

On Pilgrimage with Luke

Week 4

A Guided Tour with Ray Crafton
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READ LUKE 2.41-52



The Finding in the Temple

- Background

- Passover is one of three pilgrimage festivals along with Sukkoth and Shavuot.
- Males 13 and up journeyed to Jerusalem and The Temple; Mary was not required to travel.
- The festival lasted 7 to 8 days.
- Jesus would have been in the company of Joseph while in The Temple.

- Observations

- Jesus' precocious understanding (2.47) contrasts with his parents' lack thereof (2.50)
- Lk. 2.52 ≈ 1 Sam. 2.26

Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and with the people.

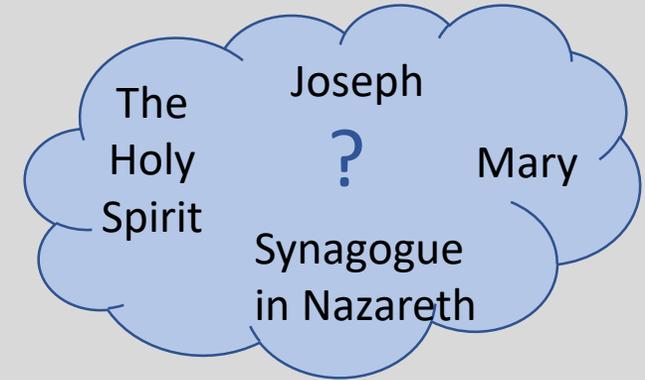
Why does Luke include this episode?



The Finding in the Temple: Its Possible Purposes

- The episode provides continuity: it's halfway between infancy and adulthood.
- It partially answers a question asked in all four canonical gospels:
 - “Where does Jesus get all this?”
 - See Mk. 6.3, Mt. 13.55, Lk. 4.22, Jn. 6.42
- Mary's presence, not required, is telling.
 - Demonstrates the piousness of Jesus' family
 - She delivers the rebuke, not Joseph
 - First instance of the sword that will pierce Mary's life
- It fulfills the words of Malachi 3.1:

...the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.
- Jesus, like Samuel, will now grow up to take his place in salvation-history
- Luke's infancy narrative ends as it began – in the Temple in Jerusalem.
 - Once again, Luke emphasizes the emergence of Jesus and his followers from Judaism as adherents of a *religio licita*, i.e., an “approved religion.”

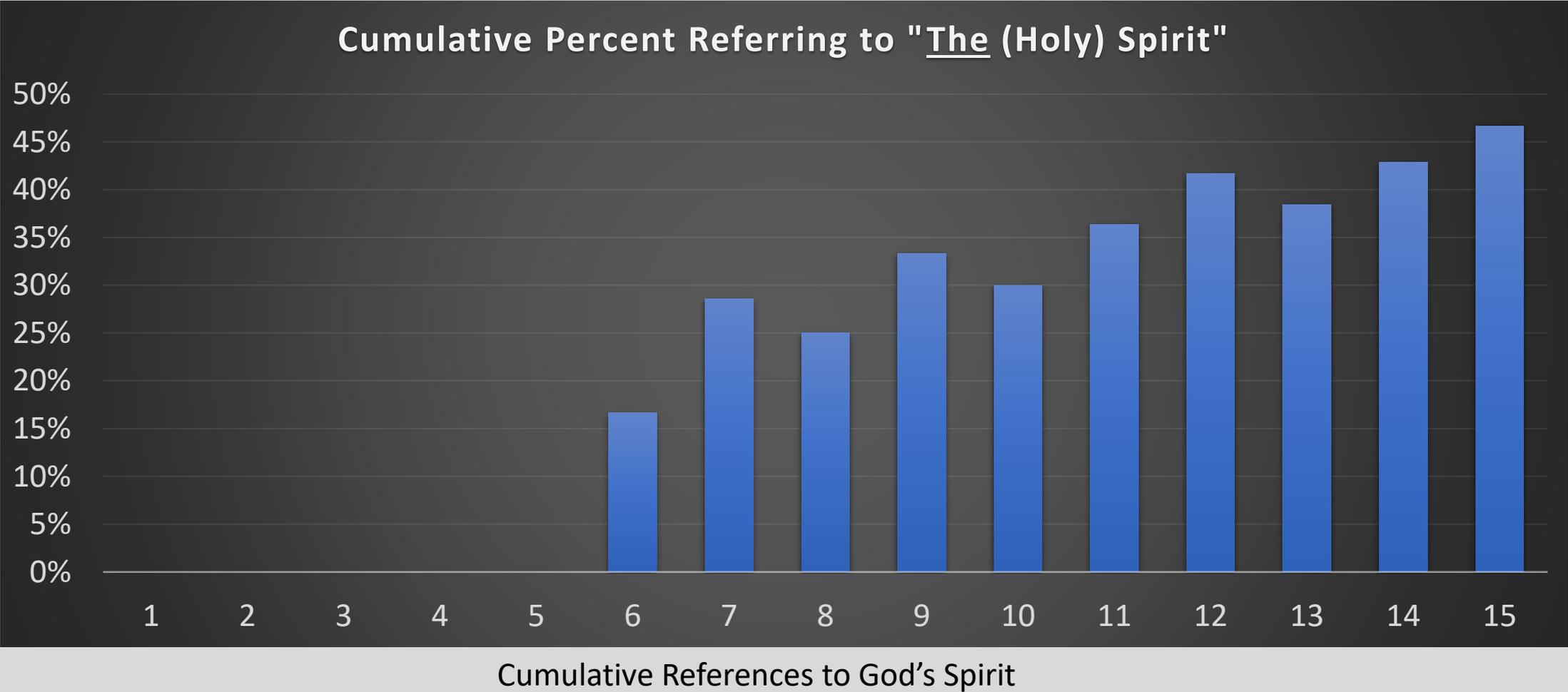


Luke's Infancy Narrative for Adults: A Summary

- Christianity emerges from the center of pious, mainstream Judaism as the natural fulfillment of Judaism's ancient expectations.
 - Corollary: Since Judaism is a *religio licita*, then Christianity is a *religio licita*.
- Jesus is completely human, yet his relationship with God is unique in salvation-history.
 - From conception he is the only Son of God and shares God's nature.
 - From birth, Jesus is Savior, Christ, and – by his birthright – Lord.
- The salvation that Jesus brings is both real and universal.
- Mary is the role model for Christians to emulate.
 - Open
 - Obedient
 - Courageous and persistent
 - Tolerant of ambiguity and trusting in God
- The Great Reversal: God favors the poor, the powerless, the disadvantaged, and the downtrodden.
 - Mary's Magnificat
 - Zechariah's Benedictus
 - Luke's shepherds
 - If history is written by the winners, salvation-history is to be written by the losers.
- The Holy Spirit acts as God's agent of intervention in human history.



As Luke's Narrative Unfolds, the Holy Spirit Gradually Becomes a More Definite Entity...



READ LUKE 3.1-22

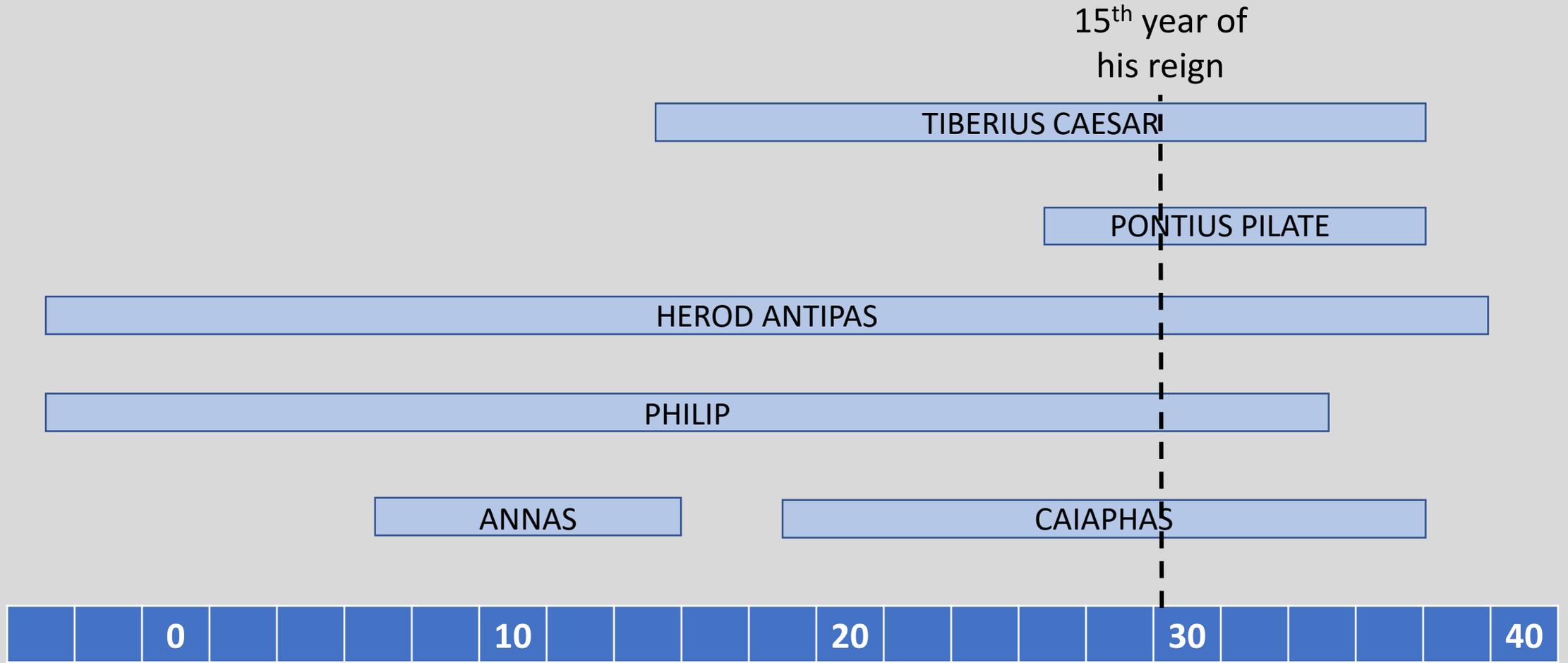


Luke 3 Is Also Filled with Unique “L” Material...

- Periodization of the Ministries of John and Jesus
- The Resounding Chord of Universal Salvation (vv.6, 8, 34c-38)
- John’s Baptism
- The Components of John’s Message
 - Eschatological vv.7-9 Q
 - Ethical vv.10-14 L
 - Messianic vv.15-18 L/Q/L
- The Baptism of Jesus and the Agency of the Holy Spirit
- The Genealogy of Jesus



Periodization of the Ministries of John and Jesus



The Resounding Chord of Universal Salvation

- Luke's quotation of Isaiah 40
 - It introduces John the Baptist as fulfillment of ancient prophecy
 - Luke's narrative once began with this just as Mark's gospel does
 - However, Luke's quotation is longer:
...and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.
- John's words
...do not say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father"... God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.
- There once may have been a pun between the words "sons" and "stones."
In Aramaic the words are *benayyā* and *'abnayyā*.
- Luke's genealogy of Jesus goes back to Adam (and God)
 - Therefore, the ancestors of the Gentiles are included



John's Baptism

- “A baptism of repentance (*metanoia*) for the forgiveness of sins.”
- From what source did John derive this practice?
- Judaism had (and has) ritual washings (*mikvoth*).
- But these were (and are) *ad hoc* washings to restore purity.
- However, the Essenes at Qumran had a ritual like John's.
- Their rule book required a baptism to enter the covenant (conversion or, in Greek, *metanoia*.)
- The rule book also speaks of three elements in conjunction:

“Then God will purge with his truth all the deeds of man, **refining [i.e. by fire]** for himself some of mankind in order to remove every evil spirit from the midst of their flesh, to cleanse them with **a holy Spirit** from all wicked practices and sprinkle them with a spirit of truth like **purifying water.**”

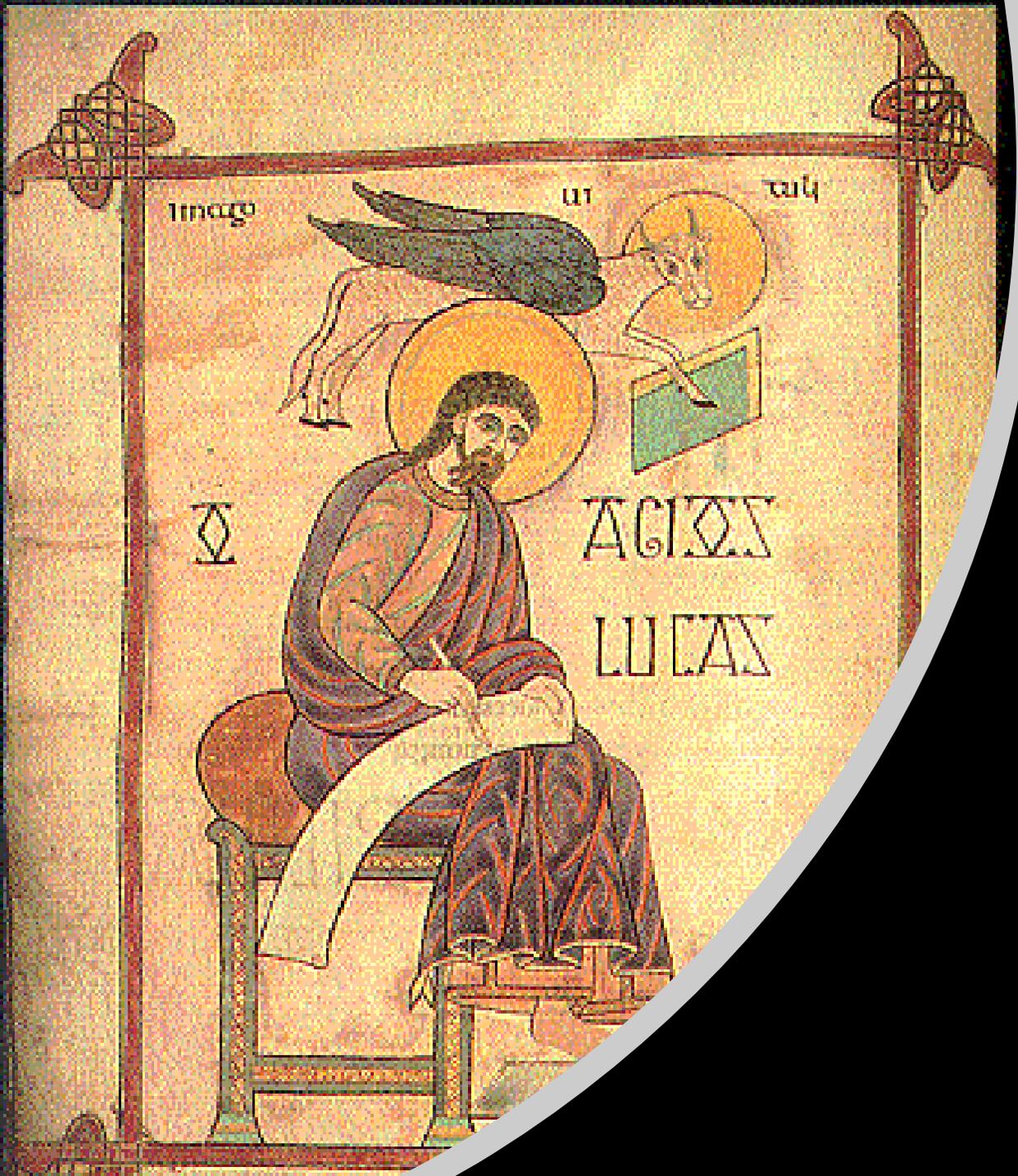
- John says, “...he will baptize you with Holy Spirit and with fire (*puri*).” (Lk. 3.16)



The Components of The Baptist's Message

- These contain an implicit critique of the Essenes:
 - Not monastic withdrawal, but engagement with the world
 - Not radical observance of the letter of the law, but “no rules, just right”
- John's eschatological element (vv.7-9) is dire, but universal.
- John's ethical component is a BIG DEAL throughout Luke's narrative
 - One fruit of repentance is its guidance of the use of physical possessions
 - Background
 - Tax collector positions auctioned to high bidders; abuse rampant
 - The soldiers are Herod's; no Roman legions were in Palestine at the time (Fitzmyer)
 - Greek “to extort” is “to shake violently”
- The Baptist's messianic admission: historical or apologetic?
 - His description of The One to Come in vv. 16-17 is consistent with Essene understandings of a coming Messiah.
 - The text says “winnowing fork” (*ptuon*), not “winnowing fan” (*liknon*)





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