

# New Testament Survey

## The Gospel of Luke

### I. Attestation and Authorship<sup>1</sup>

#### A. There is a extensive evidence of Luke's acceptance by the early church.

1. Justyn Martyr quotes Luke 22:44 and 23:46.
2. The Muratorian Fragment calls the third Gospel, "Luke."
3. The heretic Marcion accepted only Luke as his Gospel.
4. Irenaeus quotes from nearly every chapter in Luke.
5. Luke is found in the Curetonian Syriac, the Sinaitic Syrian, and the African Latin which date from the second century A.D.
6. Clement of Alexandria quotes extensively from Luke, as does Tertullian in his treatise against Marcion.

#### B Internal and external evidence points to Luke as the author of Luke.

##### 1. External evidence<sup>2</sup>

- a. The early church universally ascribed the Gospel of Luke to Luke the Physician.
- b. The Muratorian Fragment says that the author of Luke was the physician whom Paul took with him on his missionary journeys.
- c. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria all ascribe the third Gospel to Luke.

##### 2. Internal Evidence<sup>3</sup>

- a. The writer of Acts is also the author of Luke. Note the similar introductions in Luke 1 and Acts 1.
- b. The early church ascribed the same author to Luke and Acts.
- c. By examining Acts, we can identify its writer as Luke. Hence, Luke wrote Luke as well.
  - 1). The "we" sections of Acts (16:10-17, 20:5-21:18, and 27:1-28:16) indicate that the author of Acts was with Paul on his journey.

---

<sup>1</sup>Henry C. Thiessen, *Introduction to the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Co., 1987), pp. 150-154.

<sup>2</sup> See also William Hendricksen, *New Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), pp. 3-9.

<sup>3</sup> Hendricksen, pp. 12-15.

- 2). Timothy, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Tychicus, and Trophimus are excluded by Acts 20:4.
- 3). Silas cannot be easily fit into the “we” sections.
- 4). Only Timothy and Luke remain. There is no internal or external evidence for Timothy, hence we are left with Luke.
- 5). The writer of the rest of Acts is also the writer of the “we” sections, hence Acts has a single author.
- 6). Luke and Acts employ the same grammar and style of writing, hence both were written by the same author.
- 7). The medical language in both Luke and Acts indicates the writer was a physician. Since Luke was called a physician (Colossians 4:14), we conclude that the writer of Luke-Acts is Luke.

Compare the following passages which emphasize the medical viewpoint of the author of Luke:

Luke 4:38 - Mark 1:30  
Luke 5:12 - Mark 1:40  
Luke 6:6 - Mark 3:1  
Luke 8:43-44 - Mark 5:26, 29  
Luke 8:55 - Mark 5:42  
Luke 9:38ff. - Mark 9:17ff.  
Luke 22:50-51 - Mark 14:47

3. A brief biography of Luke
  - a. Luke appears only in Paul's epistles (Colossians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:11, and Philemon 1:24).
  - b. In Colossians 4:14 he is distinguished from those of the circumcision. This leads us to believe he was a Gentile.
  - c. Early tradition places him as a citizen of Antioch of Syria.
  - d. Luke joins Paul at Troas on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:10-17) but remained at Philippi until Paul returned to that city on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:6-21:8). After that, Luke appears to be with Paul almost continuously.
  - e. Luke was a physician (Colossians 4:14), and probably Paul's medical advisor.
  - f. Luke was with Paul when Colossians and Philemon were written (Colossians 4:14, Philemon 1:24).
  - e. Luke was with Paul during his second Roman imprisonment (2 Timothy 4:11)

## II. Occasion and Date

- A. Luke said that he wrote his Gospel in order to set down an accurate account of Christ's life (Luke 1:1-5).

- B. Greeks needed a Gospel for themselves and Luke was a Greek.<sup>4</sup>
1. The widow of Zarephath and Naaman are alone mentioned by Luke (Luke 4:25-27).
  2. Luke alone relates the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).
  3. Luke alone relates the account of the Samaritan who returned to thank Christ for healing (Luke 17:16).
  4. Luke alone speaks of the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24).
  5. Luke frequently mentions publicans and sinners (Luke 3:12; 13; 5:27-32; 7:37-50).
  6. Luke alone quotes Isaiah 40:5, “All flesh shall see the salvation of God” (Luke 3:6).
- C. Luke was most likely written A.D. 58-60 during Paul's Caesarean imprisonment.
1. Luke would have had ample time to conduct his research during Paul's two-year imprisonment.
  2. The Luke-Acts account ends with Paul's first Roman imprisonment.

### III. Purpose and Plan

- A. To show Christ as the Son of Man.
- B. Luke contains Christ's Perean ministry (Decapolis) - Luke 9-19.

### IV. A Brief Outline<sup>5</sup>

The Introduction - Luke 1:1-4.

- A. The Birth of the Redeemer's Forerunner - Luke 1:5-80.
- B. The Birth and Childhood of the Redeemer - Luke 2.
- C. The External and Internal Preparation of the Redeemer - Luke 3:1-4:13.
- D. The Redeemer's Early Ministry in Galilee - Luke 4:14-7:50.
- E. The Redeemer's Later Ministry in Galilee - Luke 8:1-9:6.
- F. The Redeemer's Withdrawal Northward - Luke 9:7-50.
- G. The Redeemer's Later Judean and Perean Ministry - Luke 9:51-19:28.
- H. The Redeemer's Closing Ministry in Jerusalem - Luke 19:29-21:37.
- I. The Redeemer's Betrayal, Trial, and Death - Luke 22-23

---

<sup>4</sup> Thiessen, p. 157.

<sup>5</sup> Thiessen, pp. 159-160.

J. The Redeemer's Resurrection and Appearance to His Disciples - Luke 24:1-49.

K. The Redeemer's Ascension - Luke 24:50-52.

V. Chapters to Remember

Luke 1	The Birth and Ministry of John the Baptist
Luke 2	The Birth of Christ
Luke 9	Discipleship and the Mount of Transfiguration
Luke 10	The Good Samaritan
Luke 15	The Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and Lost Son
Luke 16	The Rich Man and Lazarus
Luke 18	Parables on Prayer
Luke 21	The Widow's Mites
Luke 24	The Road to Emmaus

VI. Points and Peculiarities<sup>6</sup>

- A. Gospel of the perfect humanity of Christ. Luke portrays the genealogy of Christ back to Adam.
- B. More about prayer than any other gospel. Christ is portrayed as praying at least fifteen times in this gospel.
- C. Makes much of praise and blessing.
  - 1. It begins and ends with worship in the Temple.
  - 2. It contains several songs of praise:
    - a. The *Ave Maria* - Luke 1:28
    - b. The *Magnificat* - Luke 1:46-56.
    - c. The *Benedictus* - Luke 1:68-79.
    - d. The *Gloria in Excelsis* - Luke 2:14
    - e. The *Nunc Dimitis* - Luke 2:29-32.
- D. Women and children are prominent.
- E. Most literary and beautiful - has the best Greek in the New Testament.
- F. Use of medical terms.
- G. 20 miracles and 23 parables of which 6 miracles and 18 parables are unique to Luke.

---

<sup>6</sup> Thiessen, pp. 160-161.

H. Luke 9:51-18:14 have Christ's Perea ministry in the area of the Decapolis.

VII. A Closer Look

A. Luke 1

1. The Conception of John the Baptist - 1:5-25.
2. The Announcement to Mary - 1:26-38.
3. The Birth of John the Baptist - 1:57-80.

B. Luke 2

1. The Birth of Jesus - 2:1-20
2. Jesus' Presentation in the Temple - 2:21-39.
3. The Boyhood of Christ - 2:40-52.

C. Luke 3

1. The Ministry of John the Baptist - 3:1-22.
2. The Genealogy of Christ - Luke 3:23-38.

D. Luke 4

1. The Temptation of Christ - 4:1-14.
2. Christ in Nazareth - 4:16-30.

E. Luke 5

1. The Third Calling of the Disciples - 5:1-11.
2. The Healing of the Man with Palsy - 5:16-26.

F. Luke 6

1. Conflict over the Sabbath - 6:1-11.
2. The Choosing of the Twelve - 6:12-19.

G. Luke 7

1. Healing of the Centurion's Servant - 7:1-10.
2. The Raising of the Widow of Nain's Son - 7:11-18.
3. John the Baptist Asks about Christ - 7:19-35.
4. Parable of the Creditor - 7:36-50.

H. Luke 8

1. Jesus' Ministry Funded - 8:1-3

2. Various Parables - 8:4-18

I. Luke 9

1. Three Would-Be Disciples - 9:57-62.

J. Luke 10

1. The Parable of the Good Samaritan - 10:25-37.

K. Luke 11

1. A Divided House - 11:14-26.

L. Luke 12

1. The Parable of the Rich Fool - 12:13-21.
2. The Parable of the Wicked Servant - 12:41-48.

M. Luke 13

1. True Repentance - 13:1-5

N. Luke 14

1. The Parable of the Great Supper - 14:15-24.
2. The Cost of Discipleship - 14:25-35.

- O. Luke 15
  - 1. The Parable of the Lost Sheep - 15:3-7.
  - 2. The Parable of the Lost Coin - 15:8-10.
  - 3. The Parable of the Lost Son - 15:11-32.
- P. Luke 16
  - 1. The Rich Man and Lazarus - 16:19-31.
- Q. Luke 18
  - 1. The Persistence of Prayer - 18:1-8.
- R. Luke 19
  - 1. The Parable of the Pounds - 19:11-27.
- S. Luke 24
  - 1. The Road to Emmaus - 24:13-35.