



Walking Thru The Bible

LUKE

Introduction:

The Gospel of Luke is generally regarded as a literary masterpiece among New Testament books. Here one finds some of the finest Greek in the New Testament. While the Gospels have much in common, almost a third of the Gospel according to Luke is peculiar to itself, including six miracles, eighteen parables, and a great deal of discourse material.

AUTHOR: The two books attributed to Luke (Luke and Acts) make up about 28% of the Greek New Testament. Luke, the "beloved physician" and the traveling companion of the apostle Paul, is not mentioned by name in either book. The only places where his name occurs in the New Testament are in Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; and Philemon 24. Luke also referred to himself directly in the "we" sections of Acts (16:10-17; 20:5-21; 27:1-28:16). Just when he became a Christian is unknown.

Luke seems to have been the only Gentile writer of the New Testament. Paul wrote that, of his fellow-workers, Aristarchus, Mark and John were the only ones who were Jewish. The others (Epaphras, Luke, and Demas) were therefore probably Gentiles. Paul referred to Luke as a physician (Col. 4:14), and evidence from passages in Luke and Acts seem to corroborate this.

BACKGROUND: Luke was a historian who carefully researched his material (Luke 1:1-4). He consulted eyewitnesses for information (1:2). He may have gathered certain details, such as facts on Jesus' birth and youth from Mary herself (cf. 2:51). Luke also seemed to have had contacts with the Herodian court (cf. 3:1, 19; 8:3; 9:7-9; 13:31; 23:7-12). All of Luke's writing was done under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOOK:

Key Verse: Luke 19:10

Key Word: "Son of Man"

The term "Son of man" is used 26 times. It speaks of more than just the Lord's humanity in contrast to His deity, "Son of God." It means He is the perfect, ideal Man, the true representative of the whole human race.

Other characteristics of Luke that set it apart from Matthew and Mark would include:

1. Additional information concerning the virgin birth narrated from Mary's point of view. Luke alone tells the story of the visit of the Shepherds. Luke tells how Jesus was subject to Joseph and Mary and of his visit to the temple when he was twelve years old.

2. In presenting the manhood of Jesus, we are told that he toiled with his hands, wept over the city, knelt in prayer, and knew agony and suffering.

3. Luke emphasizes the miracles of healing, he alone tells of healing Malchus' ear.

4. Luke is the gospel for the outcast on earth. He tells of the Good Samaritan; the Publican; the Prodigal Son; of Zacchaeus, and the thief on the cross.

5. Luke has been called the "Gospel of Womanhood," he has much to say and immortalized certain women associated with Jesus in his ministry. He shows Jesus' compassion upon the many women and children.

6. Luke's is the gospel of Jesus praying, and his parables concerning prayer. (Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:28,29; 11:14; 22:31,32; 22:41,42; 23:46.)

7. Luke's gospel has a domestic tone. Jesus is often pictured as being in a home.

8. The gospel is noted for its praise and thanksgiving, a very poetic book.

a. Mary's song, 1:46-55.

b. Song of Zacharias, 1:68-79

c. The Song of the Angels, 2:8-14

9. Luke emphasized the universal message of the gospel more than the other Gospel writers and gives the reader a more comprehensive grasp of the history of the period than the other gospels. He presented more facts about the earthly life of Jesus than did Matthew, Mark, or John.

DATE. It is believed that Luke wrote his gospel about the years AD 58-60, while Paul was in prison in Caesarea; and followed it with the book of Acts during Paul's imprisonment in Rome the next two years. The two books are in a sense, two volumes of one work.

The book covers about a 35 year span from the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias to the ascension of our Lord.

PURPOSE: Luke was able to achieve several accomplishments in writing the book:

1. He was able to present an accurate account of the facts about the life of Christ, and confirm to Theophilus that his faith in Christ rested on firm historical fact (1:3-4).

2. Luke presented Christ as the perfect God-Man, who after a period of perfect ministry provided a perfect salvation for sinful humanity.

3. He presented a universal Christ. The gospel is not anti-Jewish, but it does aim to confirm the faith of Greeks.

4. Others have suggested secondary purposes such as: (a) to give a defense of Christianity; (b) to prepare a brief for use in Paul's trials; (c) to prepare a gospel account for missionary purposes.

THE RECIPIENTS. The book along with Acts of Apostles is addressed to Theophilus (meaning "lover of God" or "loved by God") 1:3. Evidently he was a high official because of the title "most excellent" (compare Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25). The Gospel was, of course, meant for more than just his private reading. Luke wrote for a Greek audience.

GENTILE CHARACTER OF THE BOOK

Several lines of evidence point to the conclusion that Luke wrote primarily for Gentiles.

(1) Luke frequently explained Jewish localities (4:31; 8:26; 21:37; 23:51; 24:13). This would be unnecessary if he were writing primarily for Jews.

(2) Luke traces Jesus's genealogy (3:23-38) all the way back to Adam (rather than to Abraham, as in Matthew's Gospel). The implication is that Jesus was representing all mankind rather than just the Jewish nation.

(3) Luke referred to Roman emperors in designating the dates of Jesus' birth (2:1) and of John preaching (3:1).

(4) Fourth, Luke used a number of words which would be more familiar to Gentile readers than the comparable Jewish terms found in Matthew's Gospel. An example is Luke's use of the Greek "didaskalos" rather than "rabbi" for "teacher".

(5) Luke used the Septuagint when quoting from the Old Testament. He has relatively few direct quotations, though the book is filled with allusions.

(6) Little is said about Jesus' fulfilling prophecies because that theme was not as important to Gentile readers as it was to Jewish readers. Luke has only five direct references to fulfillment of prophecy and all but one (3:4) are found in the teaching of Jesus to Israel.

ZACCHAEUS: A Man Who Wanted To See Jesus **Luke 19:1-10**

Introduction:

1. Jesus set his face for Jerusalem -- 9:51
2. The entrance into Jericho -- a beautiful city of importance.

I. THINGS THAT HINDERED

- A. His job -- Vs. 2b he was a chief publican
- B. His riches -- Vs. 2c "and he was rich"
 - 1) Different ways of being rich (I Cor. 4:8)
 - 2) I Tim. 6:17-18; Rev. 2:9
- C. The crowd -- Vs. 3 "he could not for the press"
- D. His stature -- v.3 "for he was little of stature"
 - 1) Different way of being little --
 - 2) 1 Sam. 15:17; I Kings 3:7; 2 Kings 5:2; I Cor. 5:6

II. THINGS THAT HELPED

- A. His desire -- Vs. 3a "and he sought to see Jesus"
- B. His determination -- Vs. 4a "and he ran before"
- C. His dexterity -- "and climbed up into a sycamore tree"
 - 1) If God made him short, it was God also who made the sycamore three so he could see.
 - 2) Nature -- the tree; Ps. 19:1

III. THINGS THAT HAPPENED

- A. The call -- Vs. 5 Christ called him and he replied
- B. The comply -- Vs. 6 The Lord went home with him.
- C. The criticism -- Vs. 7 the people murmured
- D. The conversion --
 - 1) We see repentance and restitution
 - 2) We see Zacchaeus's surrender
 - 3) We see a picture of the power of Christ to change a life
 - 4) We see him called a son of Abraham

Conclusion:

1. Look at the changes that came into the life of Zacchaeus
2. Look at the way the Jews looked at Zacchaeus (v. 7) and the way Jesus looked at him (v. 9b)
3. Think of the people who would have considered it beneath their dignity to go home with Zacchaeus but Jesus did.
4. Jesus knew Zacchaeus and called him by name (v.5)-- don't you think He knows us too...
5. Will you respond like Zacchaeus did?