



Overview for Luke

Purpose: To provide a more complete account of the life of Jesus Christ for a man named Theophilus, and to emphasize the humanity of Jesus, the Savior for all people everywhere (see Luke 1:1-4 and 19:10).

Author: Luke is thought by many commentators to have been a Gentile. His name is Greek, and he was well educated in Greek literary and scientific culture. Likely a native of Antioch in Syria, he was a physician by profession. He was a close friend and traveling companion of Paul, and the one who remained with the Apostle after others deserted him. Luke also wrote the Book of Acts, which is a sequel to the Gospel account. Tradition says Luke died a martyr.

To Whom Written: Luke's Gospel was written to Theophilus, a fellow Greek who probably was an individual of high rank. *Theophilus* means "friend of God," so this may have been a nickname indicating his strong interest in the Christian religion. The Book of Acts is also addressed to him.

Time Period Covered: From directly before Jesus' birth to His ascension.

Date Written: Based on events recorded in the Book of Acts, Luke probably wrote his Gospel about A.D. 58-60.

History: The events in the Gospel of Luke took place approximately four hundred years after the close of the Old Testament. During that period, the Persians dominated the Jews' homeland until 332 B.C., when Alexander the Great conquered the area. From 332-167 B.C. the Jews came under powerful Greek (or Hellenic) influence while under the rule of Alexander. The Maccabean revolt brought a period of Jewish independence from 164 to 63 B.C. Then the Romans conquered the area and set up a regional government, which lasted from 63 B.C. to A.D. 73, a period which encompassed the events recorded in the Gospel of Luke. During all those years, the Jewish people looked and prayed for the Messiah to come and rebuild the Kingdom of David.

Setting: Roman society in the time of Jesus was characterized by economic inequality. The vast wealth of the Roman Empire was controlled by a few individuals who had gained status through their public works and philanthropic deeds. Business and finance were dominated by international trade and an enforced system of

taxation. Due to the practice of subjugating conquered people groups, slaves made up a sizable segment of the population.

The Hebrew people maintained their identity throughout those years of domination, mainly because the Jewish faith kept alive the traditions regarding purity and defilement which set them apart from other nations in the region. By the time of Christ, the Temple was still the official center of Jewish worship, but the synagogues in every Jewish city were even more at the center of Jewish life. Religious leaders were split into three major groups: the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes (who are best known for their preservation of the Dead Sea Scrolls).

Style: Luke's Gospel is the most universal of the four Gospels. Matthew presented Christ as the Messiah to a Jewish audience, Mark stressed the aspect of Jesus as the humble Servant to those of a Roman background, and John wrote for the emerging church with an emphasis on Christ's divinity. Luke, however, focused on the humanity of Christ, often referring to Him as the "Son of Man," and making it clear that Christ came to be the Savior of the whole world.

Luke's writing indicates he was an educated man. He had an outstanding command of the Greek language and a more polished vocabulary than those of Matthew and Mark. His writing is characterized by orderly arrangement, attention to historical detail and dates, accurate descriptions of places (verified by contemporary archaeologists), and a warm, sensitive understanding of Jesus and those around Him.

Unique Features: About thirty-five percent of the material in Luke is unique to his Gospel. Some of the most well-known of Jesus' parables were recorded only by Luke, including *The Good Samaritan* and *The Prodigal Son*. Luke wrote more about prayer than any of the other Gospel writers. He also recorded some of the greatest songs of the Christian faith: the *Benedictus* (the song of Zacharias), the *Magnificat* (the song of Mary after she met with Elisabeth), and *Gloria in Excelsis* (the song of the angelic choir), which are all in the first two chapters.

Summary: Luke began his discourse with a prologue, stating his purpose for writing. He detailed the birth and infancy of both Jesus and His forerunner, John the Baptist, pointing to these events as the dawn of the

promised era of Israel's salvation. He outlined the divine preparation for Jesus' ministry, including John's prophetic role, the baptism of Jesus, and Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

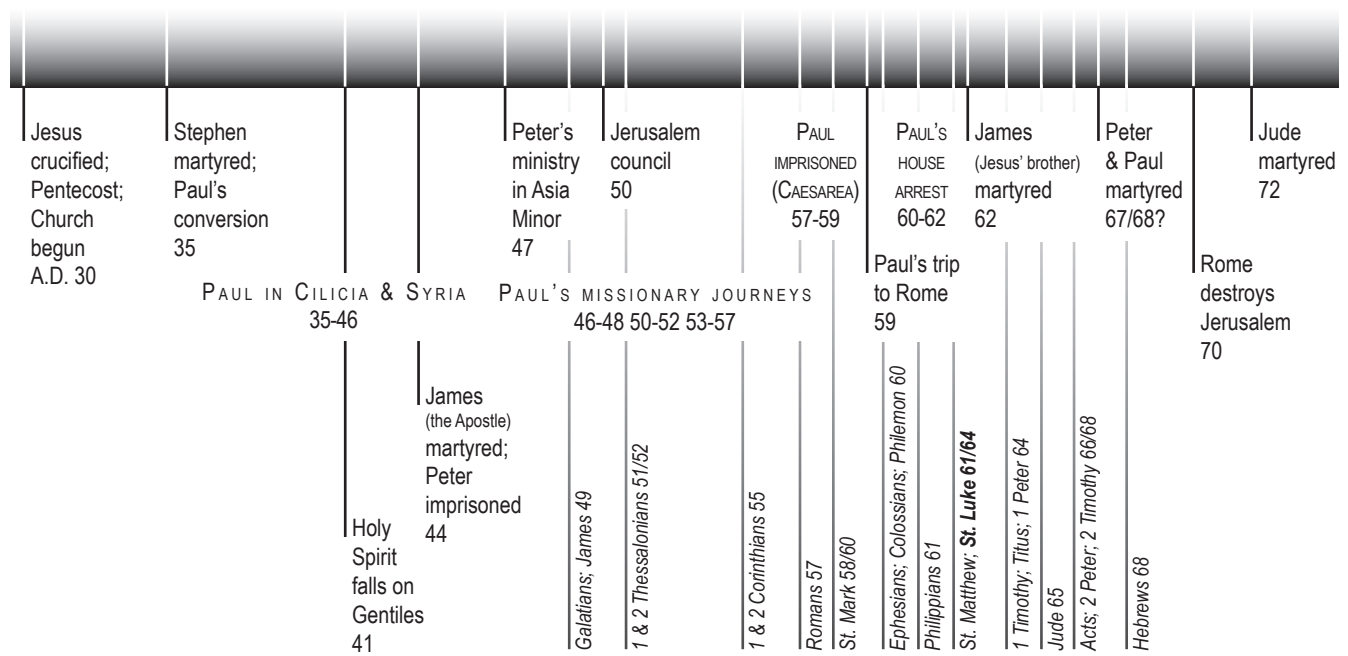
The second section of the book concerns Jesus' teaching and His miracles. Luke related events which took place during Jesus' ministry in Galilee, and the hostile reception He received there. He described Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, where He would face His destiny as the Messiah. Included in this section are a

number of Jesus' parables. Luke then described how Christ's ministry resulted in growing antagonism by the religious leaders.

In the final section of the book, Luke told of Jesus' last supper with His closest followers, followed by His betrayal, arrest, interrogation, and crucifixion. The Gospel concludes with Luke's record of events from the Resurrection to the Ascension, showing Jesus' death to be divinely ordained and in accordance with prophecy.

Timeline

Many of these dates are approximate, as reference materials differ slightly.



Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.

- I. The preface to the Gospel (1:1-4)
 - A. The sources for the Gospel (1:1-2)
 - B. The research for the Gospel (1:3)
 - C. The purpose for the Gospel (1:4)
- II. The advent of the Son of Man (1:5—2:52)
 - A. The annunciations (1:5-56)
 - B. The advent of John (1:57-80)
 - C. The advent of the Son of Man (2:1-52)
- III. The preparation of the Son of Man (3:1—4:13)
 - A. The forerunner of the Son of Man (3:1-20)
 - B. The baptism of the Son of Man (3:21-22)
 - C. The genealogy of the Son of Man (3:23-38)
 - D. The temptation of the Son of Man (4:1-13)
- IV. The ministry of the Son of Man (4:14—9:50)
 - A. The commencement of the ministry of the Son of Man (4:14-44)
 - B. The course of the ministry of the Son of Man (5:1—6:11)
 - C. The climax of the ministry of the Son of Man (6:12—8:56)
 - D. The conclusion of the ministry of the Son of Man (9:1-50)
- V. The rejection of the Son of Man (9:51—11:54)
 - A. The commencement of the rejection of the Son of Man (9:51—11:13)
 - B. The conflict causing the rejection of the Son of Man (11:14-36)
 - C. The consequence of the rejection of the Son of Man (11:37-54)
- VI. The instruction of the Son of Man (12:1—19:27)
 - A. Instructions concerning hypocrisy (12:1-12)
 - B. Instructions concerning wealth (12:13-59)
 - C. Instructions concerning repentance (13:1-9)
 - D. Instructions concerning the Kingdom of God (13:10—19:27)
- VII. The passion of the Son of Man (19:28—23:56)
 - A. The presentation of the Son of Man (19:28-48)
 - B. The public ministry of the Son of Man concluded (20:1—21:38)
 - C. The preparation of the death of the Son of Man (22:1-46)
 - D. The arrest and trial of the Son of Man (22:47—23:56)
- VIII. The triumph of the Son of Man (24:1-53)
 - A. The empty tomb (24:1-12)
 - B. The appearance near Emmaus (24:13-32)
 - C. The appearance to the disciples (24:33-43)
 - D. The instruction of the disciples (24:44-49)
 - E. The ascension of the Son of Man (24:50-53)