

A STUDY OF ST LUKE'S GOSPEL

A Feast of Word of God

(1) Why is the **Word of God** different from all **other** words? **Heb 4:12**

- God, Infinitely Immense, created **us** (Humanity), **Adam**, as His **speaking** creation...
- So, He put Himself in the position of having to communicate to us **THROUGH WORDS**.
But, since God is most **Pure Spirit**, He decided to speak to us through the **words of men**.
God chose a series of men (males!) to communicate **His Words** to us in our own language (**human language**). **Examples:** Adam, Abraham, Moses, the Prophets, Evangelists, Saints, Mystics...
- When we get to the **Church Age** many of the **speakers** are **women**...

Power of the Word: **Book of Proverbs:** 50 Proverbs on tongue alone —————

- (a) spoken
- (b) written
- (c) Incarnate Word of God!

Creation: Voyumer Elohim = God **said**... What He said came into existence... including ourselves

(2) St Luke – the **only Gentile** Evangelist – rehabilitated **women** in his Gospel .

(3) Why are there 4 Gospels **instead of One**?

- They are 4 **Testimonies** given to 4 **different groups** of people living in **different areas** of the Middle East.
- Each one wrote from a **different perspective**.
- They are given to us – **not** in the order in which they were written – but in the order of their

SUBJECT MATTER.

- They speak about the **Descent of the Word** in Redemption followed by the **Descent of the Spirit** as a result of Redemption.
- None of them are presented as **BIOGRAPHIES**
- Only the **essentials** of the **Message** are given – but from **different perspectives**.

(a) **Matthew** : a Jew, wrote to **the Jewish World** to prove that their long-awaited Messiah had come.

- Because of this he quoted the Old Testament more than 40 times to prove Jesus **was** that Messiah.
- The Theme of his Gospel is **"Behold your King!"** So the kingly ancestry of Jesus is given at the beginning and He is declared King of the Jews at the end.

(b) **Mark** : a Jew, writing to **a Gentile audience** takes a completely different approach.

- Mark's audience don't know the Old Testament so he **explains** some Jewish customs to them.
- His Theme is **"Behold My Servant"**. He writes that Jesus is the fulfillment of the 4 Servant Songs of Isaiah.
- He illustrates Jesus as a **workman** throughout the Gospel.
- He shows Jesus' sufferings in a very **stark** way to show Christians who were being persecuted and martyred for Christ that He, too, suffered greatly for them...

(c) **Luke** : was the **only Gentile** who wrote a Gospel. His approach was very different to the others.

- He understood **Gentile** needs... they wanted to see “the Glory of God in Man fully Alive”. Luke wrote **“Behold the Man”!** [or what a Man!] and showed Jesus’ Infancy and Passion as Man in his greatness.
- a lot more later!

(d) **John:** The first 3 Gospels were in circulation around the Christian communities for a long time...

- Towards the end of the first century AD the Bishops of the Church contacted John
– the last surviving Apostle and they **asked** him to write a Gospel from a completely **supernatural** aspect
- – so John wrote: **“Behold your God!”** emphasizing the divinity of Christ at a time when the **Roman Empire** was trying to destroy the Church.

So the 4 Testimonies show the Mystery of Christ from 4 different perspectives:

- (1) **Behold your King:** Jesus fulfills the Scriptures
- (2) **Behold my Servant:** The lowliness of the Lamb
- (3) **Behold the Man:** The **fact** that **God Himself** showed Himself as a Man is the greatest thing He could say **about Man!**
- (4) **Behold your God:** “who could believe what we have heard?” Isaiah 53

Let’s come to St Luke the man: **who was he?**

- He was a Syrian
- Luke is obviously a shortened form of Lucius or Lucillus, a Latin name.
- He wrote ¼ of the New Testament: Gospel and Acts
- He never became “famous” - as we understand that word today.
- He didn’t become either **a bishop** or **a martyr!**
- He was **a doctor** – a fact which is clear from details he gives in his account of events in Jesus’ Ministry.
- He was **a celebrate** and died at **84 years of age**.
- His **great love for humanity** comes out in his writings.
- Luke shows great sympathy for **women** and the role they played in Redemption – especially **Jesus’ Mother**.
- There is a **Tradition** that claims Luke painted the First Portrait of the Blessed Virgin Mary!
- Tradition also claims that he acted as Doctor to **BVM** in her agony and sufferings...
- Luke also travelled widely with **St Paul** on his missionary journeys
– that is where we get the **Acts of the Apostles** from!
- Since Luke had such a prominent role in Paul’s work, his humility, modesty and hiddenness are remarkable, because he had to have been **very close to BVM** to get the details of the Infancy from her, for example.
- Paul appreciated the enormous dedication of Luke in 2 Tim 4:11 “only Luke is with me” ... after others had moved off...

The “We” passages of Acts → • **The “we” passages** of Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:6

- All proved that Luke worked closely with Paul in his Missionary Work

The Language of Luke’s Gospel and Acts

- Luke uses **easy to read Greek** – which shows that it was his own language.
- The 3 Jewish Gospels use **Koine Greek** – almost like “Pidgeon English” – a new language that they struggled with.

Time of Writing: Scholars dispute the dating of the Gospels be.... So, these are approximate.

Luke: before 70 AD... **before** Matthew’s Gospel? ... before Mark who is considered to be the first?

John’s Gospel was written in 90 AD

Some scholars claim that Luke used both Matthew and Mark as a basis for his text!

- **Luke and Mark** worked together with St Paul so they would have shared a lot.
Luke would have known Mark's Gospel well:
Philemon 1:23-24: "**Epaphras**, here in prison with me sends his greetings. So do **Mark, Aristarchus, Demas** and **Luke**, all fellow workers for God."
Colossians 4:14: "Luke, the beloved physician sends you greetings...."
2Timothy 4:11: "Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful for my ministry."

Some notable characteristics of Luke's Gospel

- (1) His emphasis on the **Humanity** of **Christ** throughout...
 - The Infancy given in detail...
 - The Hidden Life... struggle in the wilderness...
 - The long walking tours on His Mission
 - Jesus' gentleness and compassion for anyone who suffered.
 - Jesus' appreciation of the role of women...

Examples:

- (1) Elizabeth's faith and trust in God contrasted with her husband's lack of faith...
 - 84 year old **Anna** in the Temple – most likely one of those taking care of children like BVM: chap 2
 - Simon's mother-in-law: chap 4
 - The Sinful woman: chap 7
 - The Widow of Nain: chap 7
 - Women disciples join Jesus: chap 8
 - Woman with hemorrhage / Jairus' daughter: chap 8
 - Martha and Mary: chap 10
 - The crippled woman: chap 13
 - The Widow's mite: chap 23
 - Women at the Burial of Jesus: chap 23
 - Women at the Resurrection: chap 24

This is unusual for the other Gospels are not peppered with stories about women as much as this.

- (2) **Prayer** is another theme running through this Gospel.
- (3) **Love of Neighbour** is very strong
- (4) The **danger of Riches** is also very strong.

} showing how practical Luke was
in applying the teachings of Jesus.

- St Luke is the author of two New Testament works – the Gospel and the Acts.
Modern scholars consider them to be two parts of **ONE** work.
- He was not only an educated man but also knew the **TORAH** well – as is obvious from his writings.
- He is the only author who related both the history of Jesus – which was already current in the Church – and also the history of the beginnings of the Church, showing that the story of God and His Chosen People continued in Jesus and His Mystical Body...
- Like the other Synoptic Gospels Luke is careful to show that all that happened with the Incarnation fulfilled the Scriptures – that Jesus is the Glory of Israel.
- As we go through the text I will show you **the structure of the Gospel**.

For now, the Gospel is divided into two distinct parts:

Part I: **The Arrival** of the Son of Man: chap 1 → 9:50

Part II: **The Departure** of the Son of Man: chap 9:50 → end

- **There are different STAGES to each part:**