

The Gospel of Luke

Promotion of Christianity to the
Greco-Roman World

Luke may have been a Hellenistic Jew, but it is more likely that he was a Gentile (this would make him the only Gentile contributor to the New Testament).

The Greek name *Luke* appears only three times in the New Testament (Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24)

Colossians 4:10-14

New Living Translation (NLT)

¹⁰ Aristarchus, who is in prison with me, sends you his greetings, and so does Mark, Barnabas's cousin. As you were instructed before, make Mark welcome if he comes your way. ¹¹ Jesus (the one we call Justus) also sends his greetings. **These are the only Jewish believers among my co-workers**; they are working with me here for the Kingdom of God. And what a comfort they have been!

¹² Epaphras, a member of your own fellowship and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings. He always prays earnestly for you, asking God to make you strong and perfect, fully confident that you are following the whole will of God. ¹³ I can assure you that he prays hard for you and also for the believers in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

¹⁴ **Luke, the beloved doctor**, sends his greetings, and so does Demas.

Early church tradition says Luke was from Syrian Antioch, remained unmarried, and died at the age of eighty-four.

Southern Kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonians (Persians) in 586 B.C.

The Jews actually fared pretty well under Persian rule, and in 538 B.C., Cyrus (Isaiah 44:26-28; 45:1-13) allowed them to return to Israel and to rebuild the temple, walls of Jerusalem, etc. (Ezra, Nehemiah)

Persians (Babylon) never succeeded in subduing the Greeks. In 333 B.C. Alexander the Great moved into Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. He was welcomed into Egypt as a deliverer from Persian oppression.

The greatest impact of Alexander the Great was not the conquest, but the culture – Hellenism. The Greek culture was very attractive to the population. It meant schools, libraries, sports stadiums, trade, and commerce. Whereas idol worship was the stumbling block of the Jews before they were conquered, Greek culture became the enemy after. Many Jews accepted Greek culture and philosophy (Hellenistic Jews).

The Jewish sects of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians (Matt. 22:16; Mark 3:6), Essenes (not mentioned in the NT), and Zealots (Luke 6:15) all represent different reactions to the continuing clash between Hellenism and Jewish religious life.

Pharisee (first mentioned in 134-104 B.C.) means “separated one” and probably referred to one who had separated himself from the corrupting influence of Hellenism. The Apostle Paul calls the Pharisees the strictest sect (Acts 26:5), and modern Judaism traces its roots to the Pharisees.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees were nothing alike. The Sadducees were the party of the Jerusalem aristocracy and the high priesthood. They made their peace with the political rulers and had attained positions of wealth and influence. They denied angels, the resurrection, spirits – the supernatural in general.

Temple administration and religious ritual were their specific responsibilities. They kept themselves aloof from the masses and were unpopular with them. With the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. the Sadducees came to an end.

(Paul in Acts 23:6-9)

Sanhedrin was the Jewish Council of State, an aristocratic body possessing powers of jurisdiction. It developed into the supreme native court of the Jews by Jesus' day. It functioned in both civil and religious realms until the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Made up of 70 members (included both Sadducees and Pharisees – Acts 23:6) presided over by the High Priest.

One of the most important events of this period between the Old Testament and New Testament is the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek. This occurred from 280-150 B.C. in Alexandria, a city in Egypt that many Jews migrated to after Alexander the Great's conquest of Egypt. The translation is called the **Septuagint**, and it took the Old Testament from being just a Hebrew book to a universal audience.

The Gospel of Luke is the most comprehensive of the synoptic Gospels and is the longest book of the New Testament.

The Greek style of Luke, together with the book of Hebrews, is the most refined in the New Testament.

Gospel of Luke written around A.D.60

The longest and most literary gospel, Luke presents Jesus Christ as the Perfect Man who came to seek and to save sinful men.

Jesus alone fulfills the Greek ideal of human perfection.

The Christ of Luke

The humanity and compassion of Jesus are repeatedly stressed in Luke's gospel. Luke gives the most complete account of Christ's ancestry, birth, and development. He is the ideal Son of Man who identified with the sorrow and plight of sinful men in order to carry our sorrows and offer us the priceless gift of salvation. Jesus alone fulfills the Greek ideal of human perfection.

With the exception of occasional paragraphs, very little of the text between Luke 9:51 and 18:30 occurs in the other Gospels. The parables of the good Samaritan (10:28-37), the rich fool (12:13-21), the fruitless fig tree (13:6-9), the seats at the marriage feast (14:7-14), the great supper (14:15-24), the lost coin (15:8-10), the prodigal son (15:11-32), the unjust steward (16:1-13), the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31), and the Pharisee and the publican (18:9-14) are found only in Luke.

Each parable or narrative is a specimen of Luke's use of fresh material from the life of Christ to explain his significance for Gentile readers.

Survey of Luke

- The Introduction of the Son of Man (Luke 1:1-4:13)
- The Ministry of the Son of Man (Luke 4:14-9:50)
- The Rejection of the Son of Man (Luke 9:51-19:27)
- The Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Son of Man (Luke 19:28-24:53)

**The Introduction of the Son of Man
(Luke 1:1-4:13)**

Luke places a strong emphasis on the ancestry, birth, and early years of the Perfect Man and of His forerunner John the Baptist. The ancestry of the Son of Man is traced back to the first man Adam, and His ministry commences after His baptism and temptation.

Luke 1:1-4
New Living Translation (NLT)

¹ Many people have set out to write accounts about the events that have been fulfilled among us. ²They used the eyewitness reports circulating among us from the early disciples. ³ Having carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I also have decided to write a careful account for you, most honorable Theophilus, ⁴ so you can be certain of the truth of everything you were taught.

Luke 2:52
 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁵² Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.

Luke 3:1-2
 New Living Translation (NLT)

¹ It was now the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the Roman emperor. Pontius Pilate was governor over Judea; Herod Antipas was ruler over Galilee; his brother Philip was ruler over Iturea and Traconitis; Lysanias was ruler over Abilene. ² Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests. At this time a message from God came to John, son of Zechariah, who was living in the wilderness.

The Ministry of the Son of Man
 (Luke 4:14-9:50)

The authority of the Son of Man over every realm is demonstrated in Luke 4:14-6:49. In this section His authority over demons, disease, nature, the effects of sin, tradition, and all people is presented as a prelude to His diverse ministry of preaching, healing, and discipling (Luke 7:1-9:50)

Luke 4:21
 New Living Translation (NLT)

²¹ Then he began to speak to them. “The Scripture you’ve just heard has been fulfilled this very day!”

Luke 4:40
 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁴⁰ As the sun went down that evening, people throughout the village brought sick family members to Jesus. No matter what their diseases were, the touch of his hand healed every one.

Luke 6:17-19
 New Living Translation (NLT)

¹⁷ When they came down from the mountain, the disciples stood with Jesus on a large, level area, surrounded by many of his followers and by the crowds. There were people from all over Judea and from Jerusalem and from as far north as the seacoasts of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those troubled by evil spirits were healed. ¹⁹ Everyone tried to touch him, because healing power went out from him, and he healed everyone.

**The Rejection of the Son of Man
(Luke 9:51-19:27)**

The dual response of growing belief and growing rejection increases in this section. The intensity of opposition among the religious leaders to the ministry of the Son of Man increases. Religious leaders eventually accuse Jesus of being demonized (Luke 11).

From Luke 12:1-19:27, Jesus instructs His disciples on a number of practical matters including prayer, covetousness, faithfulness, repentance, humility, discipleship, evangelism, money, forgiveness, service, thankfulness, and salvation.

Luke 11:37-39

New Living Translation (NLT)

³⁷ As Jesus was speaking, one of the Pharisees invited him home for a meal. So he went in and took his place at the table. ³⁸ His host was amazed to see that he sat down to eat without first performing the hand-washing ceremony required by Jewish custom. ³⁹ Then the Lord said to him, "You Pharisees are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and wickedness!"

Luke 11:53-54

New International Version (NIV)

⁵³ When Jesus went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, ⁵⁴ waiting to catch him in something he might say.

Luke 16:14
 New International Version (NIV)
¹⁴ The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus.

Luke 19:8-10
 New Living Translation (NLT)
⁸ Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!"
⁹ Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."

The Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Son of Man (Luke 19:28-24:53)

After His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus encounters the opposition of the priests, Sadducees, and scribes (Luke 19:28-21:38). Jesus celebrates the Passover with His disciples, institutes the Lord's Supper (Communion) and then is betrayed in Luke 22.

Luke 19:37-39

New Living Translation (NLT)

³⁷ When he reached the place where the road started down the Mount of Olives, all of his followers began to shout and sing as they walked along, praising God for all the wonderful miracles they had seen. ³⁸ "Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the LORD!

Peace in heaven, and glory in highest heaven!"

³⁹ But some of the Pharisees among the crowd said, "Teacher, rebuke your followers for saying things like that!"

Luke 19:47-48

New Living Translation (NLT)

⁴⁷ After that, he taught daily in the Temple, but the leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the other leaders of the people began planning how to kill him. ⁴⁸ But they could think of nothing, because all the people hung on every word he said.

Luke 22:19-20

New Living Translation (NLT)

¹⁹ He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me."

²⁰ After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you."

Luke 7:6-10
 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁶ So Jesus went with them. But just before they arrived at the house, the officer sent some friends to say, "Lord, don't trouble yourself by coming to my home, for I am not worthy of such an honor. ⁷ I am not even worthy to come and meet you. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed.

⁸I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, 'Go,' and they go, or 'Come,' and they come. And if I say to my slaves, 'Do this,' they do it."

⁹ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to the crowd that was following him, he said, "I tell you, I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel!" ¹⁰ And when the officer's friends returned to his house, they found the slave completely healed.
