

Luke

Authorship

Traditionally the Gospel has been attributed to Luke the traveling companion of Paul and native of Antioch, a physician, who also authored Acts. External testimony supporting this identification is clear and consistent and was unquestioned until modern times.¹ Internal evidence, including common recipient (Theophilus), similarities of language and style, and common interests argue for the Gospel's unity with Acts and therefore authorship by Luke. He was most likely a Gentile (cf. Col 4:7-15 where he is part of the listed companions separate from those of the circumcision). Luke's obvious literary abilities, coupled with his Gentile heritage and close association with Paul, make him an ideal person to author a Gospel with a view to the proclamation to the Gentile world.

Date

The date of writing is bound to one's solution to the synoptic problem. If the traditional order of Matthew-Luke-Mark (or Matthew-Mark-Luke) is accepted then one may resort to textual and historical data for aid in dating Luke. Otherwise, the date must be allowed to be driven by the required time for oral and editorial processes to take place according to the common redaction criticism theories. The date of Acts is also crucial for dating Luke. If Acts were completed at or soon after Paul's (first) Roman imprisonment, that is in A.D. 62–65, then Luke must have been earlier. A suggestion of A.D. 57–59, that is during Paul's Caesarean imprisonment, has been proposed by some.² A strong case has been made for the early 50's while Luke was in Achaia but not traveling with Paul, as determined by the "we" sections in Acts.³ A date of A.D. 55 is not unreasonable.

Historical Setting

Tradition holds that Luke published his Gospel in Achaia. This fits with the evidence given by Wenham that Luke was the "brother whose praise is in the gospel" mentioned in 2 Corinthians 8:18 and therefore the earlier date of A.D. 50–55. Orchard and Riley can envision

¹ Cf. Orchard, Bernard and Harold Riley, *The Order of the Synoptics: Why Three Synoptic Gospels?* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 123-226; and John Wenham, *Redating Matthew, Mark and Luke* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 183-97.

² Cf. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th ed. rev. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 130-31 and Orchard and Riley, *Order*, 249 who actually opt for a date as late as 61.

³ Wenham, *Redating*, 230-35.

Achaia as the place of “publication” even though it might have been written in Palestine during Paul’s Caesarean imprisonment (57-59). The contents of the book concern, of course, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ from his birth to about A.D. 33.

Original Readers

Luke is unique in that it is addressed to a specific individual, Theophilus, who was most probably a real person (“Theophilus” not being merely a coined name representing any and every “lover of God”). He was a Gentile and had received instruction, probably formal, in the Christian faith.⁴ Whether or not he was a believer, Luke undoubtedly wrote for the Gentile world at large, and was interested in sharing the life and message of Jesus with those outside Judaism who were interested in knowing the truth. The fact that Luke was writing for a gentile audience can be seen in his universal emphasis and in the absence of the specifically Jewish material which so pervades Matthew. The Gospel “was designed for all who in the non-Christian world were not averse to Christianity and were genuinely interested in having a historical account of its origins.”⁵

Occasion

If the two-document, late-date synoptic hypothesis is followed then any statement about occasion is mere guess work. However, if an early date of writing (A.D. 55–62) is accepted, then some specific occasion for its production may be sought within the framework of the Acts narrative. Since Luke is writing from the vantage point of his association with the Pauline ministry, then it is logical to assume that the concerns of the Pauline gospel proclamation would inform Luke’s purpose and strategy. The Book of Acts makes it clear that Luke is concerned with establishing the basis and validity of Paul’s gospel in the context of his ministry to Gentiles. In keeping with that, it would be fitting for him to produce a record of the life and ministry of Jesus centered in its universal appeal and validity. If Paul were already familiar with Matthew’s Gospel (see on Matthew), then it may well have been at his instigation that Luke would, on the basis of the Gospel of the Jerusalem Church (Matthew), recast the story of Jesus for a distinctively non-Jewish readership, that he would “research and . . . write a restatement of the Gospel of Matthew in terms appreciable by the Greeks. . . ” since it was “Paul’s ultimate aim . . . to secure universal

⁴ Cf. Guthrie, *Introduction*, 108-10.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

approval for Luke-Acts as a symbol of the Gentiles' acquisition of full equality of citizenship in the church"⁶

Special Issues

The genealogy of Jesus. Besides our inability to trace every corresponding name through the Old Testament record, there is the issue of whose genealogy is represented by Luke, Joseph or Mary. All possible combinations between Matthew and Luke have been argued.⁷ The main feature of Luke's genealogy is that it passes by Matthew's terminal point (Abraham) and goes all the way back to Adam, the son of God. Luke's purpose is to indicate "Jesus' relationship to all humankind as their representative. The universal perspective fits very nicely with the Lucan emphasis on salvation for all"⁸ The disclaimer regarding Jesus being Mary's son but not Joseph's is probably not to be taken as arguing for this genealogy as being Mary's. It most likely looks at the legal descent through Joseph. Both Gospels make the virgin birth clear in other ways.

Theme Statement

The story of the ministry of Jesus reveals that he is the divinely authorized and authenticated Messiah in whom remission of sins has been proclaimed to all nations by a band of instructed and trained witnesses.

Outline

- Prologue:** Luke introduces his narrative discourse for Theophilus.....1:1-4
 A. Luke establishes his work as based on eye-witness accounts.1:1-2
 B. Luke purposes to write for Theophilus' assurance.1:3-4
- Part I. *The Inauguration of Jesus' Messianic Mission:*** Luke demonstrates decisively that Jesus is the expected Messiah sent from the Father.1:5–9:50
- I. Luke introduces Jesus as the Incarnate Son of God.....1:5–2:52
 A. The announcements of the births of John and Jesus inspire hope.1:5-56
 1. Announcement of John's birth anticipates Messiah's arrival.1:5-25
 2. Announcement of Jesus' birth guarantees Messiah's arrival.....1:26-38
 3. The pronouncement of Mary's confession generates hope for all people.....1:39-56

⁶ Orchard and Riley, *Order*, 276.

⁷ Cf. D. S. Huffman, "Genealogy," *Gospels Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight and I. Howard Marshall, eds. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 256-59.

⁸ Darrell C. Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994), 348.

B.	John's and Jesus' births produce worship and testimony.	1:57–2:38
1.	John's birth results in rejoicing and prophecy.	1:57-80
a.	John's birth produced joy.	1:57-58
b.	John's birth was accompanied by prophecy.	1:59-80
1)	John's name produces wonder.	1:59-66
2)	John's ministry is revealed through prophecy.	1:67-79
c.	John's early life prepared him for later ministry.	1:80
2.	Jesus' birth results in worship and prophecy.	2:1-38
a.	Jesus' birth was divinely supervised.	2:1-7
b.	Jesus' birth was attested by angelic appearance.	2:8-14
c.	Jesus' birth was marked by human witnesses.	2:15-20
d.	Jesus' name attested divine origin.	2:21
e.	Jesus' presentation resulted in prophecy and praise.	2:22-38
1)	Jesus' presentation was in observance of Torah.	2:21-24
2)	Simeon identifies Jesus as the promised Messiah.	2:25-35
3)	Anna identifies Jesus as the redeemer.	2:36-38
C.	Jesus' early life verified the importance of his unique birth.	2:39-52
1.	As a child Jesus evidenced God's gracious nurturing.	2:39-40
2.	As a boy Jesus displayed preoccupation with his heavenly Father's concerns.	2:41-50
3.	As a young man Jesus grew in divine and human favor.	2:51-52
II.	Luke introduces Jesus as the Son approved by his Father.	3:1–4:14
A.	Jesus' divine approval is pronounced at his baptism.	3:1-22
1.	John begins his ministry as forerunner under God's direction.	3:1-6
2.	John prepares the people for the ministry of Jesus.	3:7-20
a.	John's preaching of righteousness provoked repentance.	3:7-14
b.	John's exhortation produced expectation of the Messiah.	3:15-18
c.	John's ministry evoked hostile opposition.	3:19-20
3.	Jesus' baptism evokes a pronouncement of divine approval.	3:21-22
B.	Jesus' lineage confirms his qualifications as Messiah.	3:23-38
C.	Jesus' faithfulness to his messianic calling is confirmed by his victory over satanic temptation.	4:1-13
III.	Luke introduces Jesus as the Son empowered by the Holy Spirit for messianic ministry and authenticated by his performance of it.	4:14–9:50
A.	Jesus carried on his early ministry by the power of the Spirit.	4:14-15
B.	Luke establishes the universal scope of Jesus' messianic ministry.	4:16-30
1.	Jesus identifies himself as the anointed one prophesied by Isaiah.	4:16-22
2.	Jesus predicts his rejection by Israel and subsequent acceptance by the Gentiles.	4:23-30
C.	Luke demonstrates Jesus' full and complete authority to carry out his messianic mission.	4:31–6:11
1.	Jesus teaches with authority.	4:31-32
2.	Jesus has power and authority over the spiritual realm.	4:33-37
3.	Jesus has power to heal sickness and cast out demons.	4:38-41
4.	Jesus' message of the kingdom is for all people.	4:42-44
5.	Jesus has the power to draw followers.	5:1-11
6.	Jesus has the power to heal leprosy.	5:12-16

7. Jesus has the authority to forgive sins.....5:17-26
8. Jesus has the authority to command followers.5:27-32
9. Jesus has the authority to create new things.....5:33-39
10. Jesus has authority over the Sabbath.6:1-11
- D. Luke reveals Jesus' strategy for ministry through the creation of a body of trained disciples.6:12-9:50
 1. Jesus formally institutes discipleship training in order to complete his messianic mission.....6:12-49
 - a. Jesus selects twelve disciples to be apostles.6:12-16
 - b. Jesus continues his previous ministry to the multitudes with his disciples.....6:17-19
 - c. Jesus instructs his disciples in ways of the kingdom.....6:20-49
 2. Jesus exposes his disciples to various instructional situations.....7:1-8:56
 - a. From the Centurion they learn about great faith.....7:1-10
 - b. At Nain they learn about the compassion that brings resurrected life.....7:11-17
 - c. From John the Baptist they learned about rejection of God's messengers.7:18-35
 - d. At Simon's house they learn about forgiveness and love.7:36-50
 - e. From some women they learned about sacrificial service.....8:1-3
 - f. From two parables they learned about the power of the word of God and the necessity to hear carefully.....8:4-18
 - g. From Jesus' family they learned about spiritual relationships.8:19-21
 - h. From the stormy boat ride they learned about an "overcoming faith."8:22-25
 - i. From the Gadarenes they learned about delights and dangers of spiritual warfare.8:26-39
 - j. From a dead girl and a sick woman they learned about life-restoring faith.8:40-56
 3. Jesus commissions his disciples to kingdom ministry.....9:1-50
 - a. The disciples are sent in power and authority to minister to Israel.9:1-6
 - b. Luke confirms the importance of the disciples' commission by reference to Herod's concerns.9:7-9
 - c. The disciples are taught about the responsibility of spiritual care. 9:10-17
 - d. Jesus concludes the disciples' initial training by calling them to renewed commitment.9:18-50
 - 1) Jesus elicits Peter's confession of his messianic identity.....9:18-20
 - 2) Jesus warns of his impending execution.9:21-22
 - 3) Jesus challenges them to self-sacrificial devotion.9:23-27
 - 4) Jesus is reconfirmed as God's loved and authoritative son.9:28-36
 - 5) Jesus shows the disciples that they always need his presence to minister for him.9:37-42
 - 6) Jesus warns again of his impending execution.9:41-45
 - 7) Jesus instructs about true greatness in the kingdom.....9:46-48
 - 8) Jesus forbids sectarianism.....9:49-50

- Part II.** *The Final Training of the Messianic representatives:* In the context of Jesus' resolve to complete his messianic mission, the disciples receive the training needed to carry on once Messiah is taken away.....9:51–22:38
- I. Jesus instructs on the choices and challenges of the kingdom mission.9:51–13:21
 - A. The privilege of Kingdom service is a choice that brings joy.9:51-10:24
 - 1. The messenger announces salvation not judgment.9:51-56
 - 2. The disciple follows at real personal cost.9:57-62
 - 3. Seventy additional witnesses experience the joy of proclaiming the kingdom.10:1-20
 - a. Jesus commissions the witnesses to a dependent ministry.10:1-8
 - b. Jesus commissions the witnesses to heal and proclaim the nearness of the kingdom.10:9-12
 - c. Jesus assures the witnesses of divine authorization to act on behalf of the kingdom.....10:13-16
 - d. Jesus reminds the witnesses of their true source of joy.10:17-20
 - 4. Jesus rejoices in the privilege of the disciples to know the Father's revelation of the Son.....10:21-24
 - B. The threats and challenges of kingdom service are expounded.10:25–13:21
 - 1. Instruction arising from specific responses.10:25–11:54
 - a. Obtuseness about neighbors can rob of inheritance.10:25-37
 - b. Distraction over serving robs of the joy of fellowship.10:38-42
 - c. Proficiency in prayer yields the Father's provision.11:1-13
 - 1) The pattern of the prayer of a kingdom servant.11:1-4
 - 2) Persistence in prayer results in needs being met by the Father.....11:5-13
 - d. Maintenance of Jesus' victory over the threat of unclean spirits is necessary to the well-being of the kingdom.11:14-26
 - e. Care with the word of God promotes the kingdom.....11:27-36
 - 1) Keeping the word brings true blessing.11:27-28
 - 2) The word neglected brings judgment.11:29-32
 - 3) The word is the only thing that enlightens.11:33-36
 - f. Justice and love promote the kingdom rather than self-serving wickedness and abuse.11:37-54
 - 2. Instruction arising from Jesus' own initiative.12:1-48
 - a. Warning about the leaven of hypocrisy.....12:1-3
 - b. Fear of God is preferable to fear of man.12:4-7
 - c. Confession of Jesus should replace shame of him.....12:8-12
 - d. Laying up treasure toward God is to be preferred to laying up treasure for self.....12:13-21
 - e. Trust in the Father will bring the necessities of life.12:22-34
 - f. Faithful and wise stewardship will bring spiritual privilege. ...12:35-48
 - 3. Instruction regarding the challenge of the uncommitted multitude.12:49–13:17
 - a. Jesus brings division with respect to the kingdom.....12:49-53
 - b. The multitudes cannot discern the time.12:54-56
 - c. The multitudes are on the way to judgment.12:57-59
 - d. The nation is in need of repentance.13:1-9

- 1) All are in need of repentance to avoid perishing.13:1-5
 - 2) The time of mercy is running out.....13:6-9
 - e. Callousness over human need reveals the nation’s need.....13:10-17
 - 4. Two concluding parables: Despite the threats and challenges, the kingdom of God will grow and flourish.....13:18-21
 - a. The kingdom will grow large from a small beginning.13:18-19
 - b. The kingdom will expand until it pervades the whole.13:20-21
- II. Jesus instructs on the nature of membership in the kingdom.....13:22–17:10
 - A. The kingdom is entered through the narrow gate alone.13:22-35
 - 1. Many will be excluded because they did not use the narrow gate.13:22-30
 - 2. The narrow gate involves Christ’s death at the hands of the nation. 13:31-35
 - a. Jesus would not perish by Herod but in Jerusalem.13:31-33
 - b. Unbelieving Israel would forfeit presence in the kingdom through rejection of Jesus.13:34-35
 - B. A supper party occasions summary instruction on aspects of kingdom membership.14:1-24
 - 1. Entrance to the kingdom is granted by need not merit.14:1-6
 - 2. Position in the kingdom is given to the humble.....14:7-11
 - 3. Privilege in the kingdom is rewarded to the selfless.....14:12-14
 - 4. Jesus’ supper is open to all who will come.....14:15-24
 - C. Followers occasion instruction on the qualifications for agents of the kingdom.14:25-35
 - 1. Discipleship requires complete devotion to kingdom service.14:25-33
 - 2. Discipleship aims at attracting others to the kingdom.14:34-35
 - D. Jesus expounds upon the joys of restored fellowship with God.15:1-32
 - 1. The Parable of the Lost Sheep illustrates God’s joy in the restoration of fellowship with one wayward soul.15:1-7
 - 2. The Parable of the Lost Coin illustrates God’s diligence in the recovery of one wayward soul.....15:1-10
 - 3. The Parable of the Prodigal Son illustrates God’s willing acceptance of a repentant sinner.....15:11-32
 - B. Jesus expounds on the value system of the kingdom.....16:1-31
 - a. In the Parable of the Unjust Steward Jesus illustrates the wisdom and benefit of investing in people for eternity.....16:1-13
 - b. Some Pharisees illustrate how love of money can keep one out of the kingdom.16:14-18
 - c. The rich man and Lazarus illustrate God’s view of true spiritual wealth and poverty.....16:19-31
 - C. Jesus reminds the disciples of their duty toward members of the kingdom. ...17:1-10
 - 1. The disciple must attend to others’ spiritual well-being.17:1-4
 - 2. The disciple must live with a sense of faith and duty.....17:5-10
- III. Jesus teaches on living in the face of the kingdom’s delayed advent.....17:11–19:27
 - A. Healed Samaritan lepers fail to appreciate their present benefit.17:11-19
 - B. The kingdom’s coming is being delayed.....17:20-37
 - 1. The Pharisees had missed the kingdom’s presence in Jesus.17:20-21

2. The Disciples are instructed as to the timing and circumstances of the kingdom's advent.....17:22-37
 - a. It will not come as men generally expect.17:22-23
 - b. It will come as evident to all.17:24
 - c. It will come only after the Son of Man suffers.17:25
 - d. It will come like Sodom's destruction and Noah's flood.....17:26-30
 - e. It will come with short notice but clear indications.17:31-37
- C. Jesus gives advice with respect to kingdom anticipation.18:1-30
 1. The parable of the persistent widow counsels persistent prayer.....18:1-8
 2. The parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector counsels humility.18:9-14
 3. The kingdom must be received as a child would.18:15-17
 4. The case of the rich young ruler teaches about the kingdom.18:18-30
 - a. Sacrificial service now will result in kingdom treasure.18:18-22
 - b. Riches now may hinder entrance into the kingdom.18:23-27
 - c. The disciples receive assurance of kingdom reward.....18:28-30
- D. Jesus underscores his death as the necessary requisite to the kingdom's advent.18:31-34
- E. Two incidents demonstrate the validity of kingdom expectation.....18:35–19:10
 1. The blind beggar believes in Jesus as the Son of David.....18:35-43
 2. Zacchaeus guarantees himself a place in the kingdom as a son of Abraham.....19:1-10
- F. The parable of the nobleman summarizes the proper mindset with respect to the coming of the kingdom.19:11-27
 1. As the rejected nobleman, Jesus will leave servants with work to do until he returns to establish his kingdom.19:11-14
 2. When Jesus returns he will reward his faithful servants and punish his unfaithful servants.....19:15-26
 3. When Jesus returns he will judge those who rejected him.....19:27
- IV. Jesus responds to Jerusalem's rejection of his Kingdom.....19:28–22:38
 - A. Jesus reveals Israel's spiritual condition.....19:28-48
 1. At Jesus' symbolic entry as king there is Pharisaic rejection.19:28-40
 2. Jesus weeps over Jerusalem's impending destruction.19:41-44
 3. Jesus cleanses the Temple in symbolic judgment.....19:45-46
 4. Jerusalem's leaders seek to destroy Jesus.19:47-48
 - B. Jesus continues to teach and proclaim the Gospel.20:1–21:38
 1. Jesus confronts the leaders in the presence of the people.....20:1-44
 - a. Jesus confounds the leaders over the issue of authority.20:1-8
 - b. Jesus teaches the people about their wicked vinedressers.....20:9-19
 - c. Jesus avoids the leaders' trap regarding the payment of taxes. 20:20-26
 - d. Jesus confounds the Sadducees regarding the resurrection. ...20:27-40
 - e. Jesus confounds the leaders over the identity of David's son. .20:41-44
 2. Jesus instructs the disciples in light of the coming times.....
 - a. Jesus warns them about the scribes.....20:45-47
 - b. Jesus uses the poor widow to teach about true giving.....21:1-4

- c. Jesus corrects an improper evaluation of the temple.....21:5-6
- d. Jesus teaches about the future.21:7-38
 - 1) Jesus avows that the end will be preceded by signs but will not come immediately.....21:7-11
 - 2) Jesus warns of a near persecution and destruction.....21:12-24
 - a) His followers will be persecuted.21:12-19
 - b) Jerusalem will be destroyed and Israel sent into exile.21:20-24
 - 3) Jesus promises that his return will be heralded by heavenly signs.....21:25-28
 - 4) Jesus uses the parable of the fig tree so that Israel will know when his return is near.....21:29-33
- e. Jesus warns the disciples to be ready for his appearing.....21:34-38
- C. Jesus completes his disciple training ministry.22:1-38
 - 1. Judas betrays Jesus to the chief priests.22:1-6
 - 2. Peter and John prepare the Passover.....22:7-13
 - 3. In anticipation of the kingdom, Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper..22:14-23
 - 4. Jesus instructs the disciples in true kingdom greatness.....22:24-30
 - 5. Jesus prays for Peter and predicts his denial.....22:31-34
 - 6. Jesus counsels the disciples to prepare for opposition.....22:35-38

Part III. Culmination of Jesus' Messianic Mission: Following his death as Israel's Messiah, Jesus commissions the disciples as witnesses of his suffering and resurrection before ascending to the Father in glory.....22:39-24:53

- I. Jesus is executed as the culmination of his rejection as Israel's King.22:39-23:49
 - A. In the garden Jesus commits himself to complete obedience.22:39-46
 - B. Jesus is arrested and tried for blasphemy.....22:47-23:25
 - 1. Jesus is betrayed and arrested in Gethsemane.22:47-53
 - 2. Jesus is denied by Peter in the high priest's house.22:54-62
 - 3. Jesus is mocked and beaten by his captors.22:63-65
 - 4. Jesus is examined by the Sanhedrin for his messianic claims.22:66-71
 - 5. Jesus is examined by Pilate for his regal claims.....23:1-5
 - 6. Jesus is questioned and mistreated by Herod.....23:6-12
 - 7. Jesus is sentenced by Pilate against his better inclinations.....23:13-25
 - C. Jesus is executed as a criminal.23:26-49
 - 1. Jesus is spitefully executed with criminals before witnesses.....23:26-43
 - 2. Jesus dies in purposeful compliance to the Father's will.....23:44-49
- II. Jesus is resurrected in vindication of his ministry as Israel's Messiah.23:50-24:49
 - A. Jesus is honored in his burial by Joseph.....23:50-56
 - B. Jesus is raised from the dead in fulfillment of his own promise.24:1-12
 - C. Jesus appears to disciples.....24:13-49
 - 1. Jesus appears to two disciples on the way to Emmaus, assuring them that it was prophetically necessary for him to have suffered.....24:13-35
 - 2. Jesus appears to disciples in Jerusalem assuring them of the reality of his resurrection.24:36-43
 - 3. Jesus commissions his disciples.24:44-49
 - a. Jesus gives understanding of the Scriptures related to himself...24:44-45

- b. Jesus states the implication of those Scriptures.....24:46-47
 - 1)They necessitated his death and resurrection.24:46
 - 2)They necessitate world-wide proclamation in his name.....24:47
 - c. Jesus commissions the disciples as witnesses.24:48-49
- III. Jesus ascends at the completion of his mission.24:50-53

Theme Statement

The story of the ministry of Jesus reveals that he is the divinely authorized and authenticated Messiah in whom remission of sins has been proclaimed to all nations by a band of instructed and trained witnesses.

Theme Development

Prologue: Luke introduces his narrative discourse for Theophilus (1:1-4).

The unique material found in Luke's prologue and ending greatly aid the interpreter in establishing the purpose of his writing and the message he intends to convey. The prologue states that he is writing to assure one Theophilus that the things believed by Christians have a historically verifiable source, namely eyewitnesses to the words and actions of Jesus himself. These witnesses were charged with carrying the message of salvation to all nations (24:46-47). Luke writes to his mostly gentile audience to assure them that the Messiah in whom they have believed is the authorized Son of God who had dealt decisively with the problem of sin and the power of spiritual enemies. Therefore, it is a letter designed to encourage and embolden the disciples to live and preach those things.

Part I. *The Inauguration of Jesus' Messianic Mission*: Luke demonstrates decisively that Jesus is the expected Messiah sent from the Father (1:5–9:50).

In accordance with his stated purpose (1:4), Luke goes to great measures to establish the fact that Jesus was Israel's, and the whole earth's, promised redeemer, the Messiah. By presenting his unique birth, his personal qualifications, and his words and deeds, Luke builds a solid foundation for faith in Jesus as God's authorized agent of redemption.

I. Luke introduces Jesus as the Incarnate Son of God (1:5–2:52).

By weaving together the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, Luke introduces Jesus as the Promised One of the Old Testament Scriptures. This One would be heralded by a prophet like Elijah who would carry on a ministry of reconciliation (1:17; cf. Mal 4:5-6).

A. *The announcements of the births of John and Jesus inspire hope* (1:5-56).

Luke builds anticipation by first introducing the forerunner, John the Baptist (1:1-25).

Though John's father Zacharias at first expresses unbelief over the announcement of a child to be born at his and Elizabeth's advanced age (1:18-20), it soon becomes evident that God is doing something very special (1:24-25). The announcement to Mary of Jesus' birth (1:26-38), though much more incredible than the word to Zacharias, evokes belief (1:34-38). Elizabeth's conception of John is part of the angel's confirmation that Mary will indeed bear the Son of the Highest (1:32). This announcement guarantees the arrival of the Messiah and the setting in motion of the necessary ingredients for the fulfillment of the promises of the Davidic covenant (1:32-33). When Mary visits Elizabeth, she confesses joy and gratitude that she should be chosen for the honor of bearing the one who would fulfill the expectation inherent in the promised seed of Abraham (1:46-55). Her song of praise centers on the hope that this event holds for the weak and oppressed.

B. John's and Jesus' births produce worship and testimony (1:57-2:38).

The expectations and joys of expectant motherhood are but the beginning of Luke's foundation of hope. The births of both John and Jesus will take on far greater meaning than could be grasped or expressed by either mother.

1. John's birth results in rejoicing and prophecy (1:57-80). John's birth produces not only joy (1:57-58) and wonder (1:59-66) but also a prophetic revelation of John's role as the Messiah's forerunner who will prepare for his delivery of Israel from her enemies (1:68-75) and his ministry of redemption from the power of sin (1:76-79). To this point all anticipation focuses on the spiritual and political plight of the nation of Israel itself. However, another thrust will soon become evident.

2. Jesus' birth results in worship and prophecy (2:1-38). For all the wonder of John's birth, Jesus' advent far outweighs it in attendant circumstance and prophetic attestation. Divine providence saw to it that Jesus would be born in the hometown of his regal ancestor David, though in the most humble of circumstances (2:1-7). Jesus' birth was attested by angelic appearance (2:8-14) and marked by human witnesses in the persons of shepherds from the nearby fields (2:15-29). The name given to Jesus at his circumcision attested to his divine origin (2:21) just as John's name had attested to his special birth (cf. 1:59-66).

Most remarkable was the prophetic pronouncement and praise which attended Jesus' presentation in the temple as the first born male (2:22-24). Simeon, a man full of expectation of Messiah's coming, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, pronounced Jesus as the fulfillment of his messianic hopes, adding to the previous prophetic revelations the fact that

Jesus would be a light to the Gentiles as well as the glory of Israel (2:29-32). Likewise, the prophetess Anna recognized Jesus as redeemer and testified of this to others in Jerusalem (2:36-38).

C. Jesus' early life verified the importance of his unique birth (2:39-52).

Just as John's childhood prepared him for his future ministry (cf. 1:80), so Jesus evidenced God's spiritual nurturing (2:39-40). In addition, Luke records Jesus' insightful consciousness of his heavenly Father's concerns as a mere boy of twelve (2:41-50). A further notice summarizes Jesus' continual development in personhood and relationships, divine and human (2:51-52). Luke has carefully filled in as many gaps in Jesus' early life as was necessary in his attempt to establish his messianic credentials and divine identity.

II. Luke introduces Jesus as the Son approved by his Father (3:1-4:14).

Luke continues the parallel interplay between John's life and ministry and that of Jesus. With precise historical notation, Luke introduces the preparatory ministry of John in the wilderness around the Jordan (3:1-3). For literary purposes this parallel is actually not concluded until much later (9:7-9), and one way to structure this section would be to follow the paralleling between Jesus and John (cf. 7:18-35).

A. Jesus' divine approval is pronounced at his baptism (3:1-22). The ministry of John serves two very distinct purposes: (1) it serves to prepare people for the message and ministry of the Messiah and (2) it serves as a formal introduction of Jesus to the nation.

1. John begins his ministry as forerunner under God's direction (3:1-6). Luke resorts to the open words of the "Book of Comfort" (Isa 40-66) in order to confirm John's identity as the messianic forerunner. As such he is entrusted with a ministry of spiritual preparation for the one who is about to explode onto the scene.

2. John prepares the people for the ministry of Jesus (3:7-20). John's preparation involved more than announcing the coming of the king. It also involved the preaching of righteousness and the calling of people to repentance characteristic of the Old Testament prophets (3:7-14). So powerful was John's performance of this prophetic role that it had people wondering if he himself were the Messiah (3:15). John's unqualified response indicated that the Messiah would appear in the power of the Holy Spirit and of judgment (3:16-18). This would be far beyond John's spiritual manifestations. So powerful and far-reaching was his ministry of repentance, that John was imprisoned for rebuking Herod Antipas for an illegal marriage with his sister-in-law (3:19-20). Notice of John's fate at this point serves to heighten anticipation of Messiah's stance toward such things and to foreshadow what such preaching might be expected to encounter.

3. Jesus' baptism evokes a pronouncement of divine approval (3:21-22). At a public enactment of identification with Israel, that is, his baptism by John, Jesus is endowed with the Holy Spirit and pronounced to be God's own Son, approved by the Father and thereby commissioned for his messianic ministry. This theophany was the strongest evidence to this point that Jesus was Messiah sent down from heaven to effect salvation for all mankind. This testimony of divine approval will be repeated toward the end of Jesus' ministry (cf. 9:35).⁹

B. Jesus' lineage confirms his qualifications as Messiah (3:23-38).

The difficulties of reconciling Luke's genealogy with that of Matthew does not obscure the intent of Luke's listing. As Jesus begins his ministry, being about thirty, it was as the divine Son and a member of the human race (hence Luke's tracing the line all the way back to Adam). It was only as the God-Man that Messiah could really deal with the universal problem of sin. According to Luke's portrayal, this is an appropriate point to note as one begins to consider Jesus' public ministry in word and deed.¹⁰

C. Jesus' faithfulness to his messianic calling is confirmed by his victory over satanic temptation (4:1-13).

Before embarking on his public ministry, Jesus is tested in the wilderness by Satan. Will he fail through moral or spiritual fault, like Adam did (cf. 3:38), in fulfilling his divine mandate

⁹ Liefeld notes that "divine sonship in Jewish thought was not only applicable to angels. . . and to the nation of Israel and her kings . . . but was coming into use, at least at Qumran, as a designation for the Messiah . . ." Walter L. Liefeld, "Luke" in *Expositor's Bible Commentary* vol. 8, Frank E. Gaebelein ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 859.

¹⁰ For a summary discussion and bibliography of the issues see Liefeld, *Luke*, 860-62.

upon earth? In three broad areas (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—cf. 1 John 2:16) Jesus demonstrates his moral character as well as his personal commitment to follow and obey the will of the Father. In every way Jesus has gained the approval of the Father to undertake his messianic mission.

III. Luke introduces Jesus as the Son empowered by the Holy Spirit for messianic ministry and authenticated by his performance of it (4:14–9:50).

In this section Luke gives a composite of the words and works of the Messiah designate. It serves as a comprehensive demonstration of Jesus' knowledge, wisdom, character and power as he authoritatively carries out his divine mandate.

A. Jesus carried on his early ministry by the power of the Spirit (4:14-15).

The presence and power of the Holy Spirit has been a key part of Luke's presentation thus far. Here that emphasis continues as Jesus is presented as being under divine enablement as he begins his ministry. The foremost sign of the Spirit's enabling presence was to be seen in what Jesus taught, as confirmed by comparison with Old Testament prophecy.

B. Luke establishes the universal scope of Jesus' messianic ministry (4:16-30).

This important piece sets the tone and pattern for the rest of Jesus' ministry. Having identified himself as the anointed one prophesied by Isaiah (4:16-21; cf. Isa 61:1-2), Jesus incurs the wrath of his long-time friends and neighbors by predicting the nation's rejection of him over his inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan of liberation (4:22-30). It is not that Jesus caused their unbelieving reaction but rather that his words reflected and surfaced what was already in their hearts. On the basis of this pattern-setting event, Luke sets before the reader a compendium of teaching and works that demonstrates the truth of his claim (cf. 4:18-21) and of the nation's spiritual stupor.

C. Luke demonstrates Jesus' full and complete authority to carry out his messianic mission (4:31–6:11).

In rapid-fire succession Luke demonstrates in every way and in every conceivable situation the validity of Jesus' messianic claims. The first thing noted, as above (cf. 4:15), is that Jesus taught with authority, so much so that the people were astonished (4:31-32). He exercised power and authority over the spiritual realm, so important if God's kingdom were to be established in the territory of the Evil One (4:33-37). He healed sickness and cast out demons, who recognized his true identity (4:40-41). In a concluding statement of this first round of activity, Luke observes that it all had to do with the proclamation of the kingdom of God

(4:42-44). God was ready to establish his complete rule on earth and Jesus was demonstrating that he possessed the power and authority to do just that.

A kingdom requires a vast array of servants. Jesus shows that he possessed the power to draw men into such service (5:1-11). He could heal leprosy, thereby qualifying the unclean for inclusion in the fellowship of his kingdom (5:12-15), all the while exemplifying the fellowship that he enjoyed with the Father (5:16). Another picture of qualifying and enabling subjects of the kingdom is seen in the healing and forgiving of the paralytic (5:17-26).

Jesus had the right to command followers and did so from every walk of life, much to the dismay of the unbelieving leaders (5:27-32). His was a new rule ready to break in and he was therefore in the business of creating the new things necessary to see that reign commence (5:33-39). As Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus demonstrates the same relationship to the priesthood as David did (6:1-5) and compassion for the afflicted for whom he had come (6:6-11). In all these ways Luke shows how Jesus truly possessed the correct perspective and the full and complete authority to carry out his messianic mission.

D. Luke reveals Jesus' strategy for ministry through the creation of a body of trained disciples (6:12-9:50).

Part of Luke's purpose in writing his Gospel was to assure Theophilus that the things believed and preached by them were firmly based on eyewitness accounts which he himself had assiduously investigated. Two incidents of the calling of disciples have already occurred in the context of the establishment of Jesus' authority and power to undertake the messianic mission (cf. 5:1-11, 27-32). At this important juncture (6:12-16), Jesus selects twelve of those who had responded to such calls (the number is obviously greater than eighty-two-cf. 10:1) and associates them with himself in a special way, calling them "apostles" (6:13). The following material (6:17-8:50) then, should be viewed as the initial training of the apostles in the context of Jesus' continuing messianic mission with a view to their formal commissioning to an ongoing ministry of proclamation.

1. Jesus formally institutes discipleship training in order to complete his messianic mission (6:12-49). Following the divinely directed selection of the twelve as special companions and representatives (6:12-16), Jesus returns to the same ministry of teaching, healing and casting out of demons, but this time with "the twelve" in tow as his "students" (6:17-19). This explains why Luke incorporates the first major teaching section at this point—he is instructing

his disciples in the ways of the kingdom which they are being prepared to represent and proclaim (6:20-49).¹¹

2. Jesus exposes his disciples to various instructional situations (7:1–8:56). Following the more formal address on the responsibilities of discipleship (6:20-49), Jesus continues the disciples' training by exposing them to various situations in which the kingdom was at issue. It is through this so-called "informal" classroom that the disciples receive their training as kingdom representatives.

From a Gentile centurion the disciples learn about great faith (7:1-10). At Nain they learn about the divine compassion that brings resurrected life (7:11-17). From the example of John the Baptist they learn lessons about ministry in the midst of rejection and persecution (7:18-35). They learn about forgiveness and love through an outcast woman in the house of a Pharisee (7:36-50) and about the nature of sacrificial giving through the example of the women who provided for their material needs (8:1-3).

Jesus also instructed the disciples through parables. Through the parable of the soils they were taught about the power of the word of God to produce life, growth and fruitfulness (8:4-15) and in the parable of the lamp they are impressed with the necessity to hear carefully (8:16-18). In Jesus' dealing with his own family, they learn about spiritual relationships (8:19-21), and in their stormy boat ride they are impressed with the necessity of developing an "overcoming faith" (8:22-25). At Gadara they are confronted with the dangers of spiritual warfare but see also the delight of being liberated from the power of the enemy (8:26-39). And finally, they learn more about the faith that restores wholeness in the case of a sick woman (8:43-48), and the ultimate power of life which resided in the one whom they now followed (8:40-56).

3. Jesus commissions his disciples to kingdom ministry (9:1-50). Having given them sufficient practical and conceptual instruction, Jesus commissions and sends the twelve to proclaim the kingdom, giving them power to heal as divine authorization (9:1-6). The fact that Jesus' ministry had been consistent with John the Baptist's is revealed by Herod's reaction to the news of Messiah's activity (9:7-9). When the disciples return from a successful campaign,

¹¹ The similar address recorded in Matthew 5–7 is also addressed to disciples but may well be a separate and earlier incident. The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7) emphasizes more the character qualities of kingdom citizenship within the context of the demonstration of Jesus authority while the Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20-49) is directed more toward the ministry responsibilities of the special servants of the kingdom.

Jesus impresses upon them the necessity of ongoing spiritual care for those to whom they had ministered. He does this by involving them in the responsibility of feeding a people too numerous for human resources, thus deepening their understanding about dependence upon divine supplies (9:10-17).

Jesus concludes the disciples' initial training by calling them to renew their commitment to him and his mission (9:18-50). He elicits Peter's confession of his messianic identity (9:18-20), warns of his impending execution for his messianic activity (9:21-22), and on that basis challenges them to self-sacrificial devotion through the image of cross-bearing (9:23-27). At Jesus' transfiguration, Peter, John, and James, as representatives of the twelve, are allowed to hear again the Father's confirmation of Jesus' beloved and authoritative sonship (9:28-36).

As though to counter any false confidence in their own, unaided, ability to carry on the kingdom ministry, Jesus reminds them immediately that they will always need his presence in order to minister effectively (9:37-42). He also, once again, reminds them that, despite his messianic victories, he would eventually be executed for his efforts (9:43-45). True greatness, he reminds them, comes through receiving and honoring the seemingly most insignificant in the realm, not in self-promotion (9:46-48), which means that sectarianism should also be avoided (9:49-50). This completes the first phase of the disciples' training and sets the stage for completion of Jesus' messianic mission.

Part II. The Final Training of the Messianic Representatives: In the context of Jesus' resolve to complete his messianic mission, the disciples receive the training needed to carry on once Messiah is taken away (9:51-22:38).

At this point the concept of the kingdom of God becomes more pronounced.¹² While Jesus knows what is about to transpire with respect to the kingdom program, it still becomes the necessary mission focal point for the disciples. The King has arrived but will soon depart without seeing the kingdom of heaven established on earth. But he would leave behind kingdom representatives who would continue to preach and live the kingdom principles. The final training for this must take place in a context that would prepare them for persevering in that future ministry, that is, the context of opposition and rejection. As Jesus "sets his face toward Jerusalem" this becomes the spiritual atmosphere for discipleship training. The section

¹² Cf. 9:60, 62; 10:9, 11; 11:2, 20; 12:31, 32; 13:18, 20, 28, 29; 14:15; 16:16; 17:20, 21; 18:16, 17, 24, 25, 29; 19:11, 12, 15; 21:31; 22:16, 18, 29, 30; 23:42, 51.

divisions are detected by “reorientation” statements about going to Jerusalem (cf. 9:51; 13:22; 17:11; 19:28).

I. Jesus instructs on the choices and challenges of the kingdom mission (9:51–13:21).

Jesus has called his disciples to a privileged responsibility, namely proclaiming and demonstrating the advent of the kingdom of God. Such service must not be chosen lightly and will not be easy, but it will, nonetheless, be extremely gratifying.

A. The privilege of Kingdom service is a choice that brings joy (9:51-10:24).

Luke places the beginning of the final phase of Jesus’ ministry in Samaria, a place of scorn to an Israelite (9:52-56). It is for such as these that Jesus is heading for Jerusalem to become an offering for sin. However they unknowingly spurn his gracious gesture. The disciples learn that the greatest privilege in the kingdom is announcing salvation, not calling down judgment. Because of the demands of such service it must not be entered lightly as three potential followers are told (9:57-62). Jesus sends seventy messengers ahead of him, proclaiming the nearness of the kingdom (10:1-20). As difficult and potentially dangerous as such a mission might be, the joy of being used by God in reclaiming spiritual territory from the enemy is instant justification for any hardship (10:17). However, Jesus reminds them that the real basis of joy is personal inclusion in the kingdom itself (10:20). Jesus himself rejoices that such as these were privileged to have experienced the Father’s revelation of such matters (10:21-24).

B. The threats and challenges of kingdom service are expounded (10:25–13:21).

This positive experience of kingdom service must be balanced by warnings about what could deter the servant along the way or spoil his effort at advancing the kingdom. Several different types of teaching situations present themselves in this section.

1. Instruction arising from specific responses (10:25–11:54). Luke groups a number of incidents in which Jesus responds to some question or situation to reveal a particular caution about pitfalls of discipleship. A lawyer displays spiritual myopia with respect the display of mercy (10:25-37). Martha is distracted with service itself (10:38-42). Prayer is crucial to effectual kingdom service (11:1-13), as is a steadfast stand in Jesus’ accomplished victory over the spiritual realm (11:14-26). Care must be taken to keep the word of God at the center of all ministry (11:27-36). Since justice and love are the qualities that will promote the kingdom, every effort must be made to avoid self-serving wickedness and spiritual abuse (11:37-54).

2. Instruction arising from Jesus’ own initiative (12:1-48). In this extended section Luke

simply reports Jesus' teaching on a number of issues without tying it to any specific question or circumstance. The subjects include warning about hypocrisy (12:1-3), the fear of God (12:4-7), not being ashamed of him (12:8-12), pursuing the right kind of treasure (12:13-21), trust in the Father for the necessities of life (12:22-34), and the need for faithfulness and wisdom in fulfilling their kingdom stewardship (12:35-48).

3. Instruction regarding the challenge of the uncommitted multitude (12:49–13:17). The disciples must not be deterred nor discouraged by the uncommitted multitude. As Jesus directs his comments to those outside the fellowship of disciples, he displays a perfect understanding of their present obtuseness and their coming judgment.

4. Two concluding parables: Despite the threats and challenges, the kingdom of God will grow and flourish (13:18-21). The parables of the mustard seed and leaven are designed to encourage the disciples by reminding them that despite the threats and challenges of kingdom service, and the unresponsiveness of the crowds, the kingdom of God will grow and flourish (13:18-21).

II. Jesus instructs on the nature of kingdom membership (13:22–17:10).

Whatever the hardship, membership in and service to the kingdom are well worth the effort. This is the overarching concept in this section, hence the many parables having to do with fellowship with the Father and future reward.

A. The kingdom is entered through the narrow gate alone (13:22-35).¹³

Appropriately, entrance into the kingdom is the first subject raised. In response to a question about the number being saved, Jesus admonishes all to enter at the narrow gate since many will seek entrance some other way (13:24). Many will be excluded because they trusted in their Judaism ("we ate in your presence") rather than in Jesus' work as Messiah. Reference to a prophet not perishing outside of Jerusalem confirms that Jesus' death will inform the ultimate definition of the narrow gate (13:31-33). At present many had failed to appreciate who he really was, as indicated by the coming desolation of Jerusalem, and would therefore forfeit kingdom membership (13:34-35).

¹³ The author no longer holds to the view that this refers to entrance to the kingdom in a soteriological sense. For a discussion see Joseph Dillow, *Final Destiny: The Future Reign of the Servant Kings*, (Grace Theology Press, 2013), 333-38.

B. A supper party occasions summary instruction on aspects of kingdom membership (14:1-24).

During a supper Jesus responds to an attitude which bars one from the kingdom and then uses an illustration of a wedding feast and a parable about a great supper to talk about the future in God's kingdom. Jesus speaks again about inclusion in the kingdom by showing that entrance is based on perceived need not assumed merit (14:1-6). For those who actually make it to that celebration Jesus illustrates how humility now will result in exaltation then (14:7-11) and how charitable magnanimity in the present life will be repaid in the next one (14:12-14). How unfortunate that so many who were invited will exclude themselves through unbelief (14:15-24).

C. Followers occasion instruction on the qualifications for agents of the kingdom (14:25-35).

As for the disciples, whose entrance is already secure, theirs is the privilege of acting as agents of the kingdom. This requires complete and exclusive dedication (14:25-33) and will result in others being positively attracted toward shared membership (14:34-35).

D. Jesus expounds upon the joys of restored fellowship with God (15:1-32).

In response to the Pharisees' and scribes' murmuring about Jesus' habit of receiving tax collectors and sinners, Jesus tells three parables illustrating the joy of man's restored fellowship with God. The first two focus primarily upon God's attitude about fellowship restoration. The third includes the positive effect upon the one restored as well as a negative reaction on the part of one who had not yet come to appreciate the joy of divine fellowship. The parable of the lost sheep illustrates God's joy in the restoration of fellowship of just one lost soul (15:1-7). The parable of the lost coin illustrates God's diligence in the recovery of one lost soul (15:1-10). The parable of the prodigal son illustrates God's willing acceptance of a repentant sinner (15:11-32).

E. Jesus expounds on the value system of the kingdom (16:1-31).

Lost and found things speak of value which leads to a consideration of the value system of the kingdom. In the parable of the unjust steward Jesus illustrates the wisdom and personal benefit of using that which this world considers valuable to invest in the eternal well-being of a human soul (16:1-13). How tragic, as some Pharisees illustrated, that those who love money more than people will actually be barred from the kingdom as a result of such misplaced trust (16:14-18). The story of the rich man and Lazarus demonstrates that it will not be unjust on the part of God to exclude such unbelievers from the kingdom since they are merely displaying their lack of belief in the revelation that God had already provided (16:19-31).

F. Jesus reminds the disciples of their duty toward members of the kingdom (17:1-10).

In light of such grave consequences for unbelief, Jesus reminds his disciples of their responsibility towards others. They must give careful and diligent attention to the spiritual well-being of those who are responsive toward God (17:1-4), always living with a sense of expectancy in God's ability to bring people to himself, as well as their duty to serve (17:5-10).

III. Jesus teaches on living in the face of the kingdom's delayed advent (17:11-19:27).

At the reorientation statement in 17:11, Luke shifts the theme of discipleship training more fully into the context of Jesus' rejection and coming death. It is clear to the Master that the kingdom will be delayed in its advent and so he moves to prepare the agents of the kingdom ministry in that context.

A. Healed Samaritan lepers fail to appreciate their present benefit (17:11-19).

As a summary introduction to this section Luke shows how even those who had the most to be thankful for—Samaritan lepers healed of their segregating affliction—failed to appreciate their present benefit at the hands of Messiah. This attitude on the part of Israel will delay the advent of the kingdom indefinitely.

B. The kingdom's coming is being delayed (17:20-37).

1. The Pharisees had missed the kingdom's presence in Jesus (17:20-21). The Pharisees had missed the advent of the kingdom in the person of the King and were still looking for external signs which fit their preconceived notions.

2. The Disciples are instructed as to the timing and circumstances of the kingdom's advent (17:22-37). The disciples are instructed not to be deceived by those looking for outward signs whenever they may long for the kingdom's advent. This kingdom will not come as generally expected (17:22-23) and yet when it does come it will be evident to all (17:24). At any rate, it cannot come before Jesus suffers for mankind's sins (17:25). When it does come it will be unanticipated by those not looking for it (17:26-27) and bring judgment on those not prepared (17:26-30). For those who are looking for that Day, there will be clear indications, but short notice, of its arrival (17:31-37).

C. Jesus gives advice with respect to kingdom anticipation (18:1-30).

Jesus counsels those who will be looking for the kingdom. He advises persistence in prayer (18:1-8) and humility in attitude (18:9-14). They must have come to Jesus with the simple faith of a child to be included in the kingdom (18:15-17). With respect to condition in that kingdom, Jesus teaches, in response to a ruler's question about inheritance, that sacrificial

service now (which the disciples were already engaging in (18:28-30)) will result in kingdom treasure (18:18-22) whereas trust in riches can actually keep one from even entering that realm (18:23-27).

D. Jesus underscores his death as the necessary requisite to the kingdom's advent (18:31-34).

Once again (cf. 17:25) Jesus emphasizes the fact that his death and resurrection, as foretold by the prophets, must take place before the kingdom could be established, even though the disciples did not at the time understand this.

E. Two incidents demonstrate the validity of kingdom expectation (18:35–19:10).

Though the kingdom's delay has been emphasized in this section, the appropriateness of its anticipation is underscored by two events. Upon his confession of Jesus as the Son of David, a blind man receives his sight and follows Jesus (18:35-43). This both demonstrates the validity of Jesus' messianic mission (cf. 4:18) and illustrates the essential nature of discipleship in that he "follows" Jesus and others glorify God as a result (18:43). The second incident, the salvation of Zacchaeus (19:1-10), embodies the joy of restored fellowship which Jesus had taught about through parables (cf. 15:1-32). Zacchaeus, as a son of Abraham (v. 9) shows that the kingdom, while delayed, will eventually come to be for those who have been saved for it.

F. The parable of the nobleman summarizes the proper mindset with respect to the coming of the kingdom (19:11-27).

The parable of the nobleman summarizes the various responses to Jesus' kingdom. Jesus' proximity to Jerusalem results in a false hope of the kingdom's immediate advent. The parable corrects this erroneous conclusion by teaching that as the rejected nobleman, Jesus would leave servants with work to do until he should return to actually establish his kingdom (19:11-14). When that should happen, the Master will reward his faithful servants and punish those who had abused their trusted position (19:15-26). But at least they will retain membership in his realm. His enemies will not fare so well. They will be terminally judged for their unbelief (19:27).

IV. Jesus responds to Jerusalem's rejection of his Kingdom (19:28–22:38).

The final reorientation statement (" . . . going up to Jerusalem") introduces the culmination of the journey sequence and the culmination of Jesus' messianic mission. The kingdom has been authoritatively proclaimed and powerfully demonstrated. Agents of the kingdom have been called, saved and prepared for their future mission. Now Messiah must

accomplish the actual work of redemption in order to guarantee the kingdom's eventual realization.

A. Jesus reveals Israel's spiritual condition (19:28-48).

In an action designed to reveal the true condition of unbelieving Israel, Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time on a young colt, thus evoking the confession of his Davidic kingship by loyal followers, which the Pharisees criticize (19:28-40). He then weeps over the spiritual blindness of the city and predicts its impending destruction (19:41-44). Jesus' action against the temple is symbolic of impending judgment (19:45-46). This results in the leaders' resolve to destroy him rather than repent (19:47-48).

B. Jesus continues to teach and proclaim the Gospel (20:1–21:38).

Jesus' response is to continue to teach and preach the gospel (20:1). His thrust is two-fold: (1) to confront the error of the leaders for the people's well-being (20:2-44) and to instruct his disciples in light of the coming times (20:45-21:38).

1. Jesus confronts the leaders in the presence of the people (20:1-44). For the spiritual benefit of the people, Jesus impugns the leaders' authority (20:2-8), reveals their character as wicked guardians of the nation ("vinedressers") (20:9-19), unveils their schemes (20:20-26), corrects their erroneous theology (20:27-40), and confounds them over the identity of David's Son (20:41-44).

2. Jesus instructs the disciples in light of the coming times (20:45–21:38).

Jesus also uses his last days to prepare the disciples for what lay ahead. He warns them against the hypocrisy of the scribes (20:45-47). He teaches them about true giving through a poor widow's gift (21:1-4). He corrects false confidence in the temple and predicts its impending destruction (21:5-6) which prompts questions from the disciples about signs of the future (21:7). Luke's selective record of Jesus' response contains both a distant and a near prediction. Jesus avows that his return, when it does occur, will not be secret (21:8). Before his return Jerusalem will experience conflict, but even that will not signify the immediacy of the end of the age (21:9). There will be significant political and physical upheavals before the end, but the key indicator will be great signs in the heavens (21:10-11). All of this will occur in the unspecified future.

"But before all these things," Jesus continues, there will be personal trials for the disciples (21:12). This seems to begin a "near" happening which the disciples should be prepared for, a time of persecution but also a time of opportunity (21:12-19). This more immediate difficulty will culminate in the destruction of Jerusalem. When the disciples see the city

surrounded by armies then they should flee. Israel will be reaping her judgment for rejecting Jesus and will enter another world-wide dispersion (21:20-24). This happened in A.D. 70 at the hands of the Roman general Titus. The distant future comes into view once more with a discussion of the heavenly signs which will precede Jesus' bodily return to the earth (21:25-28). All of this is calculated to comfort the disciples when they encounter a longer-than-expected delay in the Lord's return and to prepare them for the arduous and dangerous task that they will face as witnesses for the kingdom. The parable of the fig tree assures them that the Lord's coming will not be missed for those living at the time (21:29-33). The exhortation to watchfulness is to encourage those who must live in the indefinite span of time before his return (21:34-36).

C. Jesus completes his disciple training ministry (22:1-38).

In conjunction with the final betrayal by Judas (22:1-6) Jesus prepares to depart by finalizing his disciples' training. In the context of the Passover (22:7-13), he institutes a unique commemoration of the salvation work that he is about to accomplish (22:14-23). The disciples would observe this in anticipation of the future establishment of the kingdom (v. 18). Until then they must remember that true greatness, defined by sitting at table in that future kingdom, is achieved by a life of serving in the present (22:24-30). Though Peter will be severely tested, and even fail, he will recover to become the model disciple (22:31-34). Instead of the security of the messianic kingdom, the disciples will be left to minister in a hostile environment for which they must prepare since Jesus' time with them is drawing to an end (22:35-38).

Part III. Culmination of Jesus' Messianic Mission: Following his death as Israel's Messiah, Jesus commissions the disciples as witnesses of his suffering and resurrection before ascending to the Father in glory (22:39-24:53).

Though Israel had failed to receive Jesus as Messiah, and, therefore, King, he was still committed to providing the redemption necessary for the kingdom's ultimate establishment. The phrase "and coming out" marks the last movement in Luke's symphony of messianic redemption, Jesus' offering of himself as the universal sacrifice for sins.

I. Jesus is executed as the culmination of his rejection as Israel's King (22:39-23:49).

A. In the garden Jesus commits himself to complete obedience (22:39-46).

Though his disciples are unable to maintain watchfulness, Jesus continues steadfast to his resolve to accomplish his Father's plan regardless of the cost.

B. Jesus is arrested and tried for blasphemy (22:47–23:25).

As if betrayal and arrest in Gethsemane (22:47-53), denial by Peter (22:54-62), and mockery and abuse by his captors (22:63-65) were not hideous enough, Jesus is examined for his messianic claims and judged to be a blasphemer by the high council of Israel (22:66-71). Pilate, the Roman procurator, finds no fault with Jesus (23:1-5) but is unable to convince the mob and sends Jesus to Herod who only mistreats him further (23:6-12). Pilate finally releases the murderer Barabbas in place of Jesus, and sentences him to death (23:13-25). Luke's emphasis on the Roman judicial proceedings is in keeping with his desire to show that Jesus, though the promised Messiah of Israel, was sent to die for the sins of all people.

C. Jesus is executed as a criminal (23:26-49).

Luke's account of the crucifixion brings together the major emphases of his work. The universal flavor of the book is seen in the presence of a "foreigner," Simon of Cyrene (23:26), in the presence of women whom Jesus addressed (23:27-31), the two criminals with whom he was crucified, the mention of the inscription being in three languages (23:38), and the confession of the Roman centurion (23:47). The other feature of Luke's purpose is that there were numerous witnesses to verify that Jesus actually died at the hands of the Romans at the instigation of the Jews.

II. Jesus is resurrected in vindication of his ministry as Israel's Messiah (23:50–24:49).

A. Jesus is honored in his burial by Joseph (23:50-56).

Luke re-emphasizes the importance of kingdom anticipation in the person of Joseph of Arimathea, a council member, who removes Jesus' body from the cross and places it in an unused tomb. Attended also by others, this actually constitutes the beginning of Jesus' exaltation.

B. Jesus is raised from the dead in fulfillment of his own promise (24:1-12).

In fulfillment of Jesus own prediction while in Galilee (cf. 9:22), he is raised from the dead. Eye-witness accounts of the empty tomb become an important feature in validating the resurrection.

C. Jesus appears to disciples (24:13-49).

1. Jesus appears to two disciples on the way to Emmaus, assuring them that it was prophetically necessary for him to have suffered (24:13-35). In an extended appearance incident, Jesus conceals his identity as he reviews and reveals what the Old Testament contained about his own messianic ministry of suffering and glorification (24:13-27). Having

opened their eyes to the revelation of Scripture, Jesus then opened the two disciples' eyes to see that he had indeed risen from the dead (24:28-32). They then gave witness to their experience with the resurrected Messiah to the eleven in Jerusalem (24:33-35).

2. Jesus appears to disciples in Jerusalem assuring them of the reality of his resurrection (24:36-43). Then Jesus confirmed the reality of his resurrection to the eleven in Jerusalem in the most explicit way possible, namely by letting them touch him and by eating with them.

3. Jesus commissions his disciples (24:44-49). On the basis of the authority of the Scriptures, Jesus commissions his disciples as official witnesses of his resurrection who are to proclaim salvation to all peoples beginning at Jerusalem. The disciples' testimony as witnesses will be unique. Their role as proclaimers of repentance and remission of sins will be prototypical for the rest of the age. Their source of enablement will be the Holy Spirit.

III. Jesus ascends at the completion of his mission (24:50-53).

Jesus' ascension into heaven marks the end of the first phase of his kingdom ministry, that is, the effecting of salvation and the formation of a group of kingdom subjects. Worship, joy, praise and blessing of God indicate the positive outcome of this first phase as far as the disciples are concerned and leaves the reader in some degree of suspense as to when the final phase will be enacted.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPY

- Bock, Darrell L. *Luke 1:1–9:50*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994.
- Bock, Darrell L. *Luke 9:51–24:53*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996.
- Dillow, Joseph. *Final Destiny: The Future Reign of the Servant Kings*: Grace Theology Press, 2013.
- Geldenhuis, Norval. *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*. Foreword by F. F. Bruce. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951.
- Gooding, David. *According to Luke: A New Exposition of the Third Gospel*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1987.
- Liefeld, Walter L. "Luke" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin ed., vol 8. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984.
- Orchard, Bernard and Harold Riley. *The Order of the Synoptics: Why Three Synoptic Gospels?* Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987.