



Luke
(San Marco, Venice)

Christian Belief
Christian Living
Church
Creation
Education
Fundamentalism
God
Islam
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Liturgy
Mission
MSC
New Testament
Old Testament
Pope Francis
Prayer
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Religious Life
RCIA/Cursillo.

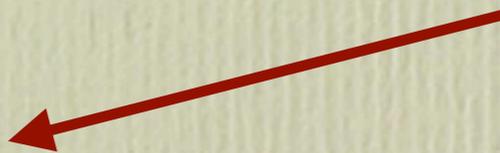
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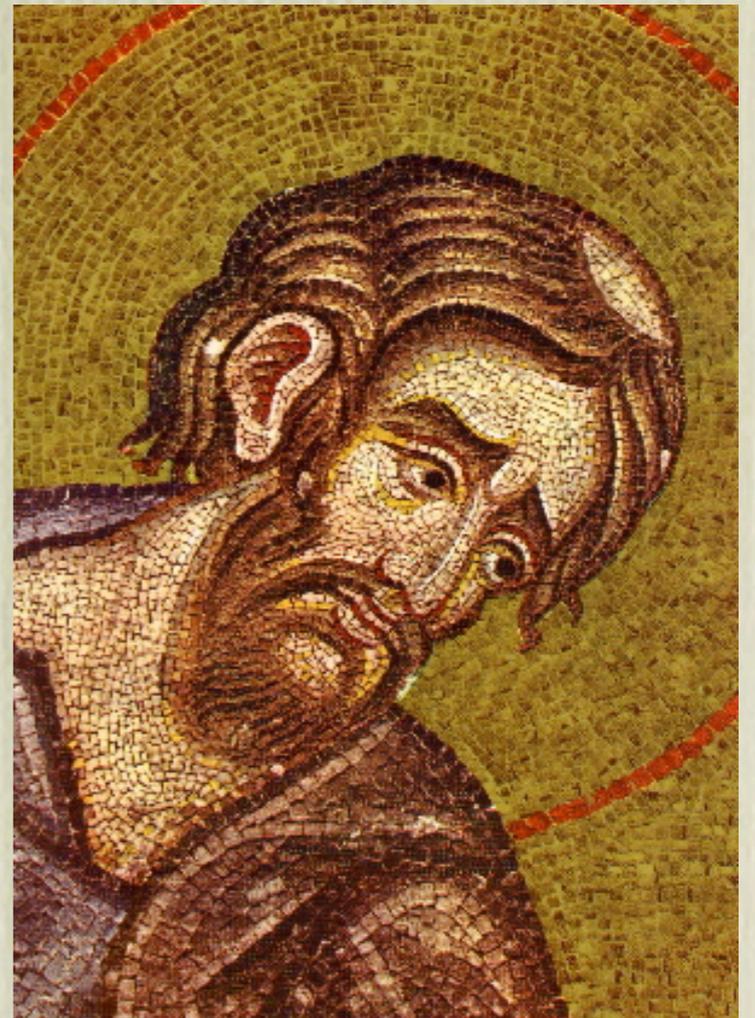


Religious Experience

Faith seeking Expression & Understanding

Prayer
Worship
Life-style
Teaching

Paul



Luke's Gospel-Acts

Pontifical Biblical Commission 1984

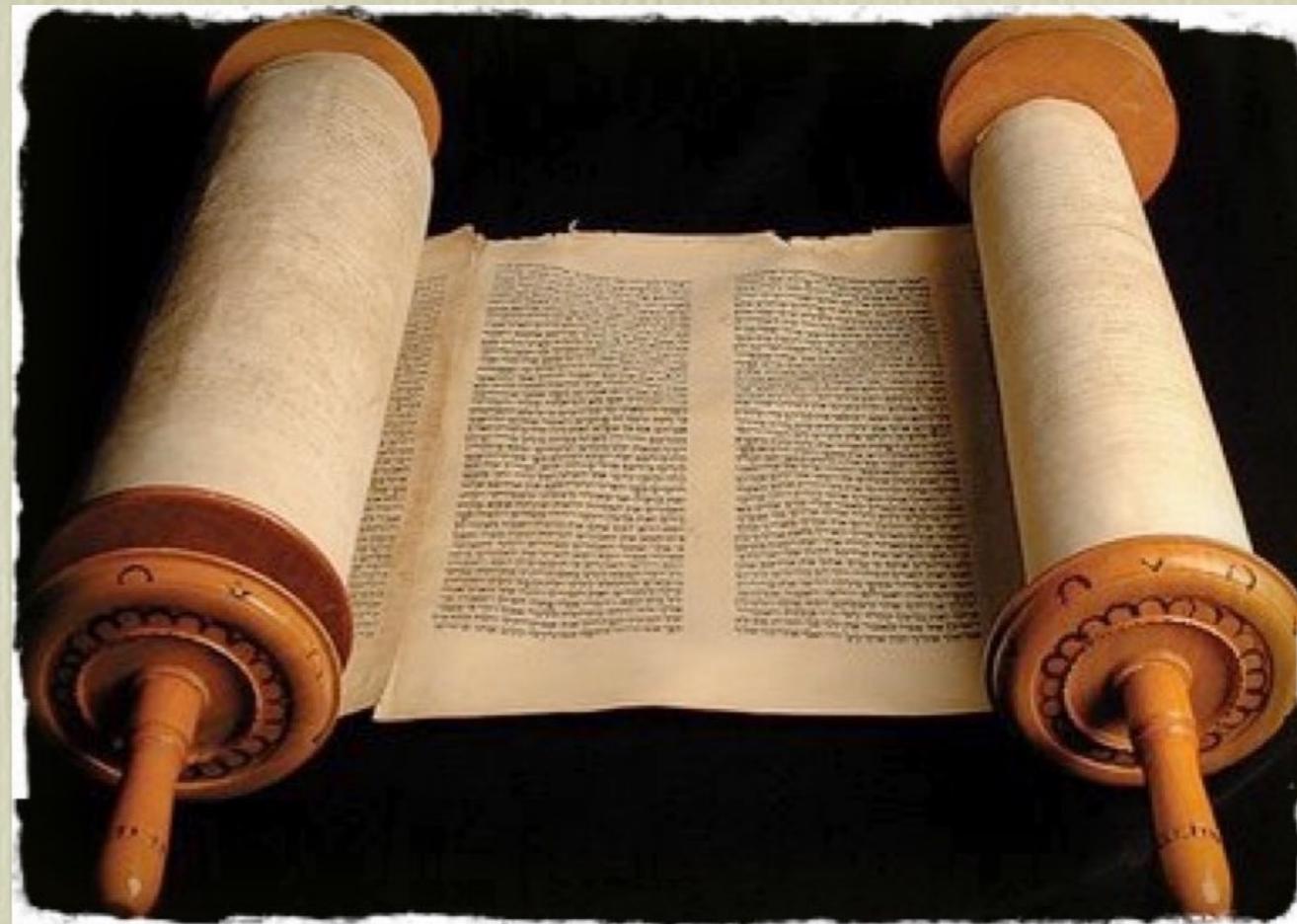
Theological Interpretations in the Gospel Traditions

Scripture and Christology (2.2.2.2 b)

‘The Gospel traditions were gathered and gradually committed to writing **in the light of Easter**, until at length they took a fixed form in four booklets. These booklets do not simply contain things **‘that Jesus began to do and teach’** (Acts 1:1);

they also present **theological interpretations of such things.**

In these booklets, then, one must learn to look for the Christology of each evangelist ... Authors whose writings are preserved in the New Testament have interpreted the deeds and sayings of Jesus in diverse ways.’



1 John 1:1-3



Invitation

‘We declare to you what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us.

We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you may have communion with us;

and truly our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus, the Messiah.’

We are privileged to have a portrait of Jesus given us by Paul

This is enriched by the portraits we find in the Four Gospels. Each Gospel presents its own, necessarily limited, portrait of Jesus, and its own **interpretive commentary**. Each Gospel aims to communicate the significance of the real Jesus to the communities for which it was composed.

‘Seeing that, in sacred Scripture, God speaks through people in human fashion, it follows that the interpreter of sacred Scripture, if he is to ascertain what God has wished to communicate to us, should carefully search out the meaning which the sacred writers really had in mind’ (Vatican II DV 12).

The fact that the four Gospels were treasured, copied, and read in the Christian assemblies in the East, in Egypt, in Asia Minor, in Greece and in Rome, is the source of our confidence that in each of the Gospels and in the four together we are seeing and hearing the real Jesus.

Luke's Gospel provides a **WINDOW** into Jesus:
his person, his life, his ministry.

Luke's Gospel offers us a MIRROR in which we see ourselves and our times.

Athanasius (295-373) Letter to Marcellinus on the Psalms n.12

‘It seems to me that these words become like a **mirror** to the person singing them, so that he might perceive himself and the emotions of his soul, and thus affected he might recite them. For in fact he who hears the one reading receives the song that is being recited as being about him, and either, when he is convicted by his conscience, being pierced he will repent, or hearing of the hope that resides in God, and of the help available to believers – how this kind of grace exists for him – he exults and begins to give thanks to God.’

God is inviting us into communion with his Son.

‘God reveals himself ... to invite and receive into his own company’ (Vatican II DV 2).

‘In the sacred books the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children and talks with them ... The Word of God is strength for their faith, food for the soul, and a pure and lasting fount of spiritual life’ (Vatican II DV 21).

Luke's 2-volume work: Gospel & Acts

God's Spirit bringing about a new creation

1. in and through Jesus (Gospel)

2. in and through the Jesus' community (Acts)

It begins in Jewish Jerusalem

It ends in Gentile Rome.



John 3:34

‘He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.’

Romans 5:5

‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.’

49AD Paul's first journey into Europe

'We' in Acts 16:11 (from Troas to Philippi).



54AD During Paul's Stay in Ephesus.

Paul sends greetings from Luke who is named as among his
'fellow workers' (Philemon 1:24).

He sends greetings from 'Luke, the beloved
physician.' (Colossians 4:14)

57AD

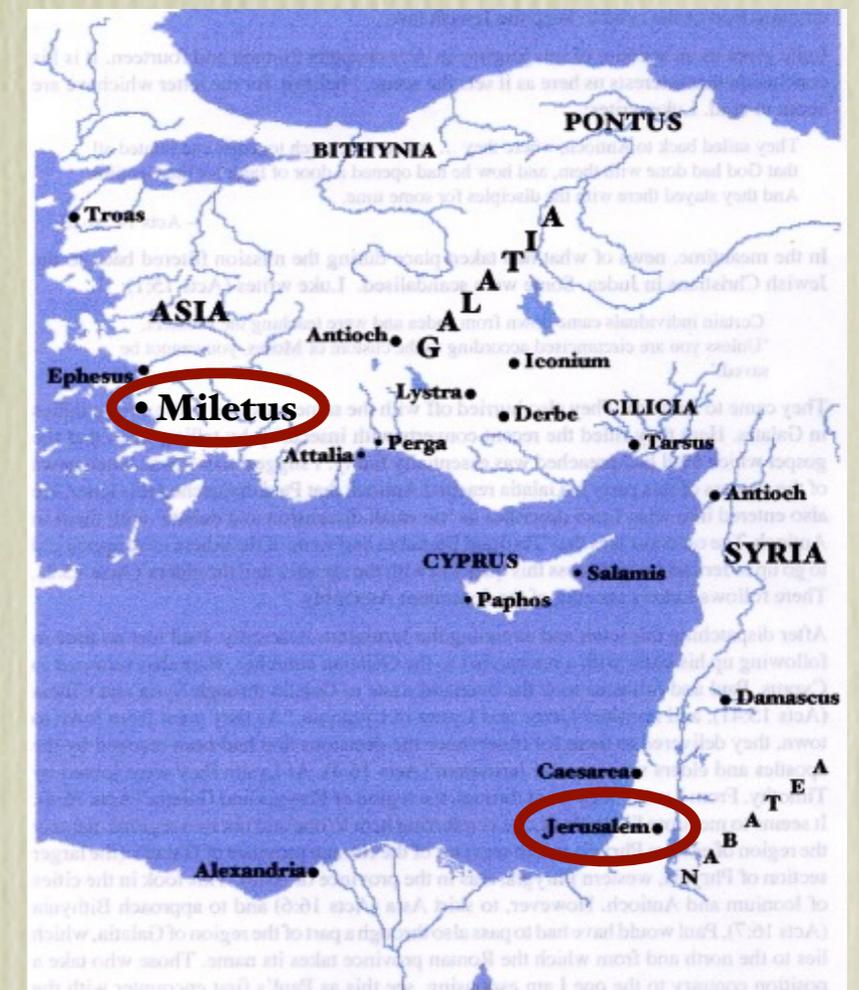
Paul's journey to Jerusalem

After Paul's Letter to the Romans
composed in Corinth

Acts 20:6 (from Philippi to Troas)



Acts 21:1-15 (from Miletus to Jerusalem)



59-60 AD Acts 27:1-2; 28:16

‘When it was decided that **we** were to sail for Italy, they transferred Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort, named Julius. Embarking on a ship of Adramyttium that was about to set sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, **we** put to sea ... **we** came to Rome.’



Writing from Rome (67AD): 'Only Luke is with me' (2 Timothy 4:11).

The Muratorian Canon (c.180AD)

‘Luke was a physician. After the ascension of Christ, when Paul had taken him along with him as one devoted to letters, he wrote the Gospel under his own name from hearsay. For he himself had not seen the Lord in person.’

Irenaeus (c.180AD)

‘Luke, the companion of Paul, set forth in a book the gospel as preached by Paul.’ (Interpretive commentary)

Clement of Alexandria, writing c.200AD, speaks of Luke as the author of the Gospel and of Acts (Stromata 1.12 & 5.12).

Prologue to the Gospel, c.200AD

‘Luke was a Syrian of Antioch, by profession a physician, the disciple of the apostles, and later a follower of Paul, until his martyrdom. He served the Lord without distraction, without a wife and without children. He died at the age of eighty-four in Boeotia, full of the Holy Spirit.

Though gospels were already in existence, the Gospel according to Matthew composed in Judea, and the Gospel according to Mark in Italy, Luke was prompted by the Holy Spirit and composed this gospel entirely in the regions about Achaia [Greece] ... Later the same Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles.’



After 200AD, the attribution of the Gospel and Acts to Luke is common. Three examples should suffice.

Tertullian, writing in the first decade of the third century, states that it was Paul who inspired Luke to write. He even speaks of Luke's Gospel as 'the Gospel of his teacher, Paul' (Against Marcion 4.5.3).

Eusebius in his *History of the Church* (3.4), composed c.340AD attributes the Gospel and Acts to Luke.

Jerome: *The Lives of Illustrious Men*, 7 (492AD)

‘Luke, a physician of Antioch, as his writings indicate, was not unskilled in the Greek language. An adherent of the apostle Paul, and companion of all his journeying, he wrote a Gospel ... He also wrote another excellent volume to which he prefixed the title Acts of the Apostles, a history which extends to the second year of Paul’s sojourn at Rome, that is to the fourth year of Nero, from which we learn that the book was composed in that same city.’

Luke 1:1-4

**Ἐπειδήπερ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν
ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν
περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων
ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων,
καθὼς παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν
οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται
γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου,
ἔδοξε καμοὶ
παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν
πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς
σοι γράψαι, κράτιστε Θεόφιλε,
να ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγῳ
τὴν ἀσφάλειαν.**

Luke 1:1-4

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first (or 'from above'), to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

to write an orderly account for you, most excellent **Theophilus**,
so that you may know the truth
concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

“**Theophilus** means ‘lover of God’ or ‘loved by God.’

All lovers of God may therefore believe that this was written to them, because Luke the Physician wrote so that they might find health for the soul here.” (Bede).

We should also keep in mind Luke's aim, which was to communicate to his contemporaries his insight into the **significance** of the events of Jesus' life and Jesus' teaching as witnessing to God's design as Luke had come to perceive it.

When Luke says that he has 'investigated everything carefully', he adds, in Greek, '**anôthen**'. This can mean 'from the very first'. It can also mean 'from above'. Both are true.

'from the very first' – from Jesus' conception:

'from above' – Luke is telling us that he has ascertained the facts and that he wishes to present them in such a way as to invite us to see **God's design** in what has happened in Jesus.

In *Acts* Luke has Paul declare to the elders of Ephesus: ‘I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God’ (Acts 20:27). Luke is speaking for himself as well. The fact that his Gospel was treasured by the Christian community gives us confidence that Luke’s fellow Christians judged that he did express valid insights into the action of the Spirit in Jesus.

Luke is writing to record the facts. He is also a believer. The focus which he puts on events, the way he arranges his material, and especially the way in which he constructs the scenes and composes the speeches given in his narrative, are all intended to encourage faith in the reader.

Raymond Brown (Theological Studies 1981)

‘The Bible is the literary objectification of a faith that is a response to revelation’(page 9).

He goes on to define Scripture as: ‘divine revelation to which human beings have given expression in words’(page 13).



Schmaus, Dogma I, 188

‘What we encounter in the Sacred Scriptures is first of all the objectivization of the belief in and understanding of Christ which was possessed by the Church or the local congregation.

In other words it is the answer to the revelation of God. In this answer, however, the word of God itself is expressed, for this word has entered into the answer of the Church and is effective in it. On the other hand we must not forget that God’s word, which enters into our human answer of faith, nevertheless always transcends it.’

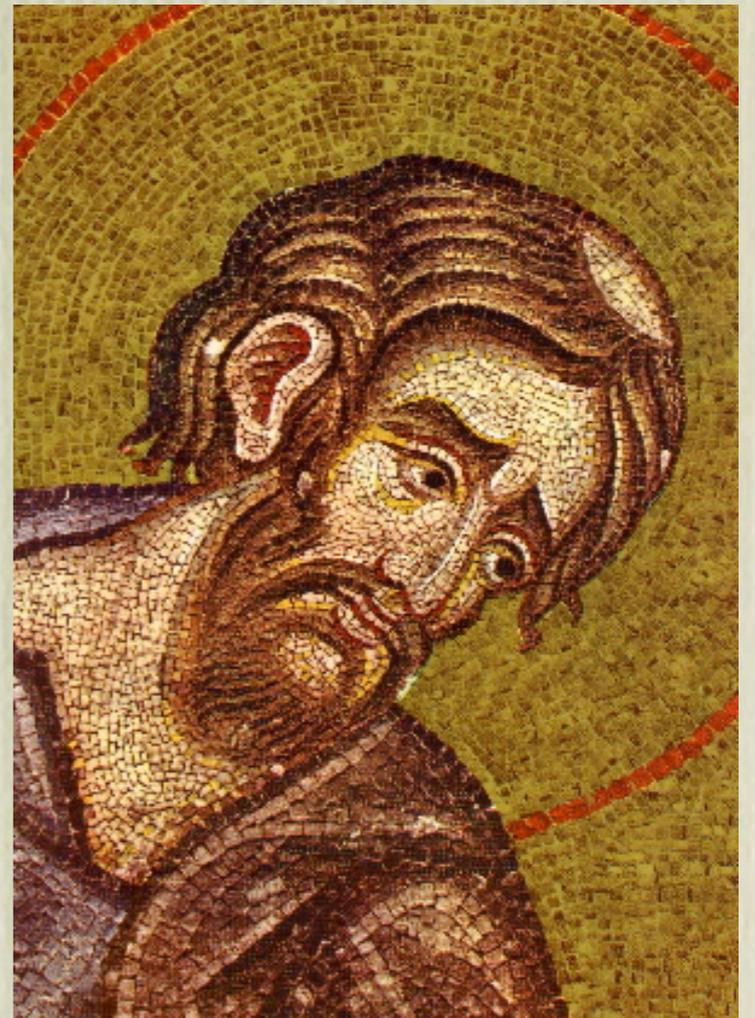


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Luke's Gospel-Acts

St Ephrem, 4th century, commenting on the Diatessaron, I,18-19
(Harmony of 4 Gospels by Tatian c.150)

‘Lord, who can grasp all the wealth of just one of your words? What we understand is much less than what we leave behind, like thirsty people who drink from a fountain. For your word, Lord, has many shades of meaning, just as those who study it have many different points of view. The Lord has coloured his words with many hues so that each person who studies it can see in it what he or she loves. The Lord has hidden many treasures in his word so that each of us is enriched as we meditate on it ...

Ephrem continued

‘Coming into contact with some share of its treasure, you should not think that the only thing contained in the word is what you yourself have found ... Because you could not exhaust it, you should give thanks for its riches. Be glad that you were overcome and do not be sad that it proved too much for you...

‘Rather let the fountain quench your thirst than have your thirst quench the fountain. Because, if your thirst is quenched and the fountain is not exhausted, you can drink from it again whenever you are thirsty. But if when your thirst is quenched the fountain also is dried up, your victory will bode evil for you.

Ephrem continued

‘Be grateful for what you have received and do not grumble about the abundance left behind. What you have received and what you have reached is your share; what remains is your heritage. What at one time you are unable to receive because of your weakness, you will be able to receive at other times if you persevere. Do not have the presumption to try to take in one draught what cannot be taken in one draught, and do not abandon out of laziness what you may consume only little by little.’