

(S) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series, you will have an opportunity to learn to know the Bible. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. First, we will learn about the origin of each Bible book: who wrote it and when and where he wrote it. Second, we will learn about how the Bible book may be divided into parts. Third, we will learn the main contents and messages of each Bible book. Finally, we will learn how to understand some difficult parts of the Bible book.

Today's teaching is: THE INTRODUCTION OF LUKE - PART 1. Today we will learn how the Gospel of Luke came into being.

POINT 1. THE WRITER OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

First. The introductions of Luke and Acts.

From the introductions to the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts it is clear that one and the same person wrote Luke and Acts. Luke and Acts were written as letters to Theophilus, but meant to be public. While Mark wrote his Gospel based mainly on the preaching and teaching of the apostle Peter, Luke wrote his Gospel based on the materials of many sources. Luke had been a companion of the apostle Paul for a long time and had more than a casual acquaintance with the rest of the apostles.

Second. The name Luke in the New Testament.

The third Gospel is called 'Luke', the name of the fellow-worker of Paul. The name Luke occurs only three times in the New Testament. During his first imprisonment in Rome, in Colossians 4:14 Paul calls him "our dear friend Luke, the doctor". Because in this passage he is distinguished from the Jews (those of the circumcision), Luke appears to be an educated Greek. In Philemon 23-24 Paul writes that "his fellow workers Mark ... and Luke" send greetings. During his second imprisonment in Rome, in 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul says, "Only Luke is with me." From these passages it is clear that Luke was Paul's loyal travel companion and fellow worker.

Third. The writer of the Gospel and the book of Acts was Paul's travel companion.

In the book of Acts, the writer never mentions himself by name, but several times includes himself as a part of the travel group. Then he says "we" did this or that.

The first so-called "we" section is Acts 16:10-17. Luke joins Paul's second missionary journey in A.D. 50 at Troas, ministers with them in Philippi and then remains at Philippi for more than six years.

The second "we" section is Acts 20:6-15. Luke again joins the end of Paul's third missionary journey in A.D. 57 at Philippi. He is with Paul when Paul preaches at the Sunday service at Troas and probably also when he meets with the elders of Ephesus at Miletus.

The third "we" section is Acts 21:1-16. Luke is with Paul when he meets with Philip the evangelist and Agabus the prophet at Caesarea.

The fourth "we" section is Acts 21:17-18 and is so closely connected with what follows that we may well conclude that Luke was a witness of the events that happened in Jerusalem. Luke is with Paul when he meets with James and all the elders at Jerusalem and when Paul is arrested and makes a speech to the Jerusalem crowd. During A.D. 57-59 when Paul was imprisoned at Caesarea, Luke probably did research work for his Gospel. From 1 Corinthians 15:6 we know that many eye-witnesses of the works and words of Jesus were still alive at that time.

The final "we" section is Acts 27:1-28:16. Luke is with Paul when he travels to Rome as a prisoner. In Colossians 4:14 Paul himself tells us that Luke is with him during his first imprisonment in Rome. This was in A.D. 60-61. In Rome, the dear friend and doctor must have visited him very regularly and must have helped him in many ways. Finally, in 2 Timothy 4:14 Paul himself tells us that only Luke is with him during his second imprisonment in Rome. This was in A.D. 64/65.

Fourth. Luke never mentions himself in his writings.

The other evangelists did the same. Although Matthew mentions his own name twice in his Gospel, he does not claim that he wrote it. Matthew refers to himself as "the tax collector" (Mt 10:3). Mark refers to himself as "a young man"

(Mk 14:51). And John refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (Jn 21:20). Therefore, this very fact may well point to Luke as the writer, for also in none of the other three Gospels does the writer ever identify himself.

Fifth. The writer of the Gospel was a medical doctor.

When certain passages in Luke are compared to their parallel passages in Mark and Matthew, then we discover that they coincide with the description of Luke as *a medical doctor*. For example, in Luke 4:38, Peter’s mother-in-law suffers from a *high fever*. In Luke 5:12 a man came to Jesus who was *covered* with leprosy. In Luke 8:43 there was a woman whom *doctors could not heal!* In Luke 6:6 Luke noticed that it was the man’s *right hand* that was withered and in Luke 22:50 that it was the man’s *right ear* that was cut off.

Sixth. The writer of the Gospel reflects Paul’s theology.

One. Just like the apostle Paul, Luke stresses that God gives his *salvation by sovereign grace* to people regardless of their race, nationality, sex, age or social position.

For example, Luke 2:30-32 teaches that God prepared his salvation for both Gentiles and Jews. Luke 7:36-50 teaches that Jesus forgives the sins of a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town. Luke 10:30-37 teaches that God does not look at the position of the Jewish priest or Levite, but at the heart of mercy of the Samaritan. Luke 13:29 teaches that people will come from east and west and north and south to enter the kingdom of God. Luke 19:10 teaches that Jesus Christ came to seek and to save what was lost. And in Luke 24:49, Jesus says that repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations.

Two. Just like Paul, Luke stresses *the necessity of faith*.

For example, Luke 1:45 says, “Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!” And Luke 7:50 says, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Three. Just like Paul, Luke speaks about *justification in a legal sense*.

For example, In Luke 18:14, Jesus says “I tell you that this man ... went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled ...” Although this tax-collector was not sinless, God regarded and treated him as completely righteous!

Four. Just like Paul, Luke emphasises *prayer*.

Luke 5:16 describes the habit of Jesus: “Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.” And in Luke 11:1-13 Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray.

Five. Just like Paul, Luke emphasises that *Christ is Lord*.

For example, “Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord” (2:11). “The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” (6:5). “Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?” (6:46).

Six. Just like Paul, Luke gives much attention to the teaching about *the Holy Spirit*.

For example, the angel said to Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God” (1:35). In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus says, “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, the release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”

Seven. Just like Paul, Luke stresses *joy amidst the circumstances in the world*.

For example, in Luke 10:20 Jesus says, “Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven”. And in Luke 13:17 Luke describes the joy of the people, “When Jesus said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.”

Eight. Just like Paul, Luke gives much attention to *the mercy, love and kindness of Christ to the less privileged, the weak and the rejected*.

For example, both books of Luke have stories, parables and teachings in which his love in action is revealed to the poor and the social outcasts, to children and women, to tax-collectors and sinners, to the sick and the handicapped, and to Samaritans and Gentiles.

Nine. There is also a striking resemblance between Paul and Luke’s account of *the institution of the Lord’s Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 and Luke 22:19-20*.

Luke probably obtained this report from Paul. Nevertheless, Luke gathered his materials from many sources, not only from Paul. He generally writes in a more calm manner than Paul.

Seventh. The historians ascribe this Gospel to Luke.

One. The church father Eusebius in A.D. 300.

He wrote, "Luke is by race an Antiochian and by profession a physician. He had been a companion of Paul for a long time and had more than a casual acquaintance with the rest of the apostles. In two books, inspired by God, namely the Gospel and the Acts, he left us examples of the art of healing the soul which he had learned from them."

Two. The Anti-Marcionite Prologue in about A.D. 180.

He says, "Luke, an Antiochian of Syria, a physician by profession, was a disciple of the apostles. At a later date he accompanied Paul, until Paul's martyrdom. He served the Lord blamelessly. Having neither wife nor children, at the age of eighty-four he fell asleep in Boeotia, full of the Holy Spirit. While there were already Gospels in existence - that according to Matthew written in Judea and that according to Mark in Italy - Luke, under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, composed his entire Gospel in the region of Achaia. In his prologue he makes very clear the fact that other Gospels had been written before his, and that it was necessary to present to believers converted from the Gentile world an accurate account of the plan of salvation, so that these people would not be led astray by Jewish fables, nor be deceived by heretical and futile fancies, and thus wander away from the truth. ... And afterwards this same Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles."

Three. The title of the Gospel.

Luke wrote to Theophilus, who was probably one of his highly respected friends, with the purpose of enlightening all earnest seekers and to strengthen the faith of new believers, especially from the Greek-speaking Roman world. His ultimate purpose was to teach the gospel to all nations. When the Gospels began to be copied, circulated and quoted in the writings of the church fathers, these people were not in the habit of mentioning the names of the writers of the Gospels, probably because they were well-known by everybody. About A.D. 125 the Four Gospels were assembled into one collection for use in the churches and they were given titles. The title "According to Luke" affirms that Christians knew that it was written by Luke.

POINT 2. THE SOURCES FOR WRITING THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

First. Luke made use of the Gospel of Mark.

Luke contains about one third of the material of the Gospel of Mark. In almost every case in which the Gospel of Luke is parallel to the Gospel of Mark, it is also parallel to the Gospel of Matthew. The exceptions are Luke 4:31-37; 4:42-44; 9:49-50 and 21:1-4. The papyrus rolls, which the evangelists used to write their Gospels on, had a limited size. It is quite possible that Luke intentionally left out certain sections from the Gospel of Mark in order to have more space left on his papyrus roll to write down the materials resulting from his own research. However it is especially notable how much new materials Luke included in his Gospel in relation to Mark. For example, Luke has the history of the birth of Jesus, and 24 parables that are not found in Mark!

Second. Luke probably made use of the notes of Matthew.

The church father Papias, who lived from A.D. 60-155 said, "Matthew arranged the 'logia' in the Hebrew language, and each translated them as he was able. This means that during the ministry of Jesus from A.D. 26-30, Matthew made notes about things that were said and done by the Lord Jesus Christ in the Aramaic language, which both Jesus and his disciples spoke. Later, the other evangelists (Gospel writers) translated and used these notes of Matthew to write their own Gospels. Especially the material found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke but absent from the Gospel of Mark may have been derived in part from these notes of Matthew.

Third. Luke made most use of his own research.

In Luke 1:1-4 Luke states that his Gospel is based on witnesses who saw and heard Jesus himself as well as on the testimony of those who served Jesus during his work on earth, that is, on the testimony of the apostles of Jesus. These people predominantly spoke Aramaic. Moreover, Luke states that he carefully investigated everything from the beginning. While Luke was in the vicinity of Jerusalem in A.D. 57-59, he could have spoken to Mary, the mother of Jesus, or to others of her close relatives and friends to whom she had entrusted the facts with regard to Christ's conception and birth. Joanna, the wife of Chuza, the manager of the household of Herod (Lk 8:2-3), could have given Luke information with regard to Herod (Lk 24:10). Luke could also have gathered information from Paul, who probably was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin (Act 26:10) and who was definitely in touch with the early disciples of Jesus, because he persecuted them (Acts 9:1). Philip, the evangelist, could have informed him with regard to the events in Samaria (Act 21:8), James could have informed him about the family life of Jesus and the events around Pentecost, etc. (Acts 21:18). Mark could have given him a copy of his Gospel to use (Philem 24). Luke must have made use of written sources, namely of the Hebrew and Greek Old Testament and possibly of other Aramaic documents that spoke about Jesus. This explains the Semitic style of some parts of his Gospel, for example Luke chapters 1-2.

Fourth. Luke was above all inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit.

Each of the four evangelists (Gospel writers) proclaimed and wrote the same message to the world, even though they did this, each with a somewhat different purpose and in a different style, and each endowed with a different personality. Each made use of somewhat different sources: Matthew made notes of Jesus' works and words during his life on earth. Mark made use of the preaching and teaching of the apostle Peter. Luke made use of many witnesses and already existing documents. But whatever sources they used, each Gospel is from beginning to end inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit. 2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correction and training in righteousness." That is also why the Gospels have never lost their power to attract, influence and change people from every culture in the world and for so many centuries long!

POINT 3. THE DATE OF WRITING THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

In Luke 19:41-44 and 21:20 Jesus predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. This actually happened in A.D. 70 by the Roman general Titus. Thus Luke and Acts must have been written before A.D. 70. Because the book of Acts ends with Paul's first imprisonment in Rome in A.D. 61, it was probably written soon after that date. In the summer of A.D. 64, a great fire destroyed three quarters of Rome. The fire was probably caused by the cruel Caesar of Rome called Nero. In order to divert attention from himself, he blamed the Christians. A great persecution against the Christians began in which they were burned publicly on stakes or thrown before wild beasts in the arena. But because the book of Acts still speaks positively of the Roman government everywhere, the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts must have been written before A.D. 64. The book of Acts was probably written in A.D. 63 and the Gospel of Luke was written not long before that during A.D. 62-63.

POINT 4. THE PLACE OF WRITING THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

The Anti-Marcionite Prologue states that Luke wrote his books in the region of Achaia, probably because it wanted to stress that Luke was a Greek, completely at home in the Greek world and writing his Gospel for the entire Greek speaking world of his day. Although Luke probably made a lot of research for his Gospel and Acts and wrote his preliminary notes in Jerusalem, Caesarea, Asia Minor and Achaia, it is most probable that he wrote his final books in Rome. We therefore conclude that Luke wrote his Gospel during A.D. 62-63 in Rome.

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. During the next week, read through Luke chapters 11-15.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and build Christ's Church" and Internet on www.dota.net

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".