

An Aerial View of the New Testament



Timeline of NT History

- 6-5 BC – Birth of Christ
- 26 AD – Beginning of Jesus' ministry (summer baptism)
- 30 AD
 - April – Crucifixion & Resurrection
 - May – Ascension (40 days after resurrection; Acts 1:3)
 - May – Pentecost (50 days after Feast of Passover)
- ca. 32-33 AD – Conversion of Paul
- 47-48 AD – 1st Missionary Journey
- 49 AD – Jerusalem Council
- 49-52 AD – 2nd Missionary Journey (including 18 months in Corinth)
- 52-57 AD – 3rd Missionary Journey (including almost 3 years in Ephesus)
- 57 AD – Sail for Jerusalem (April)
- 57-59 AD – Paul in custody at Caesarea
- 60-62 AD – Paul's 1st Roman imprisonment
- 65-67 AD – Paul's 2nd Roman imprisonment
- 67 AD – Paul's death
- 70 AD – Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus
- ca. 90-95 AD – John the Apostle dies

The Author—Luke

• The External Evidence

- Irenaeus of Asia Minor and Gaul (c. A.D. 180): names Luke as author of the third Gospel and Acts.
- The Muratorian Fragment (c. A.D. 170; the earliest surviving list of New Testament books): "The Acts of all the Apostles were written in one volume. Luke compiled for 'most excellent Theophilus' what things were done in detail in his presence, as he plainly shows by omitting both the death of Peter and also the departure of Paul from the city, when he departed for Spain."
- Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D. 155-215): "As Luke in the Acts of the Apostles relates that Paul said, 'Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.'"
- Tertullian of Carthage (c. A.D. 150-222): "In the self-same commentary of Luke the *third* hour is demonstrated as an hour of prayer, about which hour it was that they who received the initiatory gift of the Holy Spirit were held for drunkards."

The Author—Luke

• The Internal Evidence

- The "we" sections (16:10-17; 20:5--21:18; 27:1--28:16)
 - The author was one of Paul's companions on his journeys.
 - The rest of the book was written by the writer of the "we" sections-- same vocabulary and style.
 - The writer of Acts and the third gospel are the same. The testimony of the early church was unanimous in assigning the third gospel to Luke.
 - The final "we" section includes Paul's imprisonment in Rome (ch. 28). From Rome Paul wrote Philemon and Colossians. Luke is mentioned in both these letters as a current companion (Philemon 23-24; Col. 4:10-17). In fact, all of Paul's traveling companions can be ruled out except Luke and Titus. There is no internal or external evidence for Titus but there is strong evidence for Luke.
- Acts is obviously a continuation of the book of Luke (cf., Luke 24 and Acts 1).
- Both Luke and Acts are addressed to Theophilus.
- The medical language of Luke/Acts may confirm that Luke was the writer (cf., Col. 4:14).

A Biographical Sketch

- "Luke" (Gr., *Loukas*) is probably an abbreviation of *Loukanos*.
- He was a Gentile.
 - In Colossians 4:11-14 Paul contrasts Luke, Epaphras, and Demas with those who are "from the circumcision" (i.e., Jews).
 - He was well-educated in Greek culture and language.
- His hometown was Syrian Antioch.
- Luke joined Paul in Troas on his second missionary journey and stayed in Philippi until Paul came through on his third journey.

A Biographical Sketch

- He was a physician by profession (Col. 4:14).
- There were three educational centers in the first century.
 - Athens, Alexandria, and Tarsus.
 - Possible that Luke and Paul met while Luke was attending university there.
- Paul's only companion during his second imprisonment (2 Tim. 4:11).
- A Latin writer: Luke was unmarried and died at the age of 74.

The Date of Writing: 60-62 AD

- The events of the book of Acts do not go beyond 62 AD.
 - No hint of Nero's persecution (64-68 AD) or Paul's death (c. 66-68 AD).
- Roman officials in Acts are tolerant toward Christianity--an attitude that dramatically changed with the beginning of Neronian persecution.
- Luke doesn't mention the death of James, the brother of the Lord (d. 62 AD).
- Luke doesn't refer to Paul's epistles.
- Acts is silent about the further ministry of Paul (cf. 2 Tim. 4:11).
- **The Date of the Book's Events: 30–62 AD**

The Recipient--Theophilus

- A common Jewish and Gentile name
- Means "God-lover" or "loved of God"
- A Gentile living some distance from Palestine (Acts 1:12)
- His title, "most excellent" (Luke 1:3)
 - Can be a term of respect
 - Likely indicates that he held a high government position
 - Cf. Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25
- Already a Christian
 - Already thoroughly taught about Christ's life (lit., "catechized," Luke 1:4).
- Possibly Luke's patron
- Intended to be circulated to other Christians

Outlines

- **By Main Characters:**
 - I. Peter (1-12)
 - II. Paul (13-28)
- **By Acts 1:8:**
 - I. Jerusalem (1-7)
 - II. Judea and Samaria (8-12)
 - III. The Remotest Part of the Earth (13-28)

Outlines

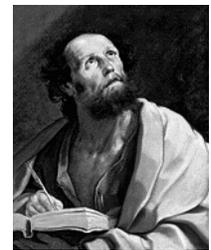
- **By a series of progress reports**
 - **2:47** - praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.
 - **6:7** - The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.
 - **9:31** - So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.
 - **12:24** - But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied.
 - **16:5** - So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily.
 - **19:20** - So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.
 - **28:30-31** - And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.
- Each represents about 5 years of early church history.

The Purposes of the Book

- **The Primary Purpose of Luke (Luke 1:1-4)**
 - Four successive stages (Luke 1:1-4):
 - (1) The Historical Events: "the things accomplished among us" (Luke 1:1)
 - (2) Passed down by Contemporary, Oral, Eyewitness Accounts – primarily the Apostles: "they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the Word" (Luke 1:2)
 - (3) Luke's Research and Investigation: "having investigated everything carefully from the beginning" (Luke 1:3a)
 - (4) Luke's Writing: "it seemed fitting for me as well...to write it out for you in consecutive order" (Luke 1:3b)

The Purposes of the Book

- Stated Purpose of Luke (v. 4): "that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught."
- Paraphrase: "That you may know with complete certainty that what you have been orally taught has an impregnable historical foundation."



The Purposes of the Book

- Implied Purpose of Acts
 - "That you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught."
 - The continuing work of Christ in the Person of the Holy Spirit
 - Acts 1:1 – "the first account [Luke's gospel] I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day when He was taken up."

The Purposes of the Book

- Historical themes
 - The spread of the gospel and the growth of the church.
 - The historical setting for Paul and his letters.
 - Acts furnishes the background for ten of the epistles: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians.

The Purposes of the Book

- Secondary Purposes
 - Apologetic
 - A defense against pagan religion: Christianity is true; paganism is false (14:15-18; 17:22-31).
 - A defense against Judaism: Christianity is the fulfillment of true Judaism (7:2-52; Paul's speeches, 21:39--28:28).
 - A defense against political accusations: Christianity is innocent of any offense against Roman law (response of Roman officials, chapters 17-28).
 - A defense against Gentile evangelization: Christianity is for Gentiles as well as Jews (e.g., 10:1--11:26).
 - Missionary (1:8; 28:31)

Preparation (1:1-26)

- The post-resurrection ministry of Christ (1:1-8)
 - Building the Foundation of the Church: the Apostles (2-5; cf., Eph. 2:19-22)
 - Chose them
 - Proved His resurrection to them
 - Commissioned them
 - Taught them
 - Promised them the Spirit

Preparation (1:1-26)

- Establishing the mission of the Church: Witnesses (6-8)
 - The disciples' misunderstanding (6)
 - Political kingdom--"restore"
 - National kingdom--"to Israel"
 - Immediate kingdom--"at this time"
 - Christ's correction
 - Acknowledges future kingdom for Israel (7)
 - Explains current kingdom manifestation (8)
 - Spiritual--"Holy Spirit"
 - International--"Remotest part of earth"
 - Gradual--starts with 120 in Jerusalem and spreads; cf. parable of the leaven in Matt. 13.

Preparation (1:1-26)

- Ascension (1:9-11)
- Waiting in the Upper Room (1:12-26)
 - Those present (13)
 - The eleven apostles
 - Certain women
 - Jesus' mother, Mary
 - Jesus' brothers
 - James, Joseph, Judas (Jude), & Simon
 - Their activity (14-26)
 - Praying continually (14)
 - Replacing Judas (15-26)

Replacing Judas

- Necessary: the Scripture had foretold it.
 - Psalms of David: Ps. 69:25; 109:8
- Requirements for the replacement:
 - 1) witness of Jesus from His baptism until His ascension
 - 2) a witness of His resurrection.
- Two were qualified: Joseph & Matthias

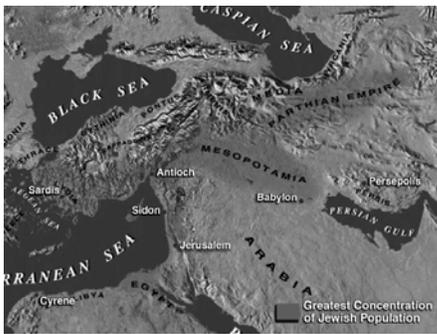


Witnesses in Jerusalem (2:1—7:60)

- Covers a period of 2-3 years.
- Roughly from Ascension in May of 30 AD to the conversion of Saul in 32-33 AD.



The Diaspora in Jerusalem



Pentecost

- 2:1-4 – the Descent of the Spirit
 - Three phenomenon
 - 1) A noise like a rushing wind filled the house
 - 2) Tongues resembling fire rested on each one
 - Fire often symbolizes God's presence.
 - Tongues, symbolic of speech and communication.
 - 3) Speaking in Tongues
 - Two events related to the Holy Spirit happened to them at this moment.
 - 1) Baptized with the Spirit (1:5)
 - 2) Filled with the Spirit (2:4)

Baptism vs. Filling

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism of the Spirit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Initiatory (1 Cor. 12:13) – Once (Acts 11:16-17) – Connected to salvation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filling of the Spirit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – After conversion (Eph. 5:18) – Ongoing (Eph. 5:18; cf. Acts 4:8, 31) – Connected to Sanctification (Eph. 5:19ff) |
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Speaking in Tongues

- The 1st occurrence
- The pattern
- "Other tongues" (2:4)
 - Greek, *glossa*
 - 1) The fleshy instrument in the mouth used in the articulation of speech
 - 2) A language known by ordinary people.
 - Cf. 2:6, 8, 11
- Why tongues?
 - 1) The Diaspora (2:5, 8-11)
 - 2) Miraculous confirmation of the Apostles' message
 - Cf. 2 Cor. 12:12 - The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.
- In Acts, when tongues 1) an apostle is always present and 2) the Holy Spirit is introduced for the 1st time.

Why not tongues today?

- Possible today – but must reflect the pattern here.
- Not the norm
- Why?
 - 1) Confirmation for the Apostolic period
 - 2 Cor. 12:12
 - Heb. 2:3-4
 - 2) Decline even during the apostolic period
 - Acts 2:4 – within 10 days of the ascension
 - Acts 10:46 – before 44 AD
 - Acts 19:6 – the early 50's AD
 - 1 Corinthians – written about 55-56 AD
 - The 4th inspired letter (following Galatians and 1 & 2 Thessalonians)
 - 9 other inspired letters after 1 Corinthians to 6 different churches
 - Never a mention of tongues again.
 - 3) The Testimony of Church History

Peter's Explanation

- 2:14-21
- Joel 2:28-32 – “the last days”
 - started with the 1st Advent
 - will end with the 2nd Advent
- Acts 2:17-18
 - fulfilled at Pentecost
 - at the beginning of the last days
- Acts 2:19-20
 - fulfilled at The Day of the Lord
 - at the end of the last days



Peter's Testimony to Christ

- 2:22-36
 - Jesus' life (2:22)
 - God performed miracles and wonders and signs through Him.
 - Jesus' death (2:23)
 - God delivered Him to death.
 - Jesus' resurrection (2:24-32)
 - God raised Him.
 - Jesus' exaltation (2:33-36)
 - Ps. 110:1
 - 2:36 – Conclusion: Jesus is both Messiah and Lord.

Peter's Invitation (2:38)

- A call to repentance
 - Cf. 3:19; 5:31; 17:30
 - Cf. the Great Commission's message
 - Luke 24:47 –repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Not Baptismal Regeneration!

- 1) Ignores immediate context of Acts
 - 3:19 - "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.
 - 10:44-48 – Cornelius is only baptized after they had the Spirit (salvation).
 - Acts 16:30-31 - after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."
- 2) Analogy of Scripture
 - Hermeneutical principle that no passage, correctly interpreted will contradict the rest of Scripture.
 - Many passages teach that salvation is by faith alone.
- 3) Preposition (*eis* translated as *for*) can mean "because of" not just "for the purpose of"
 - E.g., Matt. 12:41 - "The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at [eis, because of] the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

The First Christian Church! (2:41-47)

- A redeemed, identifiable membership (2:41)
- Clear priorities (2:42-47) – “continually devoting themselves”
 - 1) Instruction – “apostles' teaching” (42)
 - 2) Fellowship – “koinonia” (42, 46)
 - 3) Worship at The Lord's Table – “breaking of bread” (42, 46)
 - 4) Prayer – (42)
- 2:47 – 1st progress report: “praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.”