

**[Sunday, January 29, 2017] The Luke Series, Luke chapter 1, verses 1-4 – Craig Thurman**

**Introduction to the Book of Luke**

Who is the Writer:

Luke (Col.4.14), aka Lucus (Phile v.24), and Lucias (Ro.16.21).

Luke wrote the book, *The Gospel According to Luke*, which is the third gospel in the series of four. This book constitutes one of the three synoptic gospels and apocalyptic gospels because its material is so closely associated with the gospels of Matthew and Mark. Luke is also the writer of the fifth book which we have in the New Testament portion of our Bible, called *The Acts of the Apostles*.

Luke was a physician, Gr. *ἰάτρος*. The verb *ἰάομαι*, is translated and means *to heal* and *to make whole*. Paul, the apostle calls Luke the *beloved* physician. (Col. 4.14) That he was a physician may account for the fact that it was he that the Lord used to describe the notable grief of our Lord Jesus as He prayed in the shadow of the sufferings that lay before Him.

*Lu 22:44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

He is the one who refers to the *great* fever of Peter's sick mother-in-law. He seems to be peculiarly keen to issues related to the physical body.

The name, Luke, appears to be a Gentile name and for this reason we assume that he was a gentile. There is no instance recorded in Scripture where he is ever mentioned as entering with Paul into any synagogue, and he is not present with the apostle Paul when he had gone into the Temple and was arrested. (Acts 21.18; 27.1)

Luke is as a silent observer of the things that take place in the book of Acts. If it weren't for the pronouns that he employed in his writing one would never have detected his presence. He very likely joined with the apostle Paul during his second missionary endeavor, probably joining him at Troas,

just before crossing over the sea to Neapolis. (cf. Acts 16.8-10) Of him we know so little, but he must have recently come to the faith of Christ when Paul came preaching about this place. Coming shortly thereafter to Philippi there Paul and Silas were arrested. Luke appears to be separated from them until Paul is preparing to return back into Asia. (Acts 20.5) Then he accompanies Paul back to Jerusalem, but is separated until after Paul makes his appeal to Caesar from Caesarea. Then Luke will accompany Paul to Rome. (cf. Acts 27.1). Luke remains Paul's faithful minister to the end.

*2Ti 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.*

Luke never laid eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ. He never saw the Him work a miracle or heard him teach. (cf. J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, Luke*, p.3) His whole life, like ours, was a life of faith. He believed, and therefore he did.

What William Tyndale (1492-1536 A.D.) was to the English-speaking people of the world Luke was to the Greek-speaking Gentile world. Not that he translated from one language and into another as Tyndale did. But he was so monumentally used of the Lord for such an original task as bringing the Word of God into the language of the people of his day.

#### When & Where:

It is unknown to us when and where the Gospel According to Luke was written.

#### To Whom is the Book Written:

Luke wrote both of his books to a man named Theophilus. (Lk.1.3; Acts 1.1) The name Theophilus means 'a lover of God.' The name is a Greek name. The fact that Luke wrote to this man and addressed him as *most excellent*, tells us that he was a man of authority and a Roman.

#### The Purpose for This Gospel:

To record in order those things of which he had an accurate understanding concerning the life of Jesus Christ, so that Theophilus, and therefore all

Christians 'might know the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed.' *ibid.* (cf. Lk.1.3, 4)

To say it another way, the books of Luke and Acts give to Theophilus, and especially the believing Gentile, a clear understanding that Jesus is the Christ of God and Savior of the world, and also what the people of God would do through Christ until He comes again from glory.

Original to the book of Luke:

The first two chapters give us a history of the beginning of the lives of both John the Baptist and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The conversions of Zacchaeus and the thief on the cross – the Emmaus walk – the Good Samaritan – the Rich man and Lazarus, and the Prodigal Son – the parable of the lost coin – the unjust judge and the widow – the parable of the pounds – the prayers of the Pharisee and the publican – the interview with Simon as they sat at dinner concerning the woman that was a sinner – Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus – the commissioning of the seventy – the angel strengthening our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane.

Luke provides more details of the post-resurrection meetings of our Lord with the disciples. Of the glorious bodily ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ Mark gives us one verse. (Mk.16.19) Both books of Luke, the gospel and Acts cite two verses each. (Lk.24.50, 51; Acts 1.9, 10)

The Historical Setting

'The Roman power, the fourth of the great world empires described and predicted by Daniel, (ii. and vii.,) had now reached its summit.

..

Herod, the son of Antipater, after the death of Caesar, by various means ingratiated himself with the authorities at Rome, and was appointed king over a territory embracing substantially the whole of Palestine. His recognition by the people was achieved only after a fierce war and much bloodshed. He was a man of powerful character, and vast energy and enterprise were displayed by him in the establishment of his government and the maintenance of his authority; but he was one of the most vindictive, cruel and violently wicked of princes. He slew his own sons out

of jealousy, and put to death his beautiful, virtuous and accomplished wife Mariamne for the same cause. We see this character exemplified in his order for the slaughter of all the children in Bethlehem that he might make sure of the infant Jesus, the predicted and feared “King of the Jews.”

The nation, however, was in a fairly prosperous condition. Herod built and beautified many cities, and almost reconstructed the Temple at Jerusalem. Almost for the first time for centuries the descendants of the Twelve Tribes occupied the whole of their ancient territory under a consolidated government, and it was the fullness of time for the advent of the Messiah.’  
*Outlines of Bible Study*, G. M. Steele, pp.81, 82

## Chapter 1

Vss.1-4, Introduction

ἐπεχείρησαν

**1 ¶ Forasmuch as many have taken in hand \*to set forth in order**

Considering that – subj.

verb

\*infin. as an object stating purpose

*Forasmuch as*, Ἐπειδήπερ, conj.; ἐπειδή KJV, *because, for, because forasmuch, after that* since + περ, adds force to the word to which it is joined; meaning *considering that, since indeed, since now* (Moulton),,

ἐπεχείρησαν, 3rd pl. aor. ind. of ἐπιχειρέω; ἐπί upon + χεῖρ hand; KJV, *Acts 9.29, went about; 19.13, took upon*: only Luke

*to set forth in order*, ἀνατάξασθαι, aor. **infin.** of ἀνατάσσομαι; ἀνά again, above, new, re- + τάσσομαι, to appoint, determine, ordain, set, addict; as in *to reposition*.

### **a declaration**

an account

*a declaration*, διήγησιν, acc. sing. of διήγησις; διηγέομαι, is to *show, to tell, and declare.*,

περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων  
**of those things which are most surely believed among us,**  
concerning matters, works fully borne  
about

*which are most surely believed, πεπληροφορημένων, gen. pl. part. perf. pass. of πληροφορέω, πλήρης adj. full + φορέω, to bear or wear; KJV, Ro.4.21, [when applied to Abraham] being fully persuaded; Ro.14.5, Let ... be fully persuaded; 2Ti.4.5, make full proof of; 2Ti.4.17, [when applied to the preaching of the gospel] might be fully known.*

*things, πραγμάτων, gen. pl. of πρᾶγμα; KJV, thing, a matter, work.*

There were many that had *taken in hand* to write of the things of Christ. It appears that the *many* is in reference to the apostles. They thought it good to write of the things of Christ.

It was their desire to record those things that they knew of their Savior. But these recollections alone, as good as they might be, are not what constitute the Word of God. So who wrote these Scriptures? Who was it that God ordained to give us the inerrant and whole sum of that Word which was to be revealed to the saint of God? Notice who these persons are. They are seven Jews and one Gentile. Of the seven four were apostles, two were brothers to our Lord through Mary, and the other was probably *that certain young man* of Mk.14.51. Respectively their names are Matthew, John, Peter, Paul, James, Jude, Mark, and Luke. Each man wrote *by* inspiration, and what they wrote *is* the inspired Word of God.

πασα γραφη θεοπνευστος  
**2Ti 3:16** All scripture is given by inspiration of God ...  
Every Scripture is God-breathed

**2Pe.1.15** Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.  
16 ¶ For we have not followed cunningly devised fables,

These aren't things that *men took up* to write of themselves.

*when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*

*17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

*18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

*19 ¶ We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

*20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private*

*private, ἰδίας, Ja.1.14, his own; 2Pe.1.20, private; 2Pe.2.16, his.*

*interpretation.*

*ἐπιλύσεως, gen. sing. of ἐπίλυσις; ἐπί upon + λύω, to loose; only this once; cf. ἐπιλύω, KJV Mk.4.34, expounded; Acts 19.39, shall be determined.*

As if to say, consider how it was for the prophets of old ...

*21 For the prophecy came not in old time **by the will of man**: but holy men of God **spake** as they were moved (or, brought, borne) by the Holy Ghost.*

*as they were moved along by, φερόμενοι, nom. pl. masc. part. pres. pass. of φέρω; cf. also acc. sing fem. part. pres. pass. φερομένην, KJV, 1Pe.1.13, for the grace that is to be brought (borne) unto you.*

This Word came from heaven to earth.

*Jas 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

*Ps.119.89 ¶ LAMED. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*

*is settled, נָצַב, Niphal (simple passive) part. sing. masc. of נָצַב; KJV, in Niphal, to stand, appoint, to set over.*

At what time does the Word of God cease to be the inspired Word of God? Some say that the Word of God was inspired in the *original autographs*. These men mean well, but what they are saying is that the moment those inspired words were received upon that very first parchment, for it to be copied onto another parchment or translated into another language that Word is no longer original or inspired.

*‘The English Bible does not contain the very words of inspiration, but only a recast of them into another tongue, beautiful, it is true, and , for the age, wonderful in its accuracy, yet far from perfect.’ A. B. Davidson, *Biblical and Literary Essays*, [1903], p.200.*

For this, men comfort themselves when they assume to add to or to remove from or alter that Word because the inspired Word of God no longer truly exists since we do not have the *original autographs* today. But that cannot possibly be true. The warnings against altering the Word of God in any way must be as true today as it was when it was first penned, regardless of the copying and all of the translations into the various tongues of men. The Word of God was delivered to us with the very understanding that it would be published into the four ‘corners’ of the earth.

*Ps 68:11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.*

That means that God’s Word will be copied and forwarded, translated again and again, into language after language, page after page, year after year so that the elect of the Lord will hear that same Word, believe that same

Word, obey that same Word, and cast their hope upon that same Word. The presumption of many to the contrary is that this cannot be accomplished without somehow altering the communication of God's Word. But the Word of God remains inspired in every language into which it might be translated. Read it again:

πασα γραφη                      θεοπνευστος                      και  
2Ti 3:16 All scripture [is given] by inspiration of God, and [is]  
[is]                      God-breathed

ωφελιμος  
*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in  
righteousness ...*

All Scripture *is*, not *was* by inspiration of *God-breathed*. If the Scripture does not continue to be the inspired Word of God then it is also no longer profitable. If it continues to be profitable the the whole person of the child of God, then it continues to be inspired. Either both continue or else both ceases.

When a Bible in the English language says the same thing that the Hebrew and the Greek languages say how can inspiration be any different for the one than for the other? Are we afraid that we might be called fanatics because we believe that God can do that which, humanly speaking, is impossible? Many will not say that the KJV of the Bible is inspired. But why isn't it? And if it isn't, then which is? Is it so that we no longer have the inspired Word of God today? Do we believe that? What a dreadful thought!

Can I claim inspiration for every version of the Bible. No, I cannot. Why? It is because they contradict the faithful, historical transmission of the Scriptures. These cannot represent an historical, faithful transmission of the Scriptures when they omit portions, change parts, add to, and create instances of contradiction within Holy Writ. Since there has been a faithful transmission of the Word of God from document to document, and from language to language then there are some versions throughout history that have retained that holy state of the inspired Word of God. There must be



that message which is as original as the day when our Lord and the apostles spake them. Do we think that this is not so? The English version of the Bible, called the Authorized Version or the KJV Bible is a witness to the faithfulness of God, or to the *providential preservation* of Scripture. There has been a faithful, historical transmission of God's Word to this day. That Word has been preserved by the work of the Sovereign God through the true churches of Jesus Christ.

These churches are the only ones committed with its care.

*Jo.17.8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them ...*

...

*17:14 I have given them thy word ...*

*1Ti 3:15 ... the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

His Word would be preserved in the death to His people.

*Ps.19.6 The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.*

*7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.*

*Ps 100:5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.*

*Ps 119:160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.*

Ἐπειδήπερ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων

καθὼς οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς  
**2 Even as** **they delivered them unto us,** <sup>2</sup>**which from the beginning**  
expressing 'how' & subj.- verb- <sup>1</sup>obj. indir. obj. coordinate

answering to the verb  
in verse 1, *took in hand*

<sup>1</sup>that is their *declarations* or *accounts*  
<sup>2</sup>describes who *they* are. Could read *Those*  
instead of *which* ...

ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, **referring to the beginning of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Must means particularly the apostles' testimony was delivered to those gospel writers.

***were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;***

*eyewitnesses*, αὐτόπται, nom. pl. of αὐτόπτης, αὐτό + ὄψομαι;  
Gr. αὐτοψία, from which comes the English word *autopsy*, meaning  
the act of seeing with one's own eyes.

ministers, ὑπηρεταί, root ὑπηρέτης; these are servants who serve in  
an official capacity to another that is in authority; KJV, *officers (11),  
minister (5), servant (4).*

This is a reference to the apostles of Christ whose service was very  
important for the saints of God.

*Jn.15.26 ¶ But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto  
you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from  
the Father, he shall testify of me:*

***27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me  
from the beginning.***

*1Jo 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard,  
which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and  
our hands have handled, of the Word of life;*

*2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear  
witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the  
Father, and was manifested unto us;)*

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

2 καθώς παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρεταὶ γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου

**3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things**  
pleased

*seemed good*, ἔδοξεν, 3ps. aor. ind. of δοκέω; this verb form is only used by Luke (Lk.1.3; Acts 15.22, 25, 28, 34: pleased (2), seemed good (2)).

*It* referring to this accounting of the facts which he has been able to fully ascertain

*having had ... understanding*, παρηκολουθηκότι, dat. sing. masc. part. perf. of παρακολουθέω, παρά near, before, beside + ἀκολουθέω, to follow, reach; KJV, *shall follow, hast attained; hast fully known*.

*perfect*, ἀκριβῶς, adv. of ἀκριβής; KJV, *diligently, perfect, circumspectly, perfectly*.

ἄνωθεν

**from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,**

*very* gives the best sense of                      successively

ἄνωθεν because he gets back  
to the very beginning that no  
other gospel writer reports.

ἄνωθεν, Mt.27.51; Mk.15.38, *the top to the bottom*; Lk.1.3, *of all things from the very first*; Jn.3.3, 7, *a man be born again*; Jn.3.31, *that cometh from above*; Jn.19.11, *except it were given thee from above*; 19.23, *woven from the top throughout*; Acts 26.5, *knew me from the*

*beginning; Gal.4.9, ye desire again to be in bondage; Ja.1.17, every perfect gift is from above; 3.15, descendeth not from above; 3.17, the wisdom that is from above is.*

Some would say that ἄνωθεν refers to the inspiration that Luke received *from above*. While that is true, ἄνωθεν references the things of which he has had perfect understanding, which would be *from the start*. Luke's account goes to the very beginning, to the birth of John the Baptist. No other gospel account starts at this place.

*in order, καθεξῆς, adv.; κατά as, according to, or down + ἐξῆς, after, following; as [it comes] succession or consecutive seems to be the proper sense, and not only meaning proper segments of ordered thoughts. All of the disjointed information that others had thought to record, this is brought into good order.*

Other than the fact that Luke addresses Theophilus by use of the Greek, κράτιστε, which is translated *most excellent*, we know nothing of him. Claudius Lysias, chief captain charged with keeping his prisoner, Paul, safe, writes a letter to *most excellent*, κρατίστῳ, governor (leader, ἡγέομαι) Felix. (Acts 23.26) Paul addresses both Felix and Festus as *most noble* (κράτιστε). (Acts 24.3; 26.25)

3 ἔδοξεν κάμοι παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι κράτιστε Θεόφιλε

#### **4 That thou mightest know the certainty**

un-trippability, unassailability

*mightest know, ἐπιγνώσκω, 2ps. aor. subj. act. of ἐπιγινώσκω; ἐπί upon + γινώσκω, to know; a full knowledge.*

*certainty, ἀσφάλειαν, acc. sing. of ἀσφάλεια; ἀ the privative or negative particle + σφάλεια, σφάλλομαι, LXX, to be tripped up or overcome; in two other places, Acts 5.23; 1Thes.5.3, safety; ἀσφαλῆς, Acts 21.34, could not know the certainty; 22.30, he would have known the certainty; 25.26, of whom I have no certain*

thing; *Phl.3.1*, not grievous, but for you it is *safe*; *He.6.19*, the soul, both *sure* and *stedfast*.

περὶ

***of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.***

*thou hast been instructed*, κατηχήθης, 2ps. aor. ind. pass. of κατηχέω; κατα as, according to, down + ἤχέω, KJV, *roaring, sounding*; this is the sounding down of the truth of God's Word; from this we have the English word *catechize*.

Theophilus knows, but this written so that he might have a full knowledge of the *certainty* (so that you are not tripped up or overcome by false information) in that which you have been instructed in concerning Jesus Christ.

4 ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν

And so we have the anonymous writer's purpose for giving this account, and to whom specifically it is given.

*4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.*

Meaning that we might have a full knowledge of this thorough accounting of those things which concern our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowledge is most secured to our minds when we have at its foundation the Word of God. Otherwise knowledge, as good and true as it might be, as long as we haven't that record of God's Word at its foundation is yet unsecured. I/We must have a thus saith the Lord. I/We must be able to put our fingers on the passage again and again. By that we are assured, confirmed in the truth of the Word of God. Without it, while we might be personally immovable, we cannot expect all of us to be so secured together, in union until we have that *written record*. That is what the written record does for all of the people of god everywhere. Let us always be a people of the Book.