

Gospel of Luke

Synoptic Gospels
Lim Kar Yong

Structure of Luke

- 1:1-4 – Prologue
- 1:5-2:52 – Birth Narratives
 - Two pregnancies predicted (1:5-56)
 - Two sons born (1:57-2:52)
- 3:1-4:13 – Preparation of Jesus' Ministry
 - Preparation by John the Baptist (3:1-20)
 - Preparation by Jesus' baptism (3:21-22)
 - Preparation by Jesus' pedigree (3:23-38)
 - Preparation by Jesus' temptation (4:1-13)

Structure of Luke

- 4:14-9:50 – Jesus' Ministry in Galilee
 - A new base of ministry (4:14-44)
 - Authentication of Jesus' ministry (5:1-6:16)
 - Teaching of Jesus on the plain (6:17-49)
 - Scope and nature of Jesus' ministry (7:1-8:18)
 - Identity of Jesus progressively revealed (8:19-9:50)

Structure of Luke

- 9:51-19:48 – Travel Narrative: On the Way to Jerusalem
 - Instruction in discipleship in light of Jesus' mission (9:51-11:13)
 - First cycle: confrontation with Pharisees (11:14-54)
 - Instruction in discipleship in light of the religious leaders' rejection (12:1-13:35)

Structure of Luke

- 9:51-19:48 – Travel Narrative: On the Way to Jerusalem
 - Second cycle: confrontation with the Pharisees (14:1-24)
 - Instruction in discipleship in light of Jesus' impending death (14:25-19:27)

Structure of Luke

- 20:1-21:38 – Teaching in the Temple
 - Triumphal entry (19:28-44)
 - Opposition in the temple (19:45-21:38)
- 22:1-24:53 – Passion, Death & Resurrection
 - Preparation for death (22:1-53)
 - Death of Jesus (22:54-23:56)
 - Resurrection of Jesus (24:1-53)

Luke's Prologue

- See Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-2
- Cf. Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.1; 2.1

Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.1

I SUPPOSE that by my books of the Antiquity of the Jews, most excellent Epaphroditus, have made it evident to those who peruse them, that our Jewish nation is of very great antiquity, and had a distinct subsistence of its own originally; as also, I have therein declared how we came to inhabit this country wherein we now live.....

Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.1

.....However, since I observe a considerable number of people giving ear to the reproaches that are laid against us by those who bear ill-will to us, and will not believe what I have written concerning the antiquity of our nation, while they take it for a plain sign that our nation is of a late date, because they are not so much as vouchsafed a bare mention by the most famous historiographers among the Grecians.

Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.1

I therefore have thought myself under an obligation to write somewhat briefly about these subjects, in order to convict those that reproach us of spite and voluntary falsehood, and to correct the ignorance of others, and withal to instruct all those who are desirous of knowing the truth of what great antiquity we really are.

Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.1

As for the witnesses whom I shall produce for the proof of what I say, they shall be such as are esteemed to be of the greatest reputation for truth, and the most skillful in the knowledge of all antiquity by the Greeks themselves. I will also show, that those who have written so reproachfully and falsely about us are to be convicted by what they have written themselves to the contrary.

Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.1

I shall also endeavor to give an account of the reasons why it hath so happened, that there have not been a great number of Greeks who have made mention of our nation in their histories. I will, however, bring those Grecians to light who have not omitted such our history, for the sake of those that either do not know them, or pretend not to know them already.

Josephus, *Against Apion*, 2.1

IN the former book, most honored Epaphroditus, I have demonstrated our antiquity, and confirmed the truth of what I have said, from the writings of the Phoenicians, and Chaldeans, and Egyptians. I have, moreover, produced many of the Grecian writers as witnesses thereto. I have also made a refutation of Manetho and Cheremon, and of certain others of our enemies.

Josephus, *Against Apion*, 2.1

I shall now therefore begin a confutation of the remaining authors who have written any thing against us....

Destination

- Theophilis
 - A person of high rank “most excellent” – a term used elsewhere in reference to Felix and Festus (Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25)
 - Received previous instruction regarding Christian faith
 - Further instruction now given in Luke’s gospel

Purpose

- Luke 1:1-4
- Apologetic function
 - Claims of eyewitness traditions
 - Thorough investigation of the story of Jesus

Birth Narratives

Matthew	Luke
Conceived of a virgin (1:18-25)	Birth of John the Baptist predicted (1:5-25)
Born in Bethlehem (2:1-12)	Birth of Jesus predicted (1:26-38)
Out of Egypt (2:13-15)	The two mothers visit (1:39-56)
Wailing in Ramah (2:16-18)	Birth of John the Baptist (1:57-80)
Called a Nazarene (2:19-23)	Birth of Jesus (2:1-40)
	Jesus in the temple at 12 (2:41-52)

Promises and Fulfillment in Luke 1-2

Character	Promise	Fulfillment	Response
Zechariah	Wife would bear a son	John the Baptist	Benedictus
Mary	Would conceive a son	Jesus	Magnificat
Simeon	Would see Messiah	Encountered Jesus in temple	Nunc Dimittis

Emphasis on the Poor, Outcasts and Marginalised

Passage	Incident
2:8-20	Announcement of the birth of Messiah to the shepherds
4:18-21	Jesus in synagogue reading Isaiah 61:1-2
5:12-16	Healing the man with leprosy
5:29-32	Eating with tax collectors at a dinner hosted by Matthew
7:1-10	Healing of the Centurion's servant
7:11-17	Raising the widow's son
7:34	Called "a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners."

Emphasis on the Poor, Outcasts and Marginalised

Passage	Incident
7:36-50	Anointed by a sinful woman
8:26-39	Healing of a demon-possessed man in the tombs
8:42-50	Healing of the woman with issue of blood
13:10-17	Healing of woman crippled by a spirit for 18 years
15:1-31	Eating with tax collectors and sinners
17:11-19	Healing 10 people with leprosy
18:35-43	Healing of blind beggar, Bartimaeus

Emphasis on the Poor, Outcasts and Marginalised

Passage	Incident
19:1-10	Encounter with Zaccheus, the chief tax collectors
21:1-14	Commending with widow's offering

Prayer in Luke – prayer and discipleship

Passage	Incident
10:2, 21-24	Prayer after the mission of the 70/72 – harvest is plentiful, but workers are few
11:1-4	The Lord's prayer – Lord, teach us how to pray, just as John taught his disciples
11:5-13	Parable of the persistent prayer
18:1-8	Parable of the persistent widow
21:36	Olivet Discourse – be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen

Prayer in the Life of Jesus in Luke

Passage	Incident
3:21	Jesus' baptism – "as he was praying..."
5:16	Routine prayer - "but Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."
6:12	Before choosing the 12 – "Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God"
9:18-27	Peter's confession – "Once when Jesus was praying in private"

Prayer in the Life of Jesus in Luke

Passage	Incident
9:28-36	The Transfiguration – "went up to a mountain to pray. As he was praying..."
22:32	Intercession for Peter – "But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail"
22:39-46	Gethsemane – "Pray that you will not fall into temptation. He withdrew...knelt down and prayed...And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly..."
23:46	On the cross – "Jesus called out in a loud voice"

Theology of Luke

1) God's plan

- Detailed discussion of God's plan.
- Luke 24:44-49 is the key text – divides Jesus' life into 3 parts with appeal to the fulfillment of Scripture:
 1. Christ must suffer
 2. Christ must be raised from the dead on the 3rd day
 3. Repentance for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem

Theology of Luke

1) God's plan

- See 1:1, 14-17, 31-35, 46-55, 68-79
- 2:9-14, 30-32, 34-35
- 4:16-30
- 13:31-35
- See also Acts 2:23; 4:27-28; 10:34-43; 13:32-39; 24:14-15; 26:12-23

Theology of Luke

1) God's plan

- Includes all nations
- See 2:34; 3:4-6; 4:25-27; 7:1-10; 10:25-37; 11:49-51; 13:7-9, 23-30; 14:16-24; 17:12-19; 19:41-44
- And this promise is available "today" – see the "today" passages:
 - 2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 13:32-33; 19:5, 9, 42; 23:42-43
- Jesus' mission statements: 4:18-19; 5:30-32; 10:16-20; 19:10. See also Acts 10:36-43

Theology of Luke

1) God's plan

- "It is necessary" statements
- 40x out of 101x NT uses of "it is necessary" occur in Luke-Acts
- Eg – see 2:49; 4:43; 9:22; 13:16; 17:25; 21:9; 22:37; 24:7; 24:43-47 → God is the "director"

Theology of Luke

2) Christology

- Jesus as Messiah-Servant-Prophet-Lord
- Saviour
- Son of David

Theology of Luke

3) Holy Spirit

- 1:15, 35, 41, 67; 2:25
- 3:15-18, 21-22; 4:16-18; 24:49
- Cf Acts 2:1-13; 2:14-21; 2:30-36; 10:44-47; 11:15-16; 15:8

Theology of Luke

4) Salvation & New Community

- Beneficiaries of Salvation – the gentiles, the poor, the outcasts, the marginalised, the women, the children, sick, demon-possessed and disabled
- This new community is all inclusive and know no boundaries

Jesus and the Lowly in Luke

Groups of People	Passages
Gentiles	2:10, 32; 4:25-27; 7:9; 10:30-37; 14:23; 17:16
Poor	1:46-55; 4:18; 6:20-23; 7:22; 10:21-22; 14:13, 21-24; 16:19-31; 21:1-4
Tax Collectors and Sinners	5:27-32; 7:28, 30, 34, 36-50; 15:1-2; 19:7
The Sick and disabled	4:31-41; 5:12-26; 6:6-11, 17-19; 7:1-17; 8:26-9:2; 9:37-43; 17:11-19; 18:35-43
Women	7:36-50; 8:1-3, 48; 10:38-42; 13:10-17; 24:1-12
Children	2:17, 27, 40; 9:46-48; 17:2; 18:15-17

Theology of Luke

4) Salvation & New Community

- Responses – Luke uses 3 terms: repent, turn and faith
- Repent – 5:31-32; 15:17-21; 24:47. See also 18:9-14; 19:1-10 – repentance resulted in actions
- Turn – 1:17; 17:4; 22:32. Appears more in Acts, eg 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18-20; 28:27.
- Faith – 5:20; 7:9; 7:47-50; 17:19; 18:42

Theology of Luke

4) Salvation & New Community

- Opponents to salvation
 - Human level → scribes, Pharisees and the Sadducees – the religious leadership of Israel.
 - Spiritual forces → power of evil; Satan. See 4:1-13, 33-37; 8:26-39; 9:1; 10:1-12, 18; 11:14-26; 22:3
- Response of Israel – tragic. Now is the time for the gentiles – 21:24. But Israel is not out of God's plan

Theology of Luke

5) Discipleship and Christian Living

- Total commitment, no higher priorities – 9:23, 57-62; 14:25-35
- Commitment to the lost – esp tax collectors and sinners
- Love for God and one's neighbour – 10:25-37; 10:38-42; 11:1-13
- Prayer

Theology of Luke

5) Discipleship and Christian Living

- Persistence in suffering – 8:13-15; 9:23; 18:8; 21:19. See also Acts
- Wealth and possession – 8:14; 12:13-21; 16:1-15, 19-31; 18:18-25
- High concentration of parables within the Travel Narrative that are only unique to Luke.

Think

- Why would Luke focus so much on the outcast, marginalized, poor, and those on the margins of the society in his letter to Theophilus?