

REV. D. THOMAS PORTER, PH.D.

3422 Fallview Court ♦ Land O' Lakes, FL 34639

DrTom@PorterHouse.info

813.962.5758^{Office} 813.728.5713^{Cell}

See more at <http://DThomasPorter.com/BibleStudies>

Monday, June 21, 2021

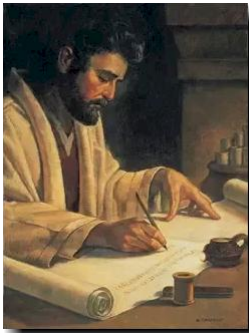
LESSON NOTES, LORD'S DAY, JUNE 27, 2021

LUKE: A SYSTEMIC LOOK INTO THE SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF YESHUA THE CHRIST

OVERVIEW

Rationale & Background

WHY STUDY LUKE



While Luke did not have the level of education we expect from today's "physicians" (see Colossians 4:14), he did seem to have a precise mind and a need for rationality. Hence, his gospel reflects systematic research (e.g., his interview with Miriam [aka "Mary"] after the Christ's resurrection (e.g., Luke 1:46ff). Luke is clearly an excellent historian.

Early texts by Christians support his authorship of what we call "Luke" and "Acts" (e.g., the Muratorian Canon, 170AD and the work of Irenaeus, circa 180AD). He was probably born Gentile, certainly well educated in Greek culture, and a companion to Paul at various times (e.g., Acts 16:10-17; i.e., "we") during and from Paul's second missionary journey to Paul's first Roman imprisonment. He appears to be a loyal partner as he remained with Paul after other folk had deserted Paul (see 2 Timothy 4:11).

Luke's gospel shares much with Matthew and Mark, but his record of the human birth of the Christ on earth as Jesus, the Good Samaritan, and other incidents make study of his gospel particularly rewarding. Luke is known for his emphasis on the work of Holy Spirit; family was a common venue for his description of the Christ's ministry. Women are particularly elevated in his gospel record. And, Luke had the temerity to assert that the good news was for more than traditional Hebrew descendants. In fact, some have argued his two volumes are a legal brief supporting the assertion that Christianity is not a new (and thus unprotected religion), but a brief showing Christianity is a fulfillment, expanded, and/or extension of what was known as Judaism then. Luke is worth your Bible study time.

A NOTE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

The success of any Bible study is entirely dependent upon three entities: you, your teacher and Holy Spirit. Therefore, He exhorts you to study—do your homework; encourage your teacher by prayer and active participation; most importantly, continually pray to Father God for Holy Spirit to guide us as we learn what He taught the writers of Scripture 1900+ years ago.

AUTHOR, DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING¹

RECIPIENT AND PURPOSE

The Gospel is specifically directed to Theophilus (1:3), whose name means "one who loves God" and almost certainly refers to a particular person rather than to lovers of God in general. The use of "most excellent" with the name further indicates an individual, and supports the idea he was a Roman official or at least of high position and wealth. He was possibly Luke's patron, responsible for seeing that the writings were copied and distributed. Such a dedication to the publisher was common at that time.

There is a case to be made, no pun intended, that Luke's two volumes were a legal brief explaining and defending this Saul/Paul from Tarsus. Theophilus is hypothesized to be a court or cultural official "looking into" the relative guilt/innocence of this very well educated, highly efficient purveyor of an allegedly "new" religion. Luke's purpose, according to this perspective, is to provide a brief showing just the opposite—Christianity is not "new" (and thus not protected by the state), but a further manifestation and fulfillment of an already accepted religion—Judaism.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

The two most commonly suggested periods for dating the Gospel of Luke are: (1) A.D. 59-63, and (2) the 70s or the 80s. The place of writing was probably Rome, though Achaia, Ephesus and Caesarea also have been suggested. The place to which it was sent would, of course, depend on the residence of Theophilus. By its detailed designations of places in Palestine, the Gospel seems to be intended for readers who were unfamiliar with that land. Antioch, Achaia and Ephesus are possible destinations.

STYLE

Luke had outstanding command of the Greek language. His vocabulary is extensive and rich, and his style at times approaches classical Greek (see the preface, 1:1-4), while at other times it is quite Semitic (1:5-2:52)—often like the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. His vocabulary reveals geographical and cultural sensitivity, in that it varies with the particular land or people being described. When Luke refers to Peter in a Jewish setting, he uses more Semitic language than when he refers to Paul (as opposed to Saul, his Jewish name) in a Hellenistic setting.

CHARACTERISTICS

Luke presents the works and teachings of Jesus especially important to understand the way of salvation. Its scope is complete from the birth of the Christ as Jesus of Nazareth to Christ's ascensions (Luke 24:50ff & Acts 1:4-11); its arrangement is orderly; and, it appeals to both Jews and Gentiles. The writing is characterized by literary excellence, historical detail and warm, sensitive understanding of Yeshua and of those around Him. Luke's dominant themes include:

- (1) Emphasis on prayer, especially Jesus' praying before important occasions (see 3:21).
- (2) Joy at the announcement of the gospel or "good news" (see 1:14).
- (3) Special concern for the role of women. Luke's gospel establishes Miriam (Mary) as one of the authors of Scripture (Luke 1:46ff).
- (4) Special interest in the poor: for example, Luke's version of the "blessed are the poor" deals with the fiscally poor, not the "poor in spirit" of Matthew's rendition.
- (5) Concern for sinners (Jesus was a friend to those deep in sin).
- (6) Stress on the family circle (Jesus' activity included men, women and children, home settings are common).
- (7) Repeated use of the title "Son of Man" (e.g., 19:10).
- (8) Emphasis on the work of Holy Spirit (see 4:1); in fact a better title for the traditional title, "Acts of the Apostles," might reasonably be "Acts of Holy Spirit."

¹Adapted, corrected and revised by D. Thomas Porter from Compton's Interactive NIV, © 1996.

Luke 20:45-47. *Trusting professors/teachers is risky*. Jesus the Christ has just explained the nature of the resurrection, and its reality, to folk. Then He challenged the listeners' understanding of "David's descendant," to wit, the Messiah. Quoting David's Psalm, He makes it clear that the Messiah is not the "son" of David, but David's sovereign. False teaching had led believers down a rather faulty, rock strewn path.

LUKE 20:45-47

While all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴⁶"Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁷They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely."



The Christ then offers a summarizing warning about "teachers of the Law." We teachers are prone to love parading around in our academic gowns—both actual and symbolic. We love the respect presumably offered to our high and mighty position as "expert." We get to sit in the best seats, whether at church or at a banquet. We show off with lengthy lectures, prayers, 12 page single spaced handouts, and other pontifications. We expect people to come to us, rather than reaching out. After all, if they really want to know about God, they will come to us—the experts—we need not pollute our status by reaching out to them.

Then, boom, the Christ offers a horrific warning—these teachers will be punished "most severely."

BOOM!

- Q What is a good example from your own experience which demonstrates the problem to which the Christ was referring?
- Q What do you suppose He meant by "most severe" punishment? What type of punishment by the Lord God is more severe than others?

Luke 21:1-4. *The Lawyers/Professors Are Challenged—Again*. Jesus has been warning about knucklehead teachers who teach, among other things, what is useful rather than what is true about the nature-character of the Lord God (aka “the Law”). Then it happens—a behavioral example occurs, right then and there!

A low-life widow contradicts the popular teaching of the time: if you give a lot to God, then you are more righteous. The Temple will now be able to afford more carpet, better AC, better food for the priests, and God will smile at your contribution.

The Christ had a different point of view. He compared how the rich put their gifts in the temple treasury and how a widow offered only two, very small copper coins. Ἀληθῶς λέγω this widow has contributed more than all the rich dudes. They gave out of abundance; she gave out of her poverty—she put in all she had to live on.

- Q What is the most generous gift you’ve ever observed given by a person in your lifetime?
- Q What tips would you give to help overcome our tendency to think we’ve been “generous” to the Lord God?

LUKE 21:1-4

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. ²He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. ³“Truly I tell you,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. ⁴All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”

Luke 21:5-24. *Be Not Deceived*. Some of His followers were enthralled with the beauty of the Temple; so much so, that Jesus felt compelled to warn them the Temple would be demolished. Of course they were freaked. When will all this happen?

Don't be deceived; lots of folk will claim my authority and say "I'm the one; the time is near." Don't follow them. When you hear of wars, don't freak. Sure, these things will happen, but the end will not come immediately.

Here's the scoop: nations will fight each other. There'll be great earthquakes, famines, viruses and scary events and signs from the skies. But, before all this, you will be persecuted—because you follow Me, because you give evidence about My reality. Now is not the time to worry about how you will respond; I will give you language no one can either resist or dispute. Sure, you'll be betrayed by your friends and family; you'll even die for the cause. Everyone will hate you because of Me. BUT, not a hair of your head will perish—stand firm and you'll win life.

Now when you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, the end is near. Flee to the mountains; don't enter the city if living in the country. This will be the time of punishment and fulfillment of all what has been prophesied in writing. It'll be bad—nursing and pregnant mothers will not be spared. People will fall by the sword, taken as prisoners. Jerusalem will be scavenged by unbelievers until unbelievers become believers.

- Q When was the Temple finally destroyed, demolished? Why is that date important for Bible study?
- Q Was this a sign of the end of Judaism, the beginning of persecution, the beginning of Christianity, or...?
- Q Which family & friends do you suspect will "turn you in" in the final days—assuming you live during them?
- Q What aspect of persecution do you fear the most? What is the key form of persecution today for believers?
- Q Why do people hate those who believe in Christ Jesus?
- Q To what extent was Yeshua the Christ talking about the end times of their age, and/or the end times of all ages?

LUKE 21:5-24

Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, ⁶"As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."

⁷"Teacher," they asked, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?"

⁸He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. ⁹When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away."

¹⁰Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

¹²"But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you.

They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. ¹³And so you will bear testimony to me.

¹⁴But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. ¹⁵For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

¹⁶You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death.

¹⁷Everyone will hate you because of me. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹Stand firm, and you will win life.

²⁰"When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. ²¹Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. ²²For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. ²³How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people.

²⁴They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Luke 21:25-38. *Be Ready*. The Christ continued—even astronomy will show signs of the end. Nations will fret at the revolution of the earth and its seas. Terror will abound as people will freak as they observe heavenly bodies shaken. It is then that the Christ as the Son of Man will come in a cloud with power and glory. When this happens—stand up, don't bow—your redemption is near!

Here's how to understand this. Consider fig trees. They sprout leaves, you know summer is near. When you see these things happening, the Kingdom is near. *Αμὴν λέγω* your generation will see all this happen. Bottom line: Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words (λόγοι) will never pass away.

Be careful—your *raison d'être* will be focused on the anxieties of life and coping mechanisms (e.g., drunkenness, carousing). The day will come like a snare (*παγίς*), quick and deadly. Be ready, always watchful, praying you may escape all this upheaval so you can stand before Me.

[Luke's note: Each day He was teaching at the temple; each evening He spent the night at the Mount of Olives. All of the people came early to hear Him teach at the Temple.]

- Q Why are we to be ready if all we need to know are these signs of the end times; i.e., the return of the Christ?
- Q Again, to what extent was Yeshua the Christ talking about the end times of their age (verse 32), and/or the end times of all ages (verse 33)?
- Q What leaves do you see sprouting on the fig tree? Is this "Such a time as this...?"

LUKE 21:25-38

"There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁷At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

²⁹He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. ³¹Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

³²"Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴"Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

³⁷Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, ³⁸and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple.

