

rather than an actual and fulfilled happening, it follows that his *Gospel* must have been written prior to A.D. 70. Hence, we are safe in assigning it to a date somewhere near the middle of the first century.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-NINE

83. Who was Mark, the writer of the second Gospel narrative?
84. Of what nationality was Mark?
85. What do we learn about Mark from the New Testament writings?
86. From what sources then did Mark obtain his information respecting Jesus of Nazareth?
87. What is the general theme of Mark's Gospel?
88. For whom was Mark's Gospel obviously written?
89. What is Mark's favorite word?
90. When was Mark's Gospel probably written?

Lesson Sixty

LUKE'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Scripture Reading: Acts 16:1-17, 20:1-12, 28:11-16; Luke 1:1-2.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas salute you" (Col. 4:14). "Only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. 4:11). "Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, saluteth thee; and so does Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-workers" (Philemon 23-24).

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91. Q. Who was Luke, the writer of the third Gospel narrative?
 - A. Luke, like Mark, was a member of the apostolic company, though not himself an Apostle.

92. Q. What two books of the New Testament Canon were written by Luke?

A. The two books of the New Testament Canon written by Luke are: the third Gospel, and Acts of Apostles.

Luke was the inspired historian of the origins of Christianity. In his *Gospel*, he gives us an account of the things which Jesus Himself did and taught (Acts 1:1-2). In *Acts of Apostles*, he gives us a history of the labors and accomplishments of the Apostles and their evangelistic co-workers in the execution of the Great Commission. In *Acts*, he merely continues the history from the point at which he terminated it in his *Gospel*. Cf. Acts 1:1—"The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen," etc.

93. Q. Of what nationality was Luke?

A. Evidently Luke was a Gentile.

(1) From the distinction drawn between Epaphras, Demas and Luke, and "those of the circumcision," in Col. 4:10-14, it is evident that Luke was not a Jew. In all probability he was of Greek extraction, as is indicated by his Greek name, and by the obvious love of beauty which characterizes his writings. (2) "It may be inferred," writes Dr. J. A. McClymont, "that he was of Gentile extraction, and this inference is confirmed by his Greek name and the character of his style, which—except when he is drawing from the older documents or reporting speeches conveyed to him by others—is more classical than that of the other *Gospels*, alike as regards the structure of the sentences and the choice of words, as well as in his use of an opening dedication, a feature quite foreign to the Hebrew style" (quoted by Moninger, *Studies in the Gospels and Acts*, p. 46). (3) Early tradition has it that Luke was a native of Antioch in Syria. Eusebius writes: "Luke, who was born at Antioch, and by profes-

sion a physician, being for the most part connected with Paul, and familiarly acquainted with the rest of the apostles, has left us two important books." Origen is quoted by Eusebius as saying that Luke's *Gospel* "was written for converts from the Gentiles." (4) Luke's familiarity with the church at Antioch is indicated by the following scriptures: Acts 6:5, 11:19-27, 13:1-3, 14:26-28, 15:1-2, 15:30-40, 18:22-23, etc.

94. Q. What was Luke by profession?

A. Luke was a physician.

Col. 4:14—"Luke, the beloved physician." Some traits of Luke's profession are to be found in the frequency with which he refers to the work of Christ and His Apostles as the ministry of healing (Luke 4:18, 4:23, 9:1-6, 10:9); and in his occasional use of terms which a physician would be most likely to employ (Luke 4:38, 5:12, 6:19, 22:44). It has been suggested by some that Luke traveled with Paul because the Apostle was frequently in need of medical attendance (2 Cor. 12:7). This, however, is merely an opinion, and one not necessarily derived from the scripture records.

95. Q. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's character and ability?

A. We learn from the New Testament writings that Luke was a man of refined character, of great culture, of broad sympathies, and of rare devotion.

"The surpassing beauty" of the third *Gospel*, writes Dr. Charles R. Erdman, "betokens the personal attractiveness of its author and the dignity and importance of its theme. . . . The phrase which describes the writer as 'the physician, the beloved one,' is full of significance. It was penned by Paul, when a prisoner in Rome, to his friends in distant Colossae. It indicates that Luke was a man of culture and scientific training, and that the charm of his character was so conspicuous as to be recognized by the Christian churches of Europe and Asia. . . . He was a man of such modesty that he never mentioned his own name

even when recording the stirring events in which he played so prominent a part. Nevertheless he revealed himself in every page of his writings and was evidently a man of broad sympathies, an acute observer, a careful historian, and a loyal friend" (Intro. to *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 7). Luke's rare devotion to his friends, and to the cause for which he gave his life in service, is indicated by the fact that he remained in constant attendance upon Paul to the very end of the Apostle's ministry. Cf. 2 Tim. 4: 11—"only Luke is with me."

96. Q. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's career?

A. We learn from the New Testament writings that Luke was the evangelistic co-worker and traveling companion of the Apostle Paul.

Note, in this connection, the many passages in *Acts* in which Luke indicates his presence with Paul by using the pronouns "we" and "us." (See chs. 16, 20, 21, 27, 28). It appears from these scriptures that Luke joined Paul, in the course of the latter's second evangelistic tour, at Troas, a seacoast city of Asia Minor, whence they embarked on the memorable voyage across the Aegean Sea that resulted in the establishing of Christianity on the European continent. The two friends, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, landed at Neapolis and thence journeyed to Philippi, where their labors resulted in the founding of a strong church (ch. 16). Then, while Paul, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, continued his travels through Macedonia and Greece, Luke remained behind, possibly to nurture the new converts (ch. 17). Seven years later, when Paul was on his third missionary tour, he seems to have joined Luke at Philippi, and to have been accompanied by him on his journey back to Jerusalem (chs. 20, 21). When Paul was arrested and confined for two years in prison at Caesarea, Luke continued as his companion; and, when the Apostle was taken prisoner to Rome, Luke accompanied him. They shared together the

perils of that voyage and the shipwreck which occurred off the island of Melita (the ancient name for Malta), and the subsequent imprisonment in the imperial city (chs. 27, 28). It seems that Paul was later released from prison and allowed to preach the Gospel in Rome, which he did effectively, with the help of certain "fellow-workers," viz., Demas, Aristarchus, Mark, and Luke (Col. 4:14, Philem. 23-24). Finally, the Apostle was imprisoned a second time, and in the shadow of impending martyrdom he indited his valedictory epistle, the second epistle addressed to Timothy, in terminating which the Apostle said, after describing the apostasy of Demas, "Only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. 4:11).

97. Q. From what sources did Luke obtain the information which he recorded in his writings?

A. Luke himself testifies that the information which he has recorded in his writings was obtained from the most reliable sources.

(1) Luke 1:1-4, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; *that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.*" Note well Luke's emphatic assertion here of his own reliability as a historian of the things that Jesus did and taught (cf. Acts 1:1). (2) "While in Caesarea, Luke seems to have gathered the material for his *Gospel*, and probably wrote it there or soon after arriving in Rome. He had ample leisure during the two years and more in Palestine to make the extensive researches of which he speaks in Luke 1:1-4. In Rome, he was with Paul, and had his help also in the Acts, and during much of the period covered by it he had been with Paul. . . . Luke enjoys the unique

distinction of being the first historian of the origins of Christianity. He carried the Christian movement on in his two volumes from the birth of John the Baptist to the arrival of Paul in Rome, when the gospel had spread to most of the Roman Empire. Luke is thus the great historian who undertook such a task, and he is in many ways the greatest of all ancient historians in his breadth of view, his research, accuracy, versatility, and sympathy. He was a man of literary taste, but of democratic instincts, who understood women and children and the poor and the outcast and the Gentiles, as well as Jews. He was a cosmopolitan and a loyal Christian, a scientist who was a devoted worshiper of Jesus as Lord and Savior. He accepted the miracles of Jesus; and narrated the Virgin Birth of Christ, after prolonged investigation" (Dr. A. T. Robertson, *System Bible*, p. 26). The assertion is often found in the writings of the Biblical "critics" that Paul's alleged silence about the Virgin Birth is evidence that he did not accept the belief. In answer, we say (1) that Paul repeatedly affirms the pre-existence of Christ (Phil. 2:5-7, Col. 1:15-17, Rom. 11:36, 1 Cor. 8:6, Gal. 4:4, etc.), and (2) that Luke, Paul's traveling companion, is the one who gives us the story of the Virgin Birth in all its simplicity and beauty (Luke 1:26-38); hence, if Paul did not believe that the Virgin Birth occurred as Luke gives it, why in the name of reason did he not set Luke right on the matter?

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY

91. Who was Luke, the writer of the third Gospel narrative?
92. What two books of the New Testament Canon were written by Luke?
93. Of what nationality was Luke?
94. What was Luke by profession?

95. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's character and ability?
96. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's career?
97. From what sources did Luke obtain the information which he recorded in his writings?

Lesson Sixty-one

LUKE'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded)

Scripture Reading: Luke 10:25-37, 15:11-32, 16:19-31.

Scriptures to Memorize: "But he charged them, and commanded them to tell this to no man; saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Luke 9:22). "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26). "And I say unto you, Everyone who shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8). "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)

98. Q. What are the outstanding characteristics of Luke's Gospel?

A. The outstanding characteristics of Luke's Gospel are: (1) its unusual literary beauty, (2) its absorbing human interest, and (3) its universal outlook.

(1) *Its unusual literary beauty.* "It is plainly a product of Greek culture. The divine Spirit chose and equipped a rare instrument in the poetic and refined personality of Luke and through him gave to the world that version of the gospel story which is most exquisite in style and most finished in form" (Erdman, *ibid.*, p. 8). (2) *Its absorbing*