

THE BOOK OF LUKE

As we have discovered so far, the Book of Matthew presents Jesus as **King**. The Book of Mark presents Him as **Servant**. Now we find the Book of Luke presenting Him as the **Son of Man**.

Matthew is writing to the Hebrew mind; Mark to the Roman mind while Luke writes to the GREEK mind.

Luke, the Physician, wrote down the words of the Book that bears his name, and also the Book of Acts. Both Books are addressed to "Theophilus", whom we believe to be a Gentile government official since Luke refers to him as "honorable"; the same title Paul uses in reference to Felix.

We know less about Luke than any other New Testament writer. He never refers to himself in the Gospel, and in the Book of Acts he only refers to himself where the words "we" and "us" are used. This was when he is a part of Paul's group of traveling companions. The change for "they" to "we" in Acts 16:10 indicates that he became a companion of Paul at Troas. From Paul's writing we know that Luke was a physician (**Colossians 4:14**). We also see traces of his thinking as a physician in his own writing: "He hath sent me to heal" (Luke 4:18), and "Physician heal thyself" (Luke 4:23).

The Central Message

"For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"

Luke 19:10

The KEY PHRASE of the Book is "**Son of Man**" because Luke deals with the humanity of our Lord.

The Structure of the Book

THE NATIVITY, BOYHOOD AND MANHOOD OF JESUS - Chapters 1 - 4:13.

HIS MINISTRY IN GALILEE - Chapters 4:14 - 9:50.

HIS JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM - CHAPTERS 9:51 - 19:44.

HIS SACRIFICE AND TRIUMPH - Chapters 19:45 - 24.

The Nativity, Boyhood, manhood of Jesus - Chapters 1 - 4:13

Luke dwells on the birth of Christ and his account has no parallel in the other Gospels. Mark and John tell nothing about His birth at Bethlehem. Matthew give an account of His birth but he does not describe, as Luke does, the birth, babyhood, and boyhood of the Lord.

Matthew and Luke both give a genealogy showing the Lord's ancestry. Matthew begins with it while Luke does not mention it until after Jesus' baptism. We believe that the reason for this is that Matthew wanted to quickly establish our Lord's Davidic heirship to the throne, while Luke's first concern is the real human birth, growth and perfect manhood.

Matthew gives the genealogy through "Joseph" who was "legally", not "physically" the father of Jesus. Luke gives his genealogy through "Mary" who really was the mother of His "manhood".

Matthew starts at Abraham and traces it down through David (Kingship). Luke goes back to Adam and traces Christ to the point of His appearance in the history of the race as a human; as the Son of Man. As we will see, John goes back beyond Adam into eternity ("in the beginning").

This part of His life covers a period of thirty years (3:23). The first two Chapters cover the first twelve years of His life (2:42). He grew physically and in wisdom (2:52). After the baptism of Jesus, He was tempted of the devil (4:1). I believe that this is to show that He, as are we, placed in a position of trial and testing, aided by the Holy Spirit.

The Ministry in Galilee - Chapters 4:14 - 9:50

Luke's account of the Lord's ministry in Galilee is much shorter than either Matthew or Mark's. In Matthew we found that the emphasis is on what Jesus SAID; in Mark, what He DID. In Luke we find the emphasis is on Jesus Himself.

The Galilean ministry begins with Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth (recorded only by Luke) and with emphasis on the manhood of Jesus Himself (4:18, 21, 22).

Only in Luke do we find Him teaching concerning the abundance of fish and Peter's realization of His power (Luke 5). Only in Luke (7) do we see Him give life to the son of the widow of Nain.

Jesus chose the twelve (4:14-6:11) then sent them forth as a multiplied (9:1-17). Peter's confession (9:20) marks a change and from this point Jesus begins to talk about His coming rejection and death.

In Luke 9:27-36 we see the events of the transfiguration showing Divine approval of Him as the Son of God. But He is also depicted as the Divine Messenger. In Luke 9:35 we see: "This is my beloved Son, HEAR HIM."

His last public miracle (9:37-50) in Galilee was the release of the demoniac son.

We find reference to the Cross in 9:22, 31, and 44.

His Journey to Jerusalem - 9:51 - 19:44

In these eleven Chapters only five miracles are reported compared to the twenty one miracles recorded in the Galilee ministry. In this section there are a great number of "sayings", "doings", "parables" and "rebukes", all of them reflecting the "Matchless Man".

Luke has preserved for us some of the treasury of sayings and incidents which are not recorded by the other Gospel writers. The one thing we should especially note is Jesus' "art of reply" (13:1-5, 31-33, 17:20-21).

This section divides into almost two equal sections: one ending with Jesus' first lament over Jerusalem (13:34) and His second lament (19:41-44).

We must not forget that this section is concerning His journey to Jerusalem. Pay close attention to Chapter 13:22-33.

His Sacrifice and Triumph - Chapters 19:45 - 24

This last section begins with the Lord in the Temple and ends with His crucifixion, entombment, resurrection and ascension. His "manhood" is seen throughout this section: His sweat drops as it were great drops of blood (22:44). It is seen in His praying, His submissiveness, His answers, His ministry following His resurrection. We also don't need to lose sight of how it affected His followers (24:53).

I don't want to leave the Gospel of Luke without pointing out some of the many differences in Luke as compared to the other Gospel writers.

JESUS' HUMAN DEPENDENCE UPON PRAYER

Matthew and Mark also record the prayer in Gethsemane, but besides this, our Lord's engagement in prayer only occurs twice in Matthew and twice in Mark. Luke shows the prayer life of Jesus over and over again:

Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 9:28; 9:29; 11:1; 22:32; 22:44; 23:34; 23:46.

JESUS' TEACHING ON PRAYER

Read:

Luke 11:9-10; 18:1; 18:9-14; 21:36; 22:46.

Many other instances and references to prayer are in Luke. So much so that Luke is often called the Gospel of Prayer.

THE PROMINENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Mentioned more in Luke than in Matthew and Mark together, and even more than in John.

Luke 1:35; 4:1; 4:14; 4:18; 11:13 - Contrast the difference between Luke 11:13 with Matthew 7:11.

LUKE STRESSES THE ALL INCLUSIVE MINISTRY OF JESUS

This can be seen in the parables which occur only in Luke. They emphasize the thoughts of the Son of Man.

1. The two debtors - 7:41-50.
2. The Good Samaritan - 10:30-37.
3. The great Supper - 14:16-24.
4. The lost coin - 15:8-10.
5. The prodigal son - 15:1-32.
6. The Pharisee and the publican - 18:9-14

Luke's ministry as presenting Christ as the Son of Man is evident throughout. This is expressed in the words of Simeon in 2:29-32.

Luke alone records our Lord's comments about the Gentile widow of Sidon and the Gentile Syrian, Naman (4:26-27). Luke alone tells of the ten lepers cleansed and one, a Samaritan, ran back to give thanks (17:15-16).

LUKE RECORDS THE PROMINENCE GIVEN TO WOMEN BY JESUS

Luke 7:37-50 - Forgiving

10:41 - His care for Martha

15:8 - The woman with 10 pieces of silver

23:28 - Telling the women to "weep not for me"

1:5 - John's mother Elizabeth

2:36-38 - Anna's adoration of the Lord

There are many more references to women in Luke, but from these examples you can see the heart of Jesus and His value of women.

There is a lot that has been left unsaid about this Book and about Luke. Study carefully the references to Luke's ministry with Paul.

FOR NEXT WEEK:
READ THE BOOK OF JOHN
THREE CHAPTERS EACH DAY