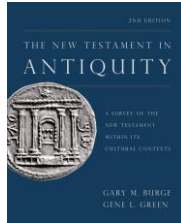


## Chapter 10-The Gospel According to Luke



**Key Terms** salvation, Savior, census, Messiah, crucifixion, “we” sections, travel narrative, certainty

**Key Locations and People** Theophilus, Elijah, Zechariah, Nazareth

### Key Points

- Luke is the only gospel that names its recipient (Theophilus).
- Central to Luke’s message in Luke-Acts is that salvation has come in Jesus.
- Matthew traces Jesus’s genealogy back to Abraham, whereas Luke takes it back to Adam.
- The poor, the outcast, and the socially marginalized take center stage and are the recipients of salvation in Luke’s gospel.
- The author of Luke-Acts traveled with Paul on several occasions.

**Noteworthy Background(s)** Josephus on writing history, coming king of the line of David, Cicero on crucifixion, Luke and Seutonius

### Chapter Summary

Luke is the only gospel that names its recipient, Theophilus, and even addresses him as “most excellent.” It is possible that Theophilus was the literary patron of the work, since the size of a book similar to Luke-Acts would have been quite costly to compose and publish. Moreover, Luke-Acts comprises the largest book in the NT, approximately one quarter of the entire NT. Luke-Acts should be read as a whole, a single narrative. The readers of composition are probably gentiles, which explains Luke’s explanatory statements, such as “the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called Passover” (Luke 22:1).

The overriding thrust of the book is that God has visited his people in his Son and offers salvation to all those who believe. All of the gospels emphasize Jesus’s concern for the poor, the outcast, and the socially marginalized. But this is particularly pointed in Luke’s gospel. This buttresses well with Luke’s concern for the reception of salvation: Jesus has come to all of humanity to provide healing from disease, freedom from demonic captivity, and the forgiveness of sin. In addition, by recalling Jesus’s quotation of Isaiah 61:1–2 in the synagogue, Luke is concerned with portraying Jesus as the Spirit-anointed prophet who announces the eschatological restoration of Israel.

Luke’s gospel falls into four principal sections. The first section concerns the arrival of the Elijah messenger—a fulfillment of Malachi 3–4. This messenger is necessary to prepare Israel for the Lord’s arrival; the hearts of the people must be readied. The birth narrative in

Luke's gospel makes it clear that Jesus is the true king of not only Israel but also the world. Such a notion is a direct attack on Caesar's imperial rule.

Another peculiar feature of Luke is the amount of material dedicated to Jesus's journey to Jerusalem. Luke devotes nearly ten chapters to this event, and much of the material is unique to the third gospel. Scholars debate the overall purpose of this particular section, but it probably deals with two main issues: problems pertaining to Jesus's conflict with the Jewish authorities and the nature of discipleship.

Once Jesus arrives in Jerusalem on his final journey, he is soon condemned and put to death. Luke portrays Jesus as completely innocent. Neither Pilate nor Herod was able to find any guilt in Jesus. But he was eventually put to death on the cross—a horrific death in the eyes of both the Jews and the Romans. Crucifixion was largely restricted to foreigners and the lower class. Like the other gospels, Luke includes a resurrection account. Women are the first witnesses, who then relate to the disciples the staggering event.

### **Chapter 10 – The Gospel According to Luke**

*The students will be able to:*

1. Identify points of symmetry between Luke and Acts.
2. Describe Luke's methodology as a historian.
3. Identify the audience and recipient of Luke-Acts.
4. Identify the beginning of Luke's genealogy of Jesus.
5. Describe Luke's innovative integration of canticles into his storytelling.
6. Identify the reading of Jesus in the synagogue which begins his ministry.
7. Discuss the major themes of the gospel of Luke.
8. Identify the reasons for understanding Luke to be the author of this gospel.
9. Describe what suggests Luke is the only gentile author in the NT.
10. Identify the arguments for the dating of Luke.