

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE

LUKE

Brief background summary

Dating:

Most scholars believe the gospel of Luke was written around 50–70 years after the crucifixion of Jesus (circa 80–100 AD).

Authorship:

The author of the gospel of Luke is unknown, but is believed to be the same author as for the book of Acts. Together, the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts comprise 27.5% of the entire New Testament scriptures. Thus, this one author has had a major impact on Christian theology and our understanding of Jesus. The author seems to have taken much of his material from the gospel of Mark.

Refer to the maps for additional background information.

CHAPTER 1

¹¹ Since many have undertaken to set in order a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us,¹² even as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word delivered them to us,¹³ it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write to you in order, most excellent Theophilus;¹⁴ that you might know the certainty concerning the things in which you were instructed.

¹⁵ There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias,⁵¹⁸ of the priestly division of Abijah. He had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.¹⁶ They were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord.¹⁷ But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they both were well advanced in years.

¹⁸ Now while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his division¹⁹ according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to enter into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.¹¹⁰ The whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense.

¹¹¹ An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.¹¹² Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.

¹¹³ But the angel said to him, "Don't be afraid, Zacharias, because your request has been heard. Your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.¹¹⁴ You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.¹¹⁵ For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.¹¹⁶ **He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.**⁵¹⁹

¹¹⁷ **He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah,**⁵²⁰ 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**"⁵²¹

¹¹⁸ Zacharias said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

¹¹⁹ The angel answered him, "I am **Gabriel**,⁵²² who stands in the presence of God. I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.¹²⁰ Behold, you will be silent and not able to speak until the day that these things will happen, because you didn't believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time."

¹²¹ The people were waiting for Zacharias, and they marveled that he delayed in the temple.¹²² When he

came out, he could not speak to them. They perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple. He continued making signs to them, and remained mute.¹²³ When the days of his service were fulfilled, he departed to his house.¹²⁴ After these days Elizabeth his wife conceived, and she hid herself five months, saying,¹²⁵ "Thus has the Lord done to me in the days in which he looked at me, to take away my reproach among men."

¹²⁶ Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,¹²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man whose name was Joseph, of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary.¹²⁸ Having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, you highly favored one! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women!"

¹²⁹ But when she saw him, she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered what kind of salutation this might be.¹³⁰ The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

¹³¹ Behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and shall name him 'Jesus.'¹³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,¹³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. There will be no end to his Kingdom."⁵²³

¹³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, seeing I am a virgin?"

¹³⁵ The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore also the holy one who is born from you will be called the Son of God.

¹³⁶ Behold, Elizabeth your relative also has conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.¹³⁷ For nothing spoken by God is impossible."

¹³⁸ Mary said, "Behold, the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

¹³⁹ Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah,¹⁴⁰ and entered into the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.¹⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.¹⁴² She called out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and **blessed is the fruit of your womb!**¹⁴³ Why am I so favored, that **the mother of my Lord**⁵²⁴ should come to me?¹⁴⁴ **For behold, when the voice of your greeting came into my ears, the baby**

⁵¹⁸ Zacharias was a descendant of Aaron.

⁵¹⁹ This indicates that John's mission is to bring many Jews to follow Jesus.

⁵²⁰ Here the angel announces that John will go before the Lord "in the spirit and power of Elias". This shows that John is to represent the long-anticipated return of Elijah which is to precede the coming of the Messiah.

⁵²¹ This indicates that John should prepare many disciples for Jesus. In fact, John did educate many young men as his own disciples, well

trained in the scriptures, but record shows that only two of them followed Jesus out of their own curiosity (see Jn 1:37 and Topical Index #23).

⁵²² iit. "champion of God"

⁵²³ Gabriel states clearly that Jesus is coming to become the literal king of Israel, in fulfillment of the scriptures in Isaiah 9 and 11 (see Topical Index #24, 25).

⁵²⁴ Here Mary's cousin reveals that she knows of Mary's mission as Jesus' mother-to-be.