INTRODUCTION. ] LUKE’S GOSPEL. [cu. 1v.   
   
 consequence (see above), that in all probability the Gospel had been then   
 written and published. This would place its publication before a.p. 58;   
 —consequently, before the traditional date of the Gospel of Matthew,—   
 see above, ch. ii. § iv.   
 8. Tracing Luke’s history further back than this,—it has been thought   
 that he remained at Philippi during the whole time comprised between   
 Acts xvii. 1 and xx. 6, because he disuses the first person at the first of   
 those dates, at Philippi—and resumes it also at Philippi, at the second.   
 Now this was a period of seven years: far too long for such an inference   
 as the above to be made with any probability. During this time he may   
 have travelled into Palestine, and collected the information which he   
 incorporated in his Gospel. For that it was collected in Palestine, is   
 on all accounts probable. And that it should have been published much   
 before this, is, I think, improbable.   
 4. My reasons are the following :—I have implied in the former part   
 of this Introduction, that it is not likely that the present evangelic collec-   
 tions would be made until the dispersion of all or most of the Apostles   
 on their missionary journeys. Besides this, the fact of numerous narra-   
 tives having been already drawn up after the model of the apostolic   
 narrative teaching, forbids us to suppose their teaching by oral commu-   
 nication to have been in its fulness still available. Now the Apostles, or   
 the greater part of them, were certainly at Jerusalem at the time of the   
 council in Acts xv. 1—5 ff, ie. about a.p. 50. How soon after that   
 time their dispersion took place, it is quite impossible to determine :—   
 but we have certainly this date as our starting-point, before which, as I   
 believe, no Gospel could have been published.   
 5. After this dispersion of the Apostles, it will be necessary to allow   
 some time to elapse for the narratives of which Luke speaks (ch. i. 1) to   
 be drawn up ;—not less certainly than one or two years, or more; which   
 would bring us just about to the time when he was left behind by Paul   
 in Philippi. Thie last arrangement must however be, from its merely   
 hypothetical grounds, very uncertain.   
 6. At all events, we have thus eight years, a.p. 50—58, as the limits   
 within which it is probable that the Gospel was published. And, with-   
 out pretending to minute accuracy in these two limits, we may at least   
 set it down as likely that the publication did not take place much before   
 Luke and Paul are found together, nor after the last journey which   
 Paul made to Jerusalem, a.p. 58. And even if the grounds on which   
 this latter is concluded be objected to, we have, as final resort, the   
 fixed date of the publication of the Acts two years after Paul’s arrival   
 at Rome, after which, by internal evidence, the Gospel cannot have been   
 published.   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
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