

Notes on LUKE 3 provided by Howard Barnes

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL

Dr. Luke is the gospel writer with an eye and a heart for the human condition. Thus he introduced the Lord Jesus as the Son of Man amongst men; living in the power of the Holy Spirit; manifesting and ministering God's grace in the gospel to sinners with a view to their salvation, thus bringing joy and rejoicing. Luke, a Gentile, writes for another Gentile, Theophilus, in elegant Greek, carefully avoiding Hebrew, Aramaic, and Latin words. He did not quote the OT as much as Matthew or Mark (27 vs. 65 and 31), but his quotations – all from the Greek LXX version - usually referred to scripture being fulfilled: what God says He does!

GOSPEL	AUDIENCE	SEEN AS*	KEY VERSES	LINEAGE	SYMBOL
Matthew	Jews	Sovereign, Messiah	1. 1; 16. 16; 20. 28	From Abraham (Matt. 1. 1)	Lion
Mark	Romans	Servant	1. 8; 8. 27; 10. 45; 15. 34	None	Ox
Luke	Greeks	Son of Man	4. 22; 9. 51; 19. 10	From Adam (Lk. 3. 23)	Man
John	Believers, Greek World	Son of God	20. 31	From Eternity (Jn. 1. 1)	Eagle

(* Matthew = **sovereignty**, 'Behold, thy King', Zech. 9. 9; Mark = **service**, 'Behold My servant', Isa. 42. 1; Luke = **salvation**, 'Behold the Man', Zech. 6. 12; John = **Sonship**, 'Behold your God', Isa. 40. 9.)

Particular subjects in Luke's Gospel include the Holy Spirit, prayer, parables, women, children and outcasts. Material unique to Luke makes up between a third and a half of his gospel, amounting to some 50 sections. Of the 1150 verses in the Gospel, over half (586) contain the words of the Lord. Dr. Luke's medical knowledge is obvious throughout the Gospel, Luke 4. 18, 23, 38; 5. 12, 6.19, 7. 44; 9. 1, 2, 6; 9, 10. 30; 21. 34; 22 .51; 22. 44.

'The Gospel of Luke presents our Lord as the Son of Man, and while attractive to faith, He was rejected by the world at large. As a Man among men, He was most approachable, welcoming the lowly and never refusing to receive the vilest and most unworthy who would appeal to His mercy. All this, however, did not make Him popular. His rejection is accentuated in the Gospel of Luke. From the very first at Nazareth, we find He was despised and men esteemed Him not', (see Samuel Ridout, www.stempublishing.com).

Turning point of the Gospel

Luke indeed highlighted the opposition to and rejection of the Lord Jesus. Hence, having largely finished his ministry to Galilee and surrounding regions, the Lord Jesus set out for Jerusalem (9.51; see Mark 10.1). This is the major transition in the Gospel of Luke. The reason for this is explained in Lk. 9.51, 'when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem'. This follows 9. 22, 'The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day', which was repeated in 18.31-34, but not understood, see 9.43 - 45.

Suggested Seven Sections of Luke's Gospel

Preface & Infancy Narrative	1.1 – 2.52
Preparation for Ministry	3.1 – 4.13
Galilean Ministry	4.14 – 9.50
Journey to Jerusalem	9.51 – 19.27
Jerusalem Ministry	19.28 – 21.38
Passion Narrative	22.1 – 23.56
Resurrection Appearances & Ascension	24.1-53

Notes on LUKE 3 provided by Howard Barnes

Notes on Chapter 3

vv. 1 – 2: Political and religious scene: Product of ‘the times of the Gentiles’

Roman appointees & Gentile puppet rulers dominated Jewish civil and religious life.

vv. 3 – 6: Preaching of John: Prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled

John, having relinquished civil and religious life, brought God’s message. The man from the wilderness not the palace preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. We see the fulfilment of Isa. 40, so the lowly valley of penitents, the lofty mountains of high-minded Pharisees, the crooked publicans and the rough soldiers, would all be dealt with by the power of God, as all would see the salvation of God.

vv. 7 – 9: Pledge of wrath to come: Plea for fruits worthy of repentance

The coming Tribulation-wrath of God – still coming upon unbelieving Israel, 1 Thess. 2. 16 – could only be averted by repentance and faith. (We believers today will be delivered from this wrath to come when the Lord comes, 1 Thess. 1. 10, Rev. 3. 10).

vv. 10 – 14: People’s questions following repentance: Particular groups instructed

Fruit was – and still is - the evidence of true faith following repentance. Even rough soldiers were asked to fulfil the law, Lev. 19. 18, Exod. 20. 16, Exod. 20. 17.

vv. 15 – 18: Promise of the coming Baptist: Prediction of blessing and judgement

The people were ‘on tiptoe with expectation’ waiting for Christ and they were all debating whether or not it was John. John assured them that he was unworthy of even the meanest service for the Christ, but he told the people that He was coming with blessing and judgement. (Compare the ‘faith, love and hope’ for the believer today, i.e., repentance re. the past; present love and future expectation, Col. 1. 5.)

vv. 19 & 20: Prison for John for condemning Herod for all his evils

John’s faithfulness to the truth landed him in prison.

vv. 21 – 22: Praying, Jesus is baptised: Picture of the Spirit: Pleasure of the Father

The Son, come down from heaven, Jn. 3. 31, was ‘sealed’ (authenticated) by the Holy Spirit descending in bodily form and Father’s ‘voice which came from heaven’, 2 Pet. 1. 18. The Father’s expressed pleasure here concerned Jesus’ ‘private’ life to date: compare Matt. 17. 5, where the ‘public’ ministry of the Lord brought the Father equal pleasure. (This is a beautiful Trinitarian view of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.)

vv. 23 – 38: Presentation of Jesus’ genealogy through Mary

The actual genealogy in Luke – as the seed of the woman, through Mary to Adam, the father of mankind (cp. Matthew, the legal genealogy through Joseph to Abraham) - laid out the Lord Jesus’ credentials in preparation for His public service, cp. Neh. 7. 63 - 65. Also, we are taken back to Adam, who failed God in a beautiful garden. The second man and the last Adam will not fail under very different – indeed very trying - circumstances:

Notes on LUKE 3 provided by Howard Barnes

this prepares us for the temptations of chapter 4. (Technical point: note different Greek wording introducing each generation: Matthew – ‘begat’, Luke – ‘which is of’.)