

1. Read through this chapter. On the evidence of verses 1-17, why were the disciples able to give such a clear answer to Jesus' question in verse 18?
2. Jesus' disciples had witnessed many incidents which indicated the extraordinary nature of their master (such as the miracle recorded in verses 10-17). How was their appreciation of Jesus confirmed, corrected and strengthened on the mountain (verses 28-36)?
3. On their descent (verses 37-50) there were more lessons to be learned. Jot them down briefly in your notebook. How do these lessons, and those learned on the mountain, add weight to what Jesus had already taught them in verses 21-27?
4. Who do you say that Jesus is?

**Memory verse:** Learn verse 23 - and think about what it means through the day.

### Weekend

1. These studies in Luke are inevitably selective. So to get a grasp of what has been studied this week, read right through Luke 1-9. Pay particular attention to lengthier accounts of Jesus' teaching such as in 8:4-18, and make some notes as to how you should respond to Jesus' words.
2. Referring to your notes of the week, can you trace a link between Jesus' words and his actions? The incident in 5:17-26 may be particularly instructive, as is the encounter with John's disciples in 7:18-23 where they are told to report what they have seen (actions) and heard (words).



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### **Meeting With God Bible Reading Notes**

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**2nd December 2013**

### **Week 14: The Gospel of Luke,1 (A Historical Study)**

Can a historical study of Luke be justified? Is Luke's Gospel a work of history - or of theology?

Until recently, few would have doubted that this book - traditionally seen as from the pen of the 'beloved physician' (Colossians 4:14, AV) - was a work of carefully researched history. But some modern scholars have argued that Luke's interest is theological rather than historical.

Undoubtedly, theology rather than strict chronology may have affected the sequence of events in Luke's 'orderly account' (cf: Luke 1:3). As all historians must be, he has been selective, theological importance often being an obvious criterion of selection.

But as you will see from Luke's own introduction to his Gospel (as well as the opening verses of its sequel - the Acts), his intention was to write history. And his work shows all the marks of a careful historian, even if it does not always meet the demands of a modern work of history.

What is this Gospel then? It is a record of the historical facts of Christ who has come into the world to bring salvation to sinners.

Over the next three weeks we shall consider Luke's orderly account in three sections. This week we see how Jesus came **in** to the world; next week, how he went **on** to Jerusalem; and finally, the narrative surrounding his going **out** of this world.

### **Day 1. From the beginning**

**Luke 1:1-4; 2:1-40** (If you have time read chapters 1 and 2 straight through.)

1. Write down those reasons you can draw from Luke 1:1-4 which might support the claim that the author of this Gospel is writing a historical account.  
**Note:** 1:3 'Excellent'- socially prominent (?). 'Excellency' - GNB. Theophilus' means 'lover of God'.
2. As you read, make a particular note of Luke's attention to detail: his use of political rulers to pinpoint dates; his precision in recording movements; the intermingling of the stories leading up to the births of John and Jesus. (You may find it easier to highlight significant points in your Bible rather than making

full notes in your notebook.)

3. As you have read Luke's account - with all its miraculous events involving angels, prophecies, and supernatural births - did it strike you as fantasy or as history? Why?

**Thank God** for the Bible and for the attention to detail taken by men like Luke, so that 'lovers of God' may 'know the certainty of things you have been taught' (1:4).

### Day 2. Jesus' preparation

#### **Luke 3:1-22; 4:1-13**

John the Baptist's ministry was intimately linked with that of Jesus. Not only was he his cousin, who went before him to 'prepare the way' (Luke 3:4), but his message was to be echoed by the Lord Jesus as he began his ministry.

1. Read Luke 3:1-22. What was John's message according to 3:3? What was of greater importance: the act of baptism, or the repentance i.e. turning from sin, a true change of heart. How can you support your conclusion from Luke's account of John's preaching?

Repentance resulted in practical action - see 3:10-14. In your life, what does repentance mean to you? **Pause:** To confess any sins you need to repent of.

2. Jesus' public act of baptism was not left unchallenged. As you read Luke 4:1-13, make a note of the temptations the devil placed before him to do something other than the revealed will of God.

The devil's temptations are intended to stir selfishness. Jesus' response was a firm 'no'. Just as he was committed to God's will as written in the Bible, now commit yourself to live for God today and always. Expect that commitment to be tested!

**Note:** God's preparation of the way for Jesus didn't begin with John's baptism and the desert encounter with the devil. The genealogy in 3:23-38 (another historical marker) sets Jesus firmly within the context of biblical history. The whole Old Testament prepares the way for him.

### Day 3. Teaching for everyone

#### **Luke 4:14-21; 6:17-49**

Early on Luke showed that Jesus himself saw his ministry in the context of Old Testament teaching and prophecy, and the Old Testament itself has a historical basis.

1. Notice how Jesus' ministry is rooted in Scripture. Looking at 4:14-21, how does he see his mission and message in the words of Isaiah? (Compare 3:16-21 with Isaiah 61:1-2.)

Jesus was a man with a message for everyone, as you will see when you look up the following incidents. He couldn't be tied down (see 4:42-44). His pulpit might be in a

synagogue (4:44) or a boat on the sea (5:3). He sometimes spoke with individuals (5:12). At other times large crowds followed Jesus and he taught them on a level place (Luke 6:17).

2. Jesus' God-centred values are very different from those of self-centred society. Try to summarize his teaching in Luke 6:20-46 by drawing out the principles of living approved by Jesus.
3. Look over your notes. How do you rate your life? Would Jesus give you a 'blessing' or a 'woe'?

**Think:** What strikes you most forcibly from your summary of Jesus' sermon? Read the relevant verses again and **ask God** to help you to live a more God-centred life today.

### Day 4. Not talk ... but power

#### **Luke 4:31 – 5:11**

In 1 Corinthians 4:20 Paul writes that 'the kingdom of God is not a matter of words but of power' (NIV). Certainly, Jesus' ministry could not be criticized as being so much 'hot air!' The things which Jesus 'accomplished' (Luke 1:1) included not only teaching but action.

1. **His authority over demons.** How did Jesus silence the demons in 4:33-37 and 4:41? How did this indicate that he had real authority? (Compare 4:31-32 with verse 36.)
2. **His authority over disease.** What do verses 38-40 show you about Jesus' approach to disease, and his power over it?
3. **His authority over the deep.** Jesus only had to say the word and it was done (see verses 35-36 and 39). What part did Jesus' word have in Luke 5:1-7?
4. Simon was willing to respond in obedience to Jesus' word of authority (verse 5). He had witnessed the authority of Jesus over demons and disease - even in his own home (4:38-39). How do you explain his reaction in Luke 5:8-11?

How do you react to Jesus' authority? Do you believe that his word still works today?

If you want help in studying Luke in greater depth, make use of a good commentary like the one by Leon Morris in the Tyndale series (IVP). Other expositions of Luke are David Gooding, "According to Luke" (IVP), and Michael Wilcock, "The Message of Luke" (IVP).

### Day 5. Who is Jesus?

#### **Luke 9:1-50**

Luke began his Gospel with the intention of presenting the facts about Jesus so that his reader might know the full truth (see 1:1-4). In this chapter he records incidents where Jesus discovers how much his hearers understood. In the process even more about Jesus is revealed. **Note:** Matthew 16:13-17 is a fuller account.