

THE
G O S P E L O F

LUKE

WILLIAM M_{AC}DONALD



Developed as a study course by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

The Gospel of Luke
William MacDonald

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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

The skeptic Renan called Luke's Gospel "The most beautiful book in the world." And so it is! The Lord Jesus is especially presented to us by Luke as the Friend of "publicans and sinners," the outcasts of society. We see Him breaking the shackles of national prejudice to show His tenderness, compassion and sympathy to those outside "the commonwealth of Israel." We find that women are given frequent and honorable mention, something quite alien to Jewish custom at the time. Luke's evident goal is to present to us Jesus as "the Son of Man" and as the Savior of mankind. A study of this Gospel is bound to be a heartwarming experience.

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Course Components

This course has two parts: this study course and a separate exam booklet.

How To Study

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete one chapter per week.

Exams

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions.

How Your Exams Are Graded

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

THE BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF JESUS (1:1–2:52)

Introduction

In the four Gospels we have four separate accounts of the life of a Perfect Man. This is one of the greatest proofs of the inspiration of the Scriptures. No mere man could write a *single* biography of a blameless, spotless life. But in the Gospels we have *four* such biographies.

It might seem like unnecessary repetition to have four accounts of the life of Christ except that each evangelist presents the Lord Jesus from a different viewpoint—Matthew as King of Israel; Mark as the Perfect Servant; Luke as the Son of Man; John as the Son of God.

The Gospels do not profess to give a complete account of the life of Christ. They contain carefully chosen incidents from His life, mostly taken from the three years of His public ministry, having the most intensive coverage given to His death, burial and resurrection. The first three Gospels do not contain many ringing evangelistic appeals, presenting the way of salvation, but lay the foundation of the gospel in telling of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

At times the accounts in the Gospels seem to contradict one another. How should we react when we find these differences? These differences are inspired by God. Instead of being contradictions, they are specially designed by the Spirit of God to bring out spiritual truth of deep significance. Even if we cannot explain all the differences, we believe that they are meaningful. This should drive us to more diligent study.

In the Gospels, we find the events are not always listed in the order in which they occurred. It is good to know at the outset that the Spirit of God often groups events according to their moral teaching. Kelly says, “It will be proved, as we proceed, that Luke’s is essentially a moral order, and that he classifies the facts, conversations, questions, replies, and discourses of our Lord according to their inward connection, and not the mere outward succession of events, which is in truth the rudest and most infantile form of record. But to group events together with their causes and consequences, in their moral order, is a far more difficult task for the historian, as distinguished from the mere chronicler. God can cause Luke to do it perfectly.”¹

In Luke’s Gospel, emphasis is on Jesus as the Son of Man. His humanity is prominent. His prayer life, for example, is referred to more than in any of the other Gospels. His sympathy and compassion are mentioned frequently. Perhaps this is why women and children occupy such a prominent place. The Gospel of Luke is also known as the missionary Gospel. Here the gospel goes out to the Gentiles, and the Lord Jesus is presented as the Savior of the world. Finally this Gospel is a discipleship manual. We trace the pathway of discipleship in the life of our Lord, and hear it expounded in His training of His followers. It is this feature we shall follow particularly in our exposition. In the life of the Perfect Man, we shall find the elements that make up the ideal life for all men. In His incomparable words we shall also find the way of the Cross to which He calls us.

As we turn to studying Luke’s Gospel, may we hear the Savior’s call, forsake all, and follow Him. As someone has said, “Obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge.” The meaning of the Scriptures becomes clearer and dearer to us as we enter into the experiences described.

Outline

1. Birth and Childhood of Jesus—The first 12 years (1:1–2:38; 2:41-50).
2. Silent Years in Nazareth (2:39, 40, 51-52).
3. Three Years of Public Ministry (3:1–19:28).
 - a. Galilean Ministry (4:14–9:51).
 - b. Perea Ministry (10:1–19:28).
4. Last Week—Jerusalem and Vicinity (19:29–23:56).
5. Resurrection and Ascension (24:1-53).

The How and Why of This Gospel (1:1-4)

In his preface, Luke reveals himself as a historian. He describes the source materials to which he had access, the method he followed and explains his purpose in writing. From the human standpoint he had two types of source materials—written accounts of Christ’s life and oral reports of eyewitnesses of the events in His life.

The written accounts are described in verse 1: “In as much as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us.” We do not know who these writers were. Matthew and Mark may have been among them but any others were obviously not inspired. (John wrote at a later date.)

Luke also depended on oral reports. These are referred to in verse 2: “as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us.” Luke does not claim to be an eyewitnesses but he had interviews with those who were. He describes them as “eyewitnesses and ministers of the word.” Here he uses the Word as a Name of Christ, just as John does in his Gospel.

The fact that Luke used written and oral accounts does not deny the verbal inspiration of what he wrote. It simply means the Holy Spirit guided him in choosing and arranging his materials. “Luke makes it perfectly clear that the inspired writers were not miraculously freed from the necessity of hard historical research. Inspiration was not God magically transcending human minds and faculties: it was God expressing His will through the dedication of human minds and faculties. It does not supercede the sacred writer’s own personality and make him God’s machine; it reinforces his personality and makes him God’s living witness.”²

In verse 3, Luke gives a brief statement of his motivation and method: “It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus.” About his motivation he simply says, “It seemed good to me also.” On the human level, there was the quiet conviction that he should write the Gospel. We know, of course, divine constraint was mingled with this human decision.

In his method, he first traces the course of all things accurately from the beginning, writing them down in order. His task involved a careful, scientific investigation of the course of events in our Savior’s life. Luke

checked the accuracy of his sources, eliminating all that was not historically true and spiritually relevant, then compiled his materials in order as we have them today. When he says he wrote *in order*, he does not mean in chronological order, but in a moral or spiritual order. Events are connected by subject matter and moral instruction rather than by time.

Although this Gospel and the book of Acts were both addressed to Theophilus, we know little about him. His title “most excellent” suggests he was a government official. (Theophilus means *a friend of God*.) Probably he was a Christian holding a position of honor and responsibility in the foreign service of the Roman Empire.

Luke’s purpose was to give Theophilus a written account confirming the trustworthiness of all he had been taught concerning the Lord Jesus’ life and ministry. The written message would afford fixity by preserving it from the inaccuracies of continued oral transmission. Thus verses 1-4 give us a brief but enlightening background into the human circumstances of how this book was written. We know he wrote by inspiration, implying it in the words *from the first* (verse 3) which could also be translated *from above*.

A Godly Couple, yet Childless (1:5-7)

Luke begins his narrative by introducing the parents of John the Baptist. They lived in Jerusalem when Herod the Great was king of Judea. Herod was an Idumean, a descendant of Esau.

Zacharias (means *the Lord remembers*) was a priest belonging to the course of Abijah, one of the twenty-four shifts into which David had divided the Jewish priesthood (1 Chronicles 24:10). Each shift served at the Temple in Jerusalem twice a year from Sabbath to Sabbath. Because there were so many priests at this time, the privilege of burning incense in the Holy Place came only once in a lifetime, if at all.

Elisabeth (means *the oath of God*) was also a descendant of the priestly tribe of Aaron. She and her husband were devout Jews, scrupulously careful in observing the Old Testament Scriptures, both moral and ceremonial. They were not sinless, but when they did sin they made sure to offer a sacrifice or otherwise to obey the ritualistic requirement. They had no children, a reproachful condition for any Jew. The problem was aggravated because they both were now quite advanced in years.

The Promised Son to be Messiah's Forerunner (1:8-17)

One day Zacharias was performing his priestly duties in the Temple. This was a great day in his life because he had been chosen by lot to burn incense in the Holy Place. The people had gathered outside the temple and were praying. No one seems to know definitely the time signified by "the hour of incense."

It is interesting to notice that the Gospel opens with people praying at the Temple and closes with people praising God at the Temple. The intervening chapters tell how prayers were answered in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus.

With priest and people engaged in prayer, it was an appropriate time and setting for a divine revelation. An angel of the Lord appeared at the right side of the altar—the place of favor. At first Zacharias was terrified; none of his contemporaries had ever seen an angel. But the angel reassured him with wonderful news. A baby would be born to Elisabeth to be named John (*the favor or grace of Jehovah*). Besides bringing joy and gladness to his parents, he would be a blessing to many.

This child would be great in the eyes of the Lord (the only kind of greatness that really matters). First, he would be great in his personal separation to God; he would drink no wine (made from grapes) or strong drink (made from grain). Second, he would be great in his spiritual endowment; he would be filled with the Holy Ghost from the time of his birth. (This does not mean John was saved or converted from birth, only that God's Spirit was in him from the outset preparing him for his special mission as Christ's forerunner.) Third, he would be great in his role as herald of the Messiah, turning many of the Jewish people to the Lord. His ministry would be like Elijah, the prophet—seeking to bring the people into right relationship with God through repentance. "His preaching would turn the hearts of careless parents to a real spiritual concern for their children. Also he would bring back the hearts of disobedient, rebellious children to the 'wisdom of the just.'"³ Or, as Ryle has so aptly stated, he would strive to gather out of the world a company of believers who would be ready to meet the Lord in the day of His appearing. This is a worthy ministry for each of us.

Notice how the deity of Christ is implied in verses 16 and 17. Verse 16 says John would turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

Verse 17 says John would go before Him. To whom does the word *Him* refer? Obviously to the *Lord their God* in the preceding verse. Yet we know John was the forerunner of Jesus. The inference is clear—Jesus is God.

Zacharias' Unbelief, Dumbness, and Restoration (1:18-25)

Aged Zacharias was struck by the sheer impossibility of the promise. Both he and his wife were too old to become the parents of a child. His plaintive question expressed all the pent-up doubt of his heart.

The angel answered first by introducing himself as Gabriel (man of God). Though commonly described as an archangel, he is mentioned in Scripture as one who stands in the presence of God and brings messages from God to man (Daniel 8:16; 9:21).

Because Zacharias doubted, he lost the power of speech until the child was born. Whenever a believer entertains doubts concerning God's Word, he loses his testimony and song. Unbelief seals lips, and they remain sealed until faith returns and bursts forth in praise and witness.

Outside, the people were waiting impatiently: ordinarily the priest who was burning incense would have appeared much sooner. When Zacharias finally came out, he had to communicate with them by making signs. Then they realized that he had seen a vision in the Temple.

After his tour of duty at the Temple, he went home, still unable to speak, as the angel had predicted.

When Elisabeth became pregnant she went into seclusion in her home for five months, rejoicing within herself that the Lord had seen fit to free her from the reproach of being childless.

Announcement to Mary that She Would Bear the Messiah (1:26-38)

Six months later, the angel reappeared—this time to a virgin named Mary who lived in the city of Nazareth, in the district of Galilee. Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph, a lineal descendant of David, who inherited legal rights to the throne of David, even though he was a carpenter. Then

engagement was considered a much more binding contract than today. It could be broken only by a legal decree similar to divorce.

The angel addressed Mary as one who was highly favored, one whom the Lord was visiting with special privilege. Two points should be noted here: (1) The angel did not worship Mary or pray to her: he simply greeted her. (2) He did not say she was “full of grace,” but “highly favored” or “favored by grace.”

Mary was understandably upset by this greeting; she wondered what it meant. The angel calmed her fears, and then told her that God was choosing her to be the mother of the long-awaited Messiah. Notice the important truths enshrined in the annunciation: The real humanity of the Messiah—“you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son.” His deity and His mission as Savior—“and shall call His name Jesus” (meaning Jehovah is the Savior). His essential greatness—“He will be great,” both as to His Person and His work. His identity as the Son of God—“and will be called the Son of the Highest.” His title to the throne of David—“the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.” This establishes Him as the Messiah. His ever-lasting and universal kingdom—“and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there will be no end.” The first four statements obviously refer to Christ’s first advent, whereas the remaining three describe His second coming as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Mary’s question, “How can this be?” was one of wonder, not of doubt. How could she bear a child when she had never had relations with a man? Although the angel did not say so in so many words, the answer was VIRGIN BIRTH. It would be a miracle of the Holy Spirit. He would come upon her, and the power of God would overshadow her.

To Mary’s problem of “How?”—it seemed impossible to human reckoning—God’s answer is “the Holy Spirit.” “Therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born of you will be called the Son of God.” Here we have a sublime statement of the incarnation. Mary’s Son would be God manifest in the flesh.

The angel then broke the news to Mary that her relative, Elisabeth was six months pregnant—she who had been barren. This miracle would reassure Mary that with God, nothing is impossible.

In beautiful submission, Mary yielded herself to the Lord for the accomplishment of His wondrous purposes. The angel then left.

Visit of Mary to Elisabeth (1:39-45)

We are not told why Mary visited Elisabeth at this time. It may have been to avoid the scandal that would inevitably arise in Nazareth when her condition became known. If this is so, then the welcome given by Elisabeth and the kindness shown would have been doubly sweet.

As soon as Elisabeth heard Mary's voice, the baby leaped in her womb—a mysterious, involuntary response of the unborn forerunner to the arrival of the unborn Messiah. The Holy Spirit controlled Elisabeth, guiding her speech and actions.

Three persons in chapter 1 filled with the Holy Spirit are John the Baptist (verse 15), Elisabeth (verse 41) and Zacharias (verse 67).

One of the marks of a Spirit-filled life is speaking in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:18, 19). We are not surprised therefore to find three songs in this chapter, and two in the next. Four of these songs are generally known by Latin titles, taken from the first lines: Elisabeth's Salutation (1:42-45); The Magnificat (it magnifies) (1:46-55); Benedictus (blessed) (1:68-79); Gloria in Excelsis Deo (glory to God on high) (2:14); Nunc Dimittis (now let depart) (2:29-32).

Speaking by special inspiration, Elisabeth saluted Mary as “the mother of my Lord.” There was not a trace of jealousy in her heart; only joy and delight that the unborn baby would be her Lord.

Mary was blessed among women because she was given the privilege of bearing the Messiah. The fruit of her womb is blessed—He is Lord and Savior.

Notice the Bible never speaks of Mary as the mother of God. While it is true she was the mother of Jesus, and Jesus is God, it is still a doctrinal absurdity to speak of God as having a mother. Jesus existed from all eternity. Mary was a finite creature with a definite date when she began to exist. She was the mother of Jesus only in His incarnation.

Elisabeth rehearsed the seemingly intuitive excitement of her unborn child when Mary first spoke. Then she assured Mary that her faith would be abundantly rewarded. Her expectation would be fulfilled. She had not believed in vain. Her Baby would be born as promised.

Mary's Song Magnifying the Lord (1:46-56)

The Magnificat resembles Hannah's song (1 Samuel 2:1-10). First, Mary praised the Lord for what He had done for her (verses 46b-49). Notice she said (verse 48) "all generations will *call me blessed*." She would not be one who conferred blessings but one who would be blessed. It should be noticed she is speaking of God as her Savior, disproving the idea that Mary was sinless.

Secondly, she praised the Lord for His mercy to those who fear Him in every generation. He abases the proud and mighty, and exalts the poor and hungry (verses 50-53).

Finally, she magnified the Lord for His faithfulness to Israel in keeping the promises He had made to Abraham and his seed (verses 54-55).

After staying with Elisabeth for three months, Mary returned to Nazareth. She was not yet married. No doubt she became the object of suspicion and slander in the neighborhood. But God would vindicate her: she could afford to wait.

Birth of the Forerunner (1:57-66)

At the appointed time, Elisabeth gave birth to a baby boy. Her relatives and friends were delighted. On the eighth day, when the boy was circumcised, they thought it was a foregone conclusion he would be named Zacharias, after his father. When Elisabeth told them the child's name would be John, they were surprised; none of his relatives had that name.

To get the final decision, they made signs to Zacharias. (This indicates that he was not only dumb, but deaf as well.) Calling for a writing tablet, he settled the matter—the baby's name was John. The people were all surprised.

But it was more of a surprise when Zacharias' speech returned as soon as he wrote "John." The news spread quickly through Judea, and people wondered about the future work of this unusual boy. They knew God's special favor was upon him.

Prophecy of Zacharias Concerning John (1:67-80)

Freed from the fetters of unbelief and filled with the Holy Spirit, Zacharias was inspired to utter an eloquent hymn of praise. This song is rich in quotations from the Old Testament. It may be outlined as follows:

Praise to God for what He had done (1:68-69). Zacharias realized the birth of his son, John, indicated the imminence of the coming Messiah. He spoke of Christ's advent as an accomplished fact before it happened. Faith enabled him to say God had already visited and wrought redemption for His people by sending the Redeemer. Jehovah had raised up a horn of salvation in the royal house of David. (A horn was used to hold the oil for anointing kings; therefore it might mean here a *King* of salvation from the kingly line of David.)

Praise to God for fulfilling prophecy (1:70-71). The coming of the Messiah had been predicted by the holy prophets since the ages began. It would mean salvation and safety from enemies.

Praise to God for His faithfulness to His promises (1:72-75). The Lord had made an unconditional covenant of salvation with Abraham. This promise was fulfilled by the coming of Abraham's seed—the Lord Jesus Christ. The salvation he brought was both external and internal. Externally, it meant deliverance from the hand of enemies. Internally, it meant serving Him with fear, in holiness and righteousness.

G. Campbell Morgan brings out two striking thoughts on this passage⁴—first, the arresting connection between the name of John and the theme of the song—both are the grace of God. Then he finds allusions to the names of John, Zacharias and Elisabeth in verses 72 and 73 (John—the mercy promised, verse 72; Zacharias—to remember, verse 72; Elisabeth—the oath, verse 73). God's favor, as announced by John, results from His remembering the oath of His covenant.

The mission of John, the Savior's herald (1:76-77), John would be the prophet of the Most High, preparing the hearts of the people for the coming of the Lord, and proclaiming salvation for the people through the forgiveness of their sins. References to Jehovah in the Old Testament are applied to Jesus in the New. Malachi predicted a messenger to prepare the way before Jehovah (3:1). Zacharias identifies John as the messenger. We

know that John came to prepare the way before Jesus. The obvious conclusion is that Jesus is Jehovah.

Christ's coming is likened to the sunrise (1:78-79). For centuries, the world had lain in darkness. Now through the tender mercy of God, dawn was about to break. It would come in the Person of Christ, shining on the Gentiles who were in darkness and in the shadow of death, and guiding Israel's feet in the path of peace (see Malachi 4:2).

The chapter closes with a simple statement that John grew physically and spiritually, remaining in the wilderness till the day would come for his public appearance to the nation of Israel.

Birth of Jesus at Bethlehem (2:1-7)

Caesar Augustus made a decree that the whole world should be enrolled; a census should be taken throughout his empire. It was first taken when Quirinius (Cyrenius, AV) was governor of Syria.

For many years, the accuracy of Luke's Gospel was called into question because of this reference to Quirinius. But recent archaeological discoveries tend to confirm the record. From Caesar Augustus' view he was demonstrating supremacy over the Greek-Roman world. But from God's view this Gentile emperor was merely a puppet to further the divine program (see Proverbs 21:1). Augustus' decree brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem at exactly the right time so the Messiah might be born there in fulfillment of prophecy (Micah 5:2).

Bethlehem was crowded when they arrived from Galilee. The only vacant place was the stable of an inn. This was a preview of how men would receive their Savior. It was while there that Mary brought forth her firstborn Son, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger. Thus God visited our planet in the Person of a helpless Baby, and in the poverty of an ill-smelling stable. "He began in a manger, and ended on the cross, and along the way had not where to lay His head."⁵

Announcement to the Shepherds (2:8-14)

The first intimation of this unique birth was not given to the religious leaders in Jerusalem, but to shepherds on Judean hillsides. "And is there not a world of meaning in the fact that it was very ordinary people, busy about

very ordinary tasks, whose eyes first saw the ‘glory of the coming of the Lord’? It means, first, that the place of duty, however humble, is the place of vision. And it means, second, that it is the men who have kept to the deep, simple pieties of life and have not lost the child heart to whom the gates of the Kingdom most readily open.”⁶

An angel of the Lord came to the shepherds, and a bright, glorious light shone all around them. As they recoiled in terror, the angel comforted them, breaking the news of good tidings of great joy for all people. That very day, in nearby Bethlehem, a Baby had been born—the Savior, Christ the Lord.

Here we have a theology in miniature. First, He is a Savior, which is expressed in His name, Jesus. Then He is Christ, the Anointed of God, the Messiah of Israel. Finally, He is the Lord, God manifest in the flesh.

The angels gave the shepherds a twofold sign. First the Baby would be wrapped in swaddling clothes. They had seen babies in swaddling clothes before—but this Baby was the Lord. The second part of the sign was that He would be lying in a manger.

Think of the Creator and Sustainer of the universe entering human history not as a conquering military Hero but as a little Baby! Yet this is the truth of the incarnation.

Heaven’s pent-up ecstasy could not longer be restrained. A multitude of the heavenly host suddenly appeared, singing praise to God. Their song, known generally by the title, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, catches up the full significance of the birth of the Baby. His life and ministry would bring glory to God and peace on earth to men in whom He is well pleased. The men in whom God is well pleased are those who repent of their sins and receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Visit of the Shepherds (2:15-20)

As soon as the angels departed, the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and Jesus lying in the manger. They gave a complete report of the angel’s visit, causing considerable surprise among those who had gathered in the stable. But Mary had a deeper understanding of what was going on; she treasured this news, and knowingly pondered it in her heart.

The shepherds returned to their flocks, overjoyed at all they had heard and seen, and overflowing in their worship of God.

Circumcision and Dedication of Jesus (2:21-24)

At least three different rituals are described in this passage. *First* there was the circumcision (a token of the covenant that God made with Abraham) of Jesus when He was eight days old. On this same day, the Baby was named, according to Jewish custom. The angel had previously instructed Mary and Joseph to call Him Jesus. The *second* ceremony was concerned with the purification of Mary. It took place forty days after the birth of Jesus (see Leviticus 12:1-4). Ordinarily parents were supposed to bring a lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering. But the poor were permitted to bring two young pigeons or turtledoves (Leviticus 12:6-8). The fact that Mary brought no lamb, but only two young pigeons is a reflection of the poverty into which Jesus was born. The correct translation of verse 22 is: “And when the days of *their* purification according to the Law of Moses were fulfilled . . .” This raises the question as to who is meant by *their*. Certainly there was no need of purification as far as Jesus Himself was concerned. Some people think that Joseph is thus associated with Mary in the ceremony, but this seems strange in view of the fact that Joseph was not the father of the Child. The *third* ritual was the presentation of Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem. Originally God had decreed that the firstborn sons belonged to Him; they were to form the priestly class. Later, He set aside the tribe of Levi to serve as priests. Then the parents were permitted to “buy back” or “redeem” their firstborn son by the payment of five shekels at the dedication of him to the Lord.

Simeon Lives to See the Messiah (2:25-35)

Simeon was one of the godly remnant of Jews who was waiting for the coming of the Messiah. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die before seeing God’s Christ or Anointed One. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him” (Psalm. 25:14). There is a mysterious communication of divine knowledge to those who walk in quiet, contemplative fellowship with God.

He entered the Temple area on the very day that Jesus’ parents were presenting Him to God. Simeon was supernaturally instructed that this Child was the promised Messiah. Taking Jesus in his arms, he uttered the memorable song now known as Nunc Dimittis (Now let . . . depart).

The burden of the song is as follows: Now let me depart in peace, Lord. I have seen Thy salvation in the Person of this Baby, the promised Redeemer,

as Thou didst promise me, Thou hast ordained Him to provide salvation for all classes of people. He will be a light to illuminate the Gentiles (His first advent) and to shine in glory on thy people Israel (His second advent). Simeon was prepared to die after he had met the Lord Jesus. The sting of death was gone.

(In the American Standard Version, verse 33 reads. “And his father and his mother were marveling at the things which were spoken concerning him.” The King James Version says simply, “And Joseph and his mother marveled . . .” The fact that Joseph is spoken of as the father of Jesus does not deny the Virgin Birth; Joseph was the stepfather of Jesus.)

After this initial outburst of praise to God for the Messiah, Simeon spoke prophetically to Mary. The prophecy consisted of four parts: (1) The child was set for the falling and rising of many in Israel. Those who were arrogant, unrepentant and unbelieving would fall and be punished. Those who humbled themselves, repented of their sins and received the Lord Jesus would rise and be blessed. (2) The child was set . . . for a sign which is spoken against. There was a special significance connected with the Person of Christ. His very presence on earth proved a tremendous rebuke to sin and unholiness, and thus brought out the bitter animosity of the human heart. (3) Yea, and a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also. Simeon was here predicting the grief that would flood Mary’s heart when she would witness the crucifixion of her Son (John 19:25). (4) “. . . that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” The way in which a person reacts to the Savior is a test of his inward motives and affections.

Anna, the Prophetess (2:36-39)

Anna, the prophetess, like Simeon was a member of the faithful remnant of Israel who were waiting for the Messiah’s advent. She was of the tribe of Asher (meaning happy, blessed), one of the ten tribes carried into captivity by the Assyrians in 721 B.C. Anna must have been over 100 years old, having been married for seven years, then widowed for 84 years.

As a prophetess, she undoubtedly received divine revelations and served as a mouthpiece of God. She was faithful in her attendance at the Temple’s public services, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day. Age did not deter her from serving the Lord.

As Jesus was being presented to the Lord, and Simeon was speaking to Mary, Anna came up giving thanks to God for the promised Redeemer. Then she spoke about Jesus to the faithful ones in Jerusalem who were expecting redemption.

After Joseph and Mary had completed the rites of purification and dedication, they returned to their home in Nazareth.

It will be noticed here that Luke omits any mention of the visit of the wise men or of the flight into Egypt.

Early Years of Jesus (2:40-52)

The normal growth of Jesus is set forth in verse 40. *Physically* He grew and became strong. He passed through the usual stages of physical development, learning to walk, talk, play and work. Because of this He can sympathize with us in every stage of our growth. *Mentally*, He was filled with wisdom. He not only learned His ABC's, His numbers, and all the common knowledge of that day, but He grew in wisdom, that is, in the practical application of this knowledge to the problems of life. *Spiritually* the favor of God was upon Him. He walked in fellowship with God and in dependence on the Holy Spirit. He studied the Bible, spent time in prayer, and delighted to do His Father's will.

A Jewish boy becomes a man and a son of the law at the age of twelve. When our Lord was twelve years of age, His family made their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem for His first Passover. But when they left to return to Galilee, they didn't notice that Jesus was not in the entourage. This may seem strange to us unless we realize that the family probably traveled with a fairly large caravan. They no doubt assumed that Jesus was walking with others of His own age.

Before condemning Joseph and Mary, remember how easy it is for us to travel a day's journey, supposing Jesus to be in the company, when actually we have lost contact with Him through unconfessed sin in our lives. To re-establish contact with Him, we must go back to the place where fellowship was broken, then confess and forsake our sin.

Returning to Jerusalem, the distraught parents found Jesus in the Temple. He was sitting among the teachers listening and asking questions. There is no suggestion of His acting as a precocious child, disputing with His elders. He, as a normal child, was learning in humility and quietness from His

teachers. Yet in the course of the proceedings, He must have been asked some questions, because the people were amazed by His knowledge and His answers.

His parents also were astonished when they found Jesus participating intelligently in a discussion with those much older than He. Yet His mother expressed her accumulated anxiety and irritation by reproving Him. Didn't He know they had been worried about Him? The Lord's answer (verse 49) shows He was fully aware of His identity as the Son of God, and of His divine mission. "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" She said, "Your father and I . . ." He said, "my Father's business." At the time, they did not understand what He meant by His cryptic remark.

Reunited they returned to Nazareth. The moral excellence of Jesus is seen in the words "He was subject unto them." Though Creator of the universe, He took His place as an obedient child in this humble Jewish family. And all the time, Mary was pondering His sayings in her heart.

In verse 52, we have the true humanity and normal growth of our Lord depicted: His *mental* growth—increased in wisdom: His *physical* growth—and stature; His *spiritual* growth—in favor with God and His *social* growth—in favor with man. He was absolutely perfect in every aspect of His growth.

Here Luke skips silently over eighteen years that the Lord Jesus spent in Nazareth as the Son of a carpenter. These years teach us the importance of preparation and training, the need for patience and the value of common work. They warn against the temptation to jump from spiritual birth to public ministry. Those who do not have a normal spiritual childhood and adolescence court disaster in their later life and testimony.

¹ William Kelly, *An Exposition of the Gospel of Luke* (London: Pickering and Inglis, n.d.) p. 16.

² James S. Stewart, *The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ* (New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.) p. 9.

³ G. Coleman Luck, *Luke* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1960) p. 17.

⁴ G. Campbell Morgan, *The Gospel According to Luke* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1931) pp. 30, 31.

⁵ J. N. Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, Vol. III (New York: Gospel Book and Tract Depot, n.d.) p. 293.

⁶ James S. Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

THE
G O S P E L O F

LUKE

EXAM BOOKLET

AK '05

STUDENT NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue C. yellow
B. green D. orange

 B

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. They will help you to apply the principles and concepts in this course. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

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CHAPTER 1 EXAM

THE BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF JESUS

EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

1. Luke's emphasis is on Jesus as
 - A. the Son of God
 - B. the Son of Man
 - C. the Servant of Jehovah
 - D. the King of Israel_____

2. The story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15) falls within which of the following periods in the Lord's life and ministry? In
 - A. the Galilean ministry period
 - B. the Jerusalem ministry period
 - C. the Perea ministry period
 - D. the ministry of the last week_____

3. In writing his Gospel, Luke
 - A. relied solely on his first hand knowledge of the facts
 - B. was so dependent on human documents he had little need for divine inspiration
 - C. was inspired of the Holy Spirit so had no need to refer to human documents
 - D. used oral and written sources but was, nevertheless, guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit_____

4. The first important matter recorded in Luke's Gospel is
 - A. the genealogy of the Lord Jesus
 - B. the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist
 - C. the annunciation to the Virgin Mary of the birth of the Lord Jesus
 - D. the visit of the wise men to Bethlehem_____

5. When Mary wanted to know how she could become the mother of Israel's Messiah she was told that
- A. it would be by means of a miraculous virgin birth
 - B. she would have to marry Joseph first
 - C. she must have more faith in God
 - D. her cousin Elisabeth would tell her
- _____
6. When John the Baptist was named after his birth
- A. Jesus was already six months old
 - B. his father became dumb
 - C. Zacharias burst into an inspired hymn of praise to God
 - D. Elisabeth sang the magnificat
- _____
7. The shepherds were told they would be able to recognize the promised Messiah because He would be
- A. performing miracles
 - B. worshipped by King Herod
 - C. receiving gifts from three wise men
 - D. lying in a manger
- _____
8. The second of the three rituals performed at the time of Christ's birth was
- A. the circumcision of Jesus
 - B. the baptism of Jesus
 - C. the purification of Mary
 - D. the presentation of Jesus in the Temple
- _____
9. Numerous songs were sung at the occasion of Christ's birth. Which of the following sang about the sword which would pierce the soul of the Virgin Mary?
- A. The angels
 - B. Mary herself
 - C. Zacharias
 - D. Simeon
- _____
10. The Lord Jesus was taken by Joseph and Mary to Jerusalem when He was twelve years old because
- A. Jesus wanted to see the temple
 - B. He needed further education
 - C. at the age of twelve a Jewish boy becomes a man
 - D. it was time for Israel to acknowledge her Messiah
- _____

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What spiritual lesson has impressed you most from a study of Luke 1, 2?
