

SALVATION PREPARED FOR ALL
PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE: LUKE

Luke 2:21-33 (NASV)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. AUTHORSHIP

1. Not identified in Gospel
2. Not an eyewitness of Jesus' ministry—relied on other eyewitnesses—**1:2**
3. Early Church sources identify him
 - a. Muratorian fragment—list of NT books—about 170 AD
 - Said it was Luke—‘the beloved physician’
 - b. Irenaeus—about 180
 - Said it was Luke—a close companion of Paul
4. The author accompanied Paul—in the ‘we’ passages
 - **Acts 16:10-17**—from Troas to Philippi
 - **Acts 20:5-15**—from Philippi to Troas—to Miletus
 - **Acts 21:1-18**—from Miletus to Jerusalem
 - **Acts 27:1-28:16**—from Caesarea to Rome

B. LUKE—THE PERSON

1. Referred to in 3 places in NT
 - **Philem 24**—Luke with Paul—with Mark, Aristarchus, and Demas
 - **Col 4:14**—Luke with Paul—with Mark, Aristarchus, Justus, Epaphras, and Demas
 - **II Tim 4:11**—only Luke was with Paul
2. Not a circumcised Jew
 - **Col 4:11**—says Aristarchus, Mark, Justus were the only circumcised Jews with him
3. Hometown
 - Eusebius—said it was Antioch
 - Some say—Troas—where he joined Paul on 2nd missionary journey
4. Profession—**doctor**—identified as ‘beloved physician’ in **Col 4:14**

C. COMPOSITION

1. DATE

a. Probably after destruction of Temple (70 AD)

1. Luke gives detailed description of (predicted) fall of Jerusalem—[Lk 21:20-24](#)

➤ Not symbolic reference to ‘abomination of desolation’—Mt 24/Mk 13

2. Luke gives detailed description of Roman methods of siege warfare—[Lk 19:43-44](#)

b. Probably before 90 AD

1. Luke says nothing about Pauline letters

2. These were first published about 90 AD

2. LOCATION

○ Uncertain—some scholars say Ephesus

3. AUDIENCE

a. Primary recipient—Theophilus—1:3

▪ Possibly Greek/Roman official—‘Most excellent Theophilus’

▪ Possibly a patron underwriting Luke’s research

b. General readership—Gentiles

4. USE OF SOURCES

a. Use of Mark—primary source—[as did Matthew]

1. Rearranges order

➤ Example: Jesus’ visit to Nazareth at beginning (chapter 4) instead of later (Mark 6)

2. Adds birth narratives of John the Baptist and Jesus

3. Gives modified version of Passion and Resurrection

b. Use of ‘Q’

1. Mainly teaching material—common with Matthew

2. Scattered these teachings—unlike Matthew’s long blocks

3. Two main sections

a. Lesser insertion—6:20-8:3

➤ Includes sayings from Sermon on the Plain

b. Greater insertion—9:51-18:14

1. Mainly teachings on road from Galilee to Jerusalem

2. Contains numerous parables

✓ 24 of Luke's 29 parables

✓ 14 of them are unique to Luke—not in Mark or 'Q'

c. Use of 'L'

1. Material unique to Luke

2. Examples of unique parables:

▪ Lost sheep, lost coin, prodigal son

▪ The Good Samaritan

▪ Lazarus and Rich Man

3. Typically stress one or more of these themes

▪ Life's unexpected reversals

▪ God's gracious forgiveness of sinners

▪ Jesus as gentle and loving shepherd/savior

▪ Jesus' concern for oppressed people

D. ORGANIZATION

1. Preface—1:1-4

2. Infancy Narratives of John and Jesus—1:5-2:52

3. Prelude to Jesus' Ministry—3:1-4:13

○ Baptism

○ Genealogy

○ Temptation

4. Jesus' Galilean Ministry—4:14-9:50

5. Jesus' Teachings on Journey to Jerusalem—9:51-19:27

6. Jerusalem Ministry—19:28-21:38

7. Final Conflict and Passion—chapters 22-23

8. Resurrection and Post-Resurrection Appearances—chapter 24

E. PURPOSES

1. HISTORICAL ACCURACY—1:1-4

- a. Accurate account—based on eyewitness accounts and careful research
- b. In proper sequential order
- c. To convey the exact truth

2. MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

- a. Background dilemma
 - God's promise to bless Israel and use it to bless others
 - Roman defeat of Israel and destruction of Temple
- b. Luke shows God fulfilled His promise to/through Israel
- c. Assures God will continue to be faithful to/through the New Israel—His Church

3. PHILOSOPHY OF SALVATION HISTORY

- a. Shows transition *from* Jewish *to* Christian phases of history
 - Begins with obvious Jewish roots of John the Baptist
 - But John also as messenger of a *New Covenant*—1:5-21
 - John as a transitional figure—16:16
 - Everything fulfilled in Christ—24:36-53
 - Ends with command to make disciples of all nations—24:47 (Acts 1:8)
 - Succinctly stated at end of second book—Acts 28:28
- b. Not just an ending—fulfillment of Old Covenant
- c. But also a *new* beginning—with a *future* mission for the church—explained in Acts

F. MAIN THEMES

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Emphasis on Holy Spirit's role in Christian history
- Luke uses term more than Matthew and Mark combined—14 times
- Continued emphasis in Acts

2. PRAYER

- Emphasis on Jesus' and disciples use of prayer
- Jesus' instructions on prayer more extensive than in other Gospels
- Continued emphasis in Acts

3. ROLE OF WOMEN

- Women play prominent role in Gospel

- At beginning—highlighted roles of Elizabeth and Mary
- Mary-Martha story—unique to Luke—**10:38-42**
- They financially support Jesus’ ministry—**8:2-3**
- At end—role of women in reporting resurrection
- Some scholars say Luke’s genealogy—is Mary’s lineage through Eli—**3:23**

4. JESUS’ ASSOCIATION WITH OUTCASTS

- Constant affinity with powerless, women and poor
- Reputation as friend of sinners and tax-collectors—7:34
- Parable of Good Samaritan—who is the hero
- Luke’s beatitude—“Blessed are the poor”—not ‘poor in spirit’—6:20

5. JESUS AS SAVIOR

- Matthew emphasizes Davidic Messiahship—for Jewish readers
- Mark emphasizes ‘Son of Man’ (though not exclusively)
- Luke is only Synoptic to declare Jesus as ‘Savior’ or ‘Salvation’—8 times
 - **1:47, 69, 71, 77**
 - **2:11**
 - **2:30**
 - **3:6**
 - **19:9**

6. UNIVERSAL OFFER OF SALVATION

- God works through history to redeem all humanity
- Salvation is intended for all nations

II. BIBLICAL TEXT—Lk 2:21-33

21 And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was *then* called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. **22** And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord, **24** and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” **25** And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. **26** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. **27** And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, **28** then he

took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, **29** “Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; **30** For my eyes have seen Your salvation, **31** Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, **32** A light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.” **33** And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him.

III. EXPOSITION

A. SIMEON

1. HIS SITUATION

- a. Righteous—devout—with the Holy Spirit upon him
- b. Waited for the *consolation*—**παράκλησις**—of Israel
- c. The role of the Holy Spirit—a major theme in Luke—[14 references]
 1. Fifth mention of Holy Spirit in the Gospel of Luke—in less than 2 chapters!
 2. Holy Spirit was upon Simeon—rarity before Pentecost
 3. The promise of the Holy Spirit—you will not die before seeing the Lord’s Christ
 4. Simeon came to the Temple “in the Spirit”
- d. Sense of patient but long-term longing
 - Prophecies (Isaiah) about this were 700 years old!
 - *Apparently* Simeon was quite old—waiting all his life for this

2. SIMEON’S RESPONSE

- a. He *blessed*—**εὐλογέω**—literally ‘eulogized’
 1. ‘Eulogized’ God—spoke ‘good words’ of thanks—to God—for His gift—**v 28**
 2. ‘Eulogized the parents—shared ‘good words’ of prophecy to parents—**v34**
 - b. He expressed satisfaction—that his hope had been met
 1. **Nunc dimittis vv29-32** = Latin—“Now let depart”
- 3rd birth canticle in Luke—after Magnificat and Zacharias’s Prophecy
2. Quoted mainly from Isaiah—plus one text from Psalms
 - v30**—My eyes have seen Your **salvation**—**Is 52:10** [Ps 119:166]
 - v32**—**Light** of revelation to the **Gentiles**—**Is 9:2** [42:6, 49:6]
 - v 32**—**Glory** of Your people Israel—**Is 60:2**

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF SIMEON'S RESPONSE

1. FIRST HUMAN ATTESTATION OF JESUS AS PROMISED MESSIAH

- Simeon was looking for the *consolation of Israel*—v 25

2. RARE GOSPEL PROCLAMATION OF JESUS AS 'SALVATION/SAVIOR'

- *For my eyes have seen Your salvation*—v30
- Savior/salvation—not mentioned in Matthew or Mark
- Savior/salvation—mentioned only twice in John

3. SALVATION IS AVAILABLE TO ALL—FOR UNIVERSAL ACCEPTANCE

a. *Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples*—v31

1. **λαος** = People = tribe—nation—people group—language group
2. *If singular*—could refer to all of God's 'people'—Israel
 - That is what the singular means in **verse 33**—*Your people Israel*
3. But *this is plural* = 'peoples'
 - Therefore—all tribes/nations
 - So—it extends beyond Israel—to all nations

b. *A light of revelation to the Gentiles*—v 32

1. **εθνος** = ethnic group—race—nation—people group
2. Could mean—all races or ethnic groups
3. Used by Jews to identify 'Gentiles'—especially in Pauline literature
4. This connotation—'Gentiles'—clearly extends salvation beyond just Israel
5. Definite article 'the' is absent
6. But connotation from previous verse requires this interpretation—*the Gentiles*

IV. SALVATION PREPARED FOR ALL—EVIDENCE THROUGHOUT LUKE

A. DESCRIPTION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST—Luke 3:1-6

1. Like Matthew and Mark—Luke quotes **Isaiah 40:3**

A voice of one calling in the desert, make ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.

2. But **only Luke** quotes **Is 40:4-5**—which ends with this phrase:

And all flesh will see the salvation of God

B. JESUS' INAUGURAL PROCLAMATION IN NAZARETH—Lk 4:14-30

1. This passage is **unique to Luke**—quoting **Is 61**—*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me . . .*
2. He angered the crowd—reminding them of God's mercy to Gentiles
 - Many widows were in Israel—but Elijah helped only the widow of Zarephath!
 - Many lepers were in Israel—but Elisha helped only Naaman the Syrian!

C. LUKE'S GENEALOGY GOES BACK TO ADAM—NOT JUST ABRAHAM

D. LUKE'S RECORD OF THE APOSTLES' MISSIONS

1. When Jesus sent out the Twelve—**Lk 9**
 - Luke (like Mark) does not record Jesus instructions to go only to Jews (as in Matthew)
2. Only Luke records Jesus' sending of the 70—**Lk 10**
 - Again—there is no restriction against going to the Gentiles

E. JESUS' FAVORABLE VIEW OF SAMARITANS

1. His Mercy on the Samaritans—**Lk 9**
 - a. When Samaritans refused admittance to Jesus
 - b. James and John wanted to call down fire from heaven to consume them
 - c. Jesus not only refused to punish the Samaritans
 - d. He clearly indicated—He had come to save Samaritans too

Lk 9:55-56—*You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*
 - e. **Only Luke** records this incident
2. **Only Luke** records the Parable of the Good Samaritan—**Lk 10**
 - The Samaritan is the **hero** of the story—who proved to be the good neighbor
3. **Only Luke** records the story of the Ten Lepers—**Lk 17**
 - Only the Samaritan leper showed his gratefulness for being healed

F. JESUS NARROWED THE ROAD—BUT BROADENED TENT OF SALVATION—Lk 13

1. When asked—*Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?*
2. Jesus responded with three answers
 - a. **Exhorted** them to enter through the narrow door—[Sermon on Mount]
 - b. **Rebuked** those who said they knew Him but whom He did not know—[Sermon on Mount]

13:28—*In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out.*

- Implication: salvation does not come by familiarity with God—simply born a Jew

c. Expanded the scope of salvation

1. It would be offered to persons of all nations

13:29—*And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God.*

2. Newcomers [Gentiles] would even come before Old-timers [Jews]

13:30—*And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last.*

G. LUKE'S SOTERIOLOGICAL VERSION OF THE GREAT COMMISSION—**Lk 24**

1. Like Matthew and Mark—the commission calls for **universal** proclamation

- **Matthew 28** says—make disciple of **all nations**—**εθνος**
- **Mark 16** says—preach the good news to **every creature**—**κτισισ**
- **Luke 24** says—they were to be *witnesses*—to **all the nations**—**εθνος**

2. But **salvation** is Luke's explicit emphasis

- **Matthew 28**—focuses on discipleship
- **Mark 16**—speaks of sharing the [generic] 'good news'
- **Luke 24**—explicitly addresses salvation from sin—through Christ's atonement

Lk 24:46-48—*Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.*