

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Theology of Luke-Acts, Session 2, Bock – Sources for Luke, Purpose, Readers and Destination and Date.

This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on The Theology of Luke-Acts. This is session number two, Darrell Bock's Sources for Luke, Purpose, Readers, and Destination, and Date.

We continue our study of Luke in theology with Darrell Bock's introductory material in his first volume. It's entitled Luke 1:1 through 9:50 in the Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament series put out by Baker.

Sources of the Gospel of Luke. The sources of Luke's work are a debated part of a complex area known as the synoptic problem. Numerous approaches to this issue have been suggested.

Some argue for the independence of the synoptic documents, though the amount of agreement in wording and order between Matthew, Mark, and Luke is against this approach. In addition, Luke's mention of predecessors in his preface, in his preface, Luke 1:1 to 4, suggests this approach is too simple. An old solution known as the Augustinian hypothesis argues that the order is Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

The major problem with this hypothesis is that it cannot explain the contents of Mark as a summarizing gospel without appealing to its use of Luke. The Griesbach or two gospel hypothesis argues that the correct order is Matthew, Luke, and Mark. The appeal of this view is the absence of hypothesized sources and its agreement with early church tradition, which suggests that Matthew's gospel was the earliest.

Its major problems are demonstrating that Luke knew Matthew and explaining how Mark, as a summarizing gospel, often has more vivid detail in pericopes that overlap with the other Gospels. Mark's lack of an infancy narrative or extended teaching, like the Sermon on the Mount or the Sermon on the Plain in Luke, is also against Mark's coming last, especially since Mark's use of the eschatological parables or discourses shows that he can report Jesus' discourses. Most scholars hold to some form of the four-source theory, a view first formalized by Streeter in 1924 and defended today by Tuckett, 1983, and Fitzmyer, 1981.

Fitzmyer's defense of this approach as it relates to Luke is the most detailed available. This view argues for the priority of Mark and the use of a saying source known as Q from the German Quelle or source. Mark is first and there's a saying source that is used by Matthew and Luke.

In addition, Matthew has a special source material called M for Matthew, while Luke has his own special material, some of the infancy material, for example, that would be called L. Thus, the four sources are Mark, Q, saying source, L, Luke special source, and M, Matthew special source. And Luke would have used Mark, Q, and L. It must be noted that the most challenging aspect of this approach is the nature of the evidence for Q, a document containing only sayings which have only the Gospel of Thomas as a possible ancient parallel in this genre. Once again, Bach is abreast of the scholarship, sets forth views fairly, and admits the problems of every view, including the one he favors.

That's good scholarship where I come from. A recent variation of the two-gospel hypothesis, which maintains Mark in priority, comes from Golder, who argues for the order of Mark, Matthew, and Luke. I'm going to skip that one.

So, in all likelihood, Luke had access to Mark, special material, L, and traditions, which are also reflected in Matthew, though often with some even significant divergence from Matthew's language. In fact, the Q material is so varied in character that some speak of two forms of Q, a Matthaean version and a Lukean version. I. Howard Marshall, makes this distinction.

This means that Q may not be a fixed written tradition but rather a pool of widely circulating traditions. Given the amount of teaching and parables that Matthew and Luke share, one cannot rule out that L and Q might have overlapped, with Matthew using Q and Luke using L. While noting the others speak of Q as a bona fide document or set of documents, Bach understands Q to be a fluid pool of traditions from which both Luke and Matthew drew. This gets very, very, Bock uses the word complex.

That's understating the case, and we don't need to go into minute distinctions upon distinctions. Evans, C. F. Evans, Craig Evans, 1990, lists 47 L texts, Luke texts. This unique material comprises 485 verses of Luke or about 42% of Luke's whole, so 42% of Luke is unique to Luke.

Much in Luke is not found elsewhere. This material contains not only a unique portrait of Jesus' infancy but also many fresh sayings and parables of Jesus. Four miracles are unique to Luke.

Luke 7:11 to 17. Four miracles are unique to Luke. Luke 7:11 to 17, the man with a withered hand.

Luke 13:10 to 17, a woman with a disabling spirit, the ESV calls it. Luke 14:1 to 6, healing of a man on the Sabbath. Luke 17:11 through 19.

Jesus cleanses 10 lepers, only found in Luke's gospel. Three deal either with a Sabbath controversy or with a response of a non-Jew to Jesus. Several parables are indisputably unique to Luke.

Their content has great variety, stressing service, the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:29 to 37, humility, the Pharisee and the Publican, Luke 18:9 to 14, diligence in prayer and in future or eschatological hope, the nagging friend, Luke 11:5 through 8, the nagging widow, Luke 18:1 through 8, the preciousness of the lost and the joy at their recovery, lost coin and lost son, Luke 15:8 to 10 and 11 to 32, and care in the use of resources and or kindness to the poor, the rich fool, Luke 12:13 to 21, the crafty steward, 16:1 to 8, the rich man in Lazarus, 16:19 through 31. The ethical thrust of Luke's gospel emerges in this material. Four additional parables that emphasize God's plan have the potential to overlap with Matthew and yet are cast in a fresh light by Luke.

One should be faithful until Jesus returns, one should rejoice to sit at the table, one should rejoice at the coming of the lost sheep, and one should be faithful with what the master supplies resting on his goodness. The breadth of topics in the gospel and Luke's pastoral concern emerge in this unique or uniquely emphasized material. The Gospels link with Acts.

In thinking about the use of sources, one should also consider that Luke structured his gospel to anticipate his sequel, Acts. This connection to Acts is seen in the repetition of the prologue, Luke 1:1 to 4, Acts 1:1. In fact, the Acts prologue looks back to Luke's gospel in a style reminiscent of other ancient works. Compare Josephus against Apion, 1, 1, paragraph 1, reading Acts 1:1. In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day when he was taken up. After which he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during 40 days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

The connection between Luke-Acts is also noted in the parable themes that dominate the two volumes.

Jesus heals, as do Peter and Paul. Jesus must travel to Jerusalem, while Paul must go to Rome. Jesus is slain by opposition, and so is the martyr Stephen in Acts 7. The account of the Ascension also links the two volumes tightly together.

Luke 24:49 to 53, Acts 1:1 to 11. As I said earlier, the Ascension is mentioned in many places, but the actual event is recorded only in these two places. Luke 24:49 to 51, Acts 1:1 to 11.

Efforts to note extensive parallels between Luke and Acts have often brought much discussion. Although there are debatable matters, there's no doubt Luke intends to show parallels between the time of Jesus and the time of his followers. Both the story and the theology of the two volumes are linked.

To understand the emergence of the church, one must understand Jesus and the plan of God. Luke is a historian. One other point emerges from a look at Luke's use of sources.

He was careful with his material. A great debate rages about how good a historian Luke was. Many see him handling his materials with great freedom for theological reasons.

Golder, Hanson, Martin Dibelius, or for sociological reasons, Esler. Among the items under scrutiny are Luke's association of Jesus' birth with a census from Quirinius, his timing for the rebellion under Titus, the authenticity of certain parables and sayings, the reality of the miracles, his portrait of the trials of Jesus, the details of his resurrection accounts, the faithful rendering of speeches, his portrayal of early church harmony, the uniqueness of his meeting with Cornelius, the reality of the Jerusalem council, and his portrait of Paul. The critics have been busy.

The examination of such details must be done on a case-by-case basis. Different judgments will be made in such matters, not just on the basis of the complexity of the evidence, but one must remember which one must remember is not without its own historical gaps but also because of philosophical worldview issues. Nonetheless, an examination of Luke's use of his sources shows his general trustworthiness.

Investigation into his description of settings, customs, and locales reveal the same sensitivity. Martin Hengel in a 1980 book, Colin Hemer again, 1989. Luke is a first-class ancient historian, and most good ancient historians understood their task well.

These include Thucydides and Polybius. It is average to argue that Luke is exclusively either a theologian or a historian, with many opting to give history a lesser place, underplaying the evidence in sources that show Luke is careful with his material. He is not careless, nor is he a fabricator of events, as some ancient historians were.

This point, however, does not mean that Luke cannot rearrange material for emphasis, summarize events in his own language, or bring out his own emphases as drawn from the tradition. A study of the above list of Luke's sources and their arrangement reveal these very traits. The Lukan speeches summarize and proclaim as well as report.

Surely the sermons that are recorded in the book of Acts were longer and Luke is summarizing those sermons in his own language. Luke is a sensitive observer of the events he describes. He is interested in both history and theology.

He writes not just about the time sequence of events and teaching but about their topical and theological relationship as well. He writes as a theologian and pastor but as one whose direction is marked out by the history that preceded him. That is, Luke is communicating historical information, but his purpose is not only to do that.

He is a theologian, selecting and emphasizing that which the Spirit of God leads him to do and which he does as a historian, theologian, and man who loved the Lord Jesus. To underemphasize any element in the Lukan effort, whether pastoral, theological, or historical, is to underestimate the depth of his account. Bach speaks from years of study.

So, when Zondervan began a series of Biblical theology of the New Testament, the person who is now the publisher of Zondervan, Katja Kovrit, told me at an ETS meeting, we went for the best person for each of the, for each corpus of the New Testament, for each of the corpora of the New Testament. So they got Doug Moo to do the theology of Paul. And they got Peter Davids to do the theology of the general epistles.

And when it came to Lukan theology, there was no question, they got Darrell Bach. And his book on Lukan theology is very, very good. Purpose, readers, and destination.

It is debated whether Theophilus is already a Christian or is thinking of becoming one. Numerous intents for the gospel and its sequel have been suggested. I'm not going to read 11 of them.

This plethora of credible suggestions shows the complexity of the Lukan enterprise. Of all these suggestions, those centering on God's role in salvation and his new community are most likely to reflect the key aspects of Luke's comprehensive agenda. I'll read a few of those proposed purposes for Luke.

Confirmation of the word and the message of salvation. A theodicy of God's faithfulness to Israel. A sociological legitimation of full fellowship for Gentiles and a defense of the new community as not unfaithful to Rome.

An effort at conciliation with Judaism by showing that the offer of salvation in Jesus Christ is the natural extension of Judaism. These four, Bock regards as the most probable of the suggested intents for Luke's gospel. The examination of the gospel's structure and theology will bear this out, as does a survey of Luke's unique material.

It is unlikely that Theophilus is just interested in becoming a Christian or is a Roman official who needs to have Christianity explained in order to accept it as a legitimate religion. Nor are Paul and his message of simple evangelism the object of defense. Too little of the gospel deals with such legal, political concerns, and too much exhortation deals with issues beyond simple evangelism.

He's showing why he rejects the other seven purported purposes for Luke's gospel. Luke 1:3, and 4 suggest that Theophilus received some instruction. The detail when Luke acts about faithfulness, Jewish-Gentile relations, and clinging to the hope of Jesus' return suggests a Gentile who is experiencing doubt about his association with the new community.

The problems over table fellowship, Gentile inclusion, and examples of how rejection was faced in the early church also suggest this setting. Likewise, the amount of ethical exhortation in the Gospel of Luke suggests this approach. Theophilus appears to be a man of rank, Luke 1:3, who has associated himself with the church but doubts whether, in fact, he really belongs in this racially mixed and heavily persecuted community.

In the Gospel, Luke takes Theophilus through Jesus' career in order to review how God worked to legitimize Jesus and how Jesus proclaimed hope. Luke also wishes to defend God's faithfulness to Israel and his promises despite the rejection of the promise by many of the nation. The offer of the Gospel openly includes Theophilus and calls him to remain faithful, committed, and expectant, even in the midst of intense Jewish rejection and with the hope that both Jews and Gentiles will turn to Jesus.

What is very possible is that Theophilus had been a God-fearer before coming to Christ since this can explain the interest in God-fearers in Acts, as well as the extensive use of the Old Testament in the two volumes. God-fearers, of course, are not full Jews. They are Gentiles attracted to the synagogue's monotheism and ethics, but who came short of being circumcised and becoming members of the Israelite community in that regard? They were the right mission field for Paul when he evangelized across the Roman world.

Luke did not write, however, just for this one person but for any who felt this tension. Any Gentile feeling out of place in the original Jewish movement could benefit from the reassurance Luke offers. Any Jew or Jewish Christian troubled by the lack of Jewish response to the Gospel or by the Gentile openness to the Gospel could see that God directed the affair and that he gave the nation multiple invitations to join in God's renewed work.

Christianity conflicted with Judaism not because the new movement consciously tried to isolate itself from the nation but because it was forced out. This rejection is

evidence in Acts, but the seeds are sown in the rejection of Jesus so carefully detailed in Luke chapters 9 to 13 and 22 and 23. For Luke, the new community is broad in its extension of blessing because Jesus preached that it be so.

Luke 4:16 to 30. Luke 5:30 to 32. Luke 19: 10, "Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 24:44 to 47. The new community is broad in its extension of blessing because Jesus preached that's the way it should be.

Not only so, but God also directed that it be so in Acts 10:34 to 43. Conversion of Cornelius's household. Acts 15:1 to 21, Jerusalem council and its results--22: 6 to 11. Acts 26:15 through 20.

Date. The date of Luke's gospel is disputed. But there are some limits. For example, the earliest possible date would be within the years of the last recorded event in Acts, which probably takes place in the year 62.

Some critical scholars offer a date in the early to mid-second century, but the tone of Acts does not really fit the tone of some other documents of this period. In addition, it is unlikely that such a late work would ignore Paul's letters as much as Acts does. The most popular date is sometime after the fall of Jerusalem, usually between 80 and 90 AD.

The reasons set forth include the following. Luke is said to be after Mark, which was written in the 60s. The picture of Paul as a hero figure needs time to emerge.

Three, the portrait of churches like Ephesus requires a period before the omission of persecution in the mid-90s. Four, the Lukan apocalyptic discourses, with their descriptions of siege and their focus on the city, presuppose the fall and require a period after 70. And five, some aspects of the theology are late, even early catholic.

Three of these arguments are less than central. The suggestion Paul needs time to emerge as a hero is not clear. His letters in Acts guarantee he was a central figure in the church who generated some following and controversy.

Paul's letters show that James gained respect rather quickly, and the same for Paul. The portrait of the churches, which were not yet under Roman persecution, can fit any time before the omission, who ruled in 81 to 96, or any time outside of Nero's persecution, 64. The debate about early Catholicism in Luke-Acts continues, but it is by no means clear that Luke reflects such a late theology.

Liberal scholars claim that so-called early Catholicism is reflected in the pastoral epistles attributed to Paul, which they say were not written by Paul, that is, church offices and detailed ecclesiology, and they also make eschatological reasons the hope for the second coming has dimmed, it's put off into the more distant future. In

general, well not in general, evangelicals have rejected this and say the pastorals have a different purpose and therefore, reflect different themes and ideas and, therefore, different vocabulary, and that they were indeed written by Paul. That early Catholicism thing, it's true that the offices did develop and the church got more organized and so forth, and that there were bishops and so forth in the second century, but it doesn't mean that Acts or the pastorals were late documents, their inclusion of the so-called early Catholicism is overrated.

Two arguments of those given concerning dating have more substance, Bach says. The suggestion that Luke follows Mark is likely, even if one thinks that Matthew, not Mark, is the first gospel in order must still date Mark's work in the 60s or later. This date is close to the last event in Acts, which takes place in the early 60s.

How quickly would Mark have been in circulation and thus accessible to Luke, especially if Luke had associations with major leaders in the church? It's a question. The argument that time needed to pass for Mark to gain stature is similar to the argument that Paul, as a hero figure, needed time to develop, but Paul was a major figure almost instantly. Now if Mark had roots in Peter, then respect for his work could have been instant too.

Luke sought out materials that were in circulation, Luke 1:1. Since he mentioned several such documents, quasi-canonical status was not a prerequisite. Luke could use sources that weren't headed for biblical canonicity. The most central argument is that the eschatological discourses, Luke 19:41-44, Luke 21:20-24, assume a post-70 date.

These texts detail the siege and focus on the city of rather than on the temple alone, as the accounts of Matthew and Mark do. Esler correctly, 19:87, has undertaken the most vigorous defense of this date. He argues the details of these discourses cannot be attributed simply to what inevitably happens in war, because some of the features were not inevitable results of war.

In responding in this way, Esler challenges C.H. Dodd's assertion, 19:47, that all war language in the discourse is possible for Jesus before 70 because the language fits ancient military operations against Israel and parallel, subsequent descriptions of the sacking of Solomon's temple. In making this critique, however, Esler misses a key point of the Old Testament connection. The Old Testament judgment was exercised because of covenant unfaithfulness.

The parallel of Jerusalem's total destruction with siege and total defeat could be expected as a covenantal act of God. The result is that Esler's argument does not stand. There's no need to appeal to Jerusalem's fall as a *fait accompli* in the perspective of these texts.

In addition, proponents of an earlier date note that there is no direct reference to the fall of Jerusalem. That the fall is alluded to here is strictly an inference. Yet those who hold that an allusion to the fall is present also frequently claim that Luke often updates his material and perspective.

If, as is claimed, he did this elsewhere, why not here with this major salvation historical event in the divine calendar? Why the silence instead of a direct reference? To sum up, the prediction of Jerusalem's fall is one that Jesus was capable of making solely on the basis of his knowledge of how God works to judge covenant unfaithfulness. Luke makes no effort to update remarks here. He only clarifies that the temple's collapse, in the temple's collapse, the city is not spared either.

Thus, a major argument for a date in the 80s and 90s does not work. Although a date in the 80s might seem possible and is popular, it is not the most likely. This leaves another possibility, a date somewhere in the 60s, argued by Colin Hemer, Ellis, I. Howard Marshall.

Reasons for this date include the following. One, the picture enacts that Rome, knowing little about the Jesus movement, is still deciding where Christianity fits. Two, failure to note the death of either James, 62, or Paul, late 60s.

Third, the silence about Jerusalem's destruction, even in settings where it could have been mentioned editorially. Four, the amount of uncertainty expressed about internal Jewish-Gentile relations, which fits a setting that parallels the Pauline letters that deal with similar tensions, Romans, Galatians, 1 Corinthians 8 through 10, Ephesians. This last reason is most significant and has not been developed enough in the discussion to date.

Acts presupposes a racially mixed community, which in turn suggests an earlier date, not a later one. Details about the law, table, fellowship, and practices that may offend, Acts 6:1 to 6, Acts chapters 10 and 11, Acts chapter 15, Acts 6:1 to 6, Acts 10 and 11, Acts 15, also suggest, details about the law, table, fellowship, and offensive practices also suggest an earlier time frame, that the Gentile mission still needs such vigorous and detailed defense, further suggest this earlier period, since by the 60s, 80s, since by the 80s, the Gentile character of the Christian movement was a given, that believers need reassurance in the midst of intense Jewish pressure fits an early date as well. More difficult to determine is when, in the 60s, Luke was written.

Some argue that the ending of Acts indicates a date of completion is in the early 60s. Others suggest that texts like Luke 11, 49, and 51 presuppose the start of the struggle with Rome and offer a date in the late 60s. That Paul's death is not mentioned in Acts may be an indication that it is the early to mid-60s rather than the later third of the 60s.

On the other hand, the time required for Luke to receive and incorporate Mark might suggest a mid-60s time frame. Overall, an early to mid-60s date is likely. Luke left the end of Paul's career open-ended because that is where matters stood when he wrote.

Place of writing. Where one fixes the place of Luke's writing depends on the date one fixes for the work. It is really unknown.

Possibilities include Caesarea. That would be if Luke was written in the 60s. Rome, 60s or 80s.

Antioch, any date. Greece, any date. The anti-Marcionite prologues and the Monarchian prologue place its origins in Achaia, Greece.

While Bovan, 1989, thinks Rome is likely. Fitzmyer, 1981, is right to say that the answer is anyone's guess. After our break, we will talk about ancient manuscripts and then take up the structure and argument of the Gospel of Luke.

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