



Elder Oscar Mata

LUKE

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The Gospel according to Luke is the third in the order of the New Testament. At its content does not indicate who is the author.

Who was Luke? According with the written in Matthew 10:3, Mark 3:18, and Luke 6:15, Luke was not one of the 12 disciples of the Lord. His name means “light-giving”.

With regard to the Scriptures, the name of Luke is mentioned only 3 times. He was the physician of Paul: *“Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you”* (Colossians 4:14). This physician man was very appreciated by Paul, who became one of his closest collaborators: *“and also Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-laborers”* (Philemon 1:24). At the end of the days of Paul, none of his collaborators were with him, only Luke: *“Only Luke is with me...”* (2 Timothy 4:11). For his closeness with Paul, Luke had contact with most of the apostles, so he became an important referential witness of the things that happened to the Lord.

Being Luke one of the most important collaborators of Paul, he made an inquiry to write the Gospel in detail, which would serve to their ministry, as is written in Luke 1:1-4: *“Since many took in hand to draw up an account concerning the matters which have been borne out among us, even as those who from the beginning delivered to us, becoming eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, following all things accurately from the very first, to write to you in order, most excellent Theophilus, so that you might know the certainty of those things in which you have been instructed.”*

During the ministry of Paul, the Gospel of Luke was already known, since he quotes some of his writings: *“For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle the ox treading out grain,” and, “The laborer is worthy of his reward.”*” 1 Timothy 5:18. Paul quoted Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7

Luke also wrote the book of Acts, because the recipient is the same Theophilus and that clearly he tells him that he had written earlier: *“Truly, O Theophilus, I made the first report as to all things that Jesus began both to do and teach”* Acts 1:1). In the book of Acts when the writer relates some things, he is included himself as one of those who walked with Paul, even down to the last chapter of the book (Acts 16:10, 20:6, 21:1, 27:1, 28:11). If we consider that Luke was the collaborator of Paul who stayed with him until his last days of ministry, then there is not doubt that this physician man was the writer of the Gospel called by his name and the book of Acts.

Considering that Paul quoted to Luke in 1 Timothy 5:18, and that Paul could have died before the year 65, then Luke probably wrote his Gospel before the year 60, and later wrote the book of Acts.

All books of the Bible were written by Israelites, but many have doubts about the origin of Luke. Almost everyone who has studied this Gospel has concluded that Luke was not Israelite. However, when we analyze the content of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, there are a deep knowledge of the Judaism and a great rapport with the apostles and Mary, the mother of Jesus. Analyzing how the biblical commentators have concluded that Luke was not Israelite, we can note that the evidence presented is weak. The idea that Luke was not Israelite is based more on tradition than in a strong biblical evidence

However, there is a biblical story that shows us a different picture: *“And after those days, making ready, we went up to Jerusalem. Then taking the men on the next day, being purified with them, Paul went into the temple, declaring the fulfillment of the days of the purification, until an offering should be offered for each of them. And when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews who were from Asia, having seen him in the temple, stirred up all the crowd and laid hands on him, crying out, Men, Israelites, help! This is the man who teaches all everywhere against the people and the Law and this place. And even he brought Greeks into the temple and has polluted this holy place. (For they had seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city before, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) And all the city was moved, and the people ran together. And laying hands on Paul, they drew him outside of the temple. And immediately the doors were shut”* (Acts 21:15, 26-30). Luke relates that he went with Paul, but the Jews were stirred up because Paul allegedly brought into the temple to Trophimus the Ephesian. Why were not they stirred up because of Luke? It is obvious that Luke was a Jewish man, because they did not reproach that he had brought into the temple with Paul.

Mark and Luke were not the closest of Jesus, but even so they did a valuable contribution to the evangelization, because their writings have left their mark on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. This teaches us that to contribute to the work of God is not necessary to wait to have privileged or famous positions, but each of the Christians are important and useful for the propagation of the Gospel. What are you doing for evangelism? Are you serving in your local congregation? What benefits are you bringing to your neighbors, your place of work or studies, your city or for others in general?

There is a beautiful hymn that is part of the Christian hymnology, written in 1913 by Ina Duley Ogdon, music by Charles Hutchinson Gabriel, which at one of its stanzas says: *“Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do, Do not shed your light afar, To the many duties ever near you be true, Brighten the corner where you are.”* We can think that the good work for God can only be performed by Pastors, Elders or Preachers of the Word, but you, dear reader, do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do to consider yourself useful, because even with every small act of love you can bright to show the light of the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus.

Please, brighten the corner where you are, because you are very important to the work of God. We need you.
