Luke

Who, When, Where

Written by Loukas (Luke). Loukas was a Greek physician and historian. He researched and documented the life of Yeshua, and then joined in on the mission (in Acts 11). Loukas appears on the scene in Acts 11 where he starts saying "We" instead of "They". So that was about 20 years after Yeshua's execution.
Loukas also wrote the book of Acts, where he calls this one his previous work. So the book of Luke was probably written sometime around 60AD.But the story itself starts with the birth of Yohannes, about a year before the Roman census in 6BC, and ends with the resurrection of Yeshua about 35 years later, around 30AD
Maybe Loukas wrote this as he travelled around with Paulus. We don't really know. The story itself is all in Israel. Mostly in and around Jerusalem.

Summary

This is a compilation of stories Loukas (Luke) put together as he researched the life of Yeshua. Loukas wasn't there at the time. He joined the story in Acts 11 when he became a companion to Paulos.
He compiled this book for Theophilus, which means "Friend of God", so that includes you. And according to the introduction he did it, "so that you may recognise the certainty of the message with which you've been instructed."
Loukas seems to focus a lot on how Yeshua proved to the religious leaders that he was the Messiah, and how he criticized them for not believing him.

Before You Read

This gospel in particular is not in chronological order. Instead Loukas grouped stories together more because they had a similar theme, rather than those which happened at a similar time. Like all the "sozo" stories… Sozo is a Greek word which means "to be made whole again, to be restored to wholeness", so it is translated as "healed", "saved", "delivered"… Keep that in mind as you read.

Key Verses

Luke 2:1

And it came to be, that in those days a decree by Caesar Augustus went out, that all the inhabited world should be registered.

There were a few censuses taken around that time. We know there was one around 6BC. Loukas doesn't tell us about Josef and Maria going to Egypt to escape Herod killing the babies. But we also know that Herod died in 4BC.
So we can be pretty sure that Yeshua was born in 6BC.

Luke 3:1

Now in the fifteenth year of the government of Tiberius Caesar…

The first year of Tiberius was 14AD, so Yohannes started preaching around 28AD. And Yeshua was immersed by him shortly after that.

Luke 4:18-19

The spirit of the lord [Yahweh] is on me because he's anointed me to bring the good news to the poor. He's sent me to heal those whose hearts have been crushed, to proclaim a pardon for captives and sight for the blind, to send off the broken – pardoned, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the lord [Yahweh]."

This is a huge call. Yeshua is claiming to be the Messiah. There is no other way to take what he's saying.

Luke 6:38

Give, and it'll be given to you – a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be given into your lap. For with the same measure you measure with, it'll be measured back to you."

When we read of giving in the New Testament we often think of our giving to God. But God wants us to have a generous attitude in all our giving. To him. To each other. To the poor.
Would you describe yourself as generous?
When you give, do you press it down, shake it, top it up, … make sure there is no doubt that it is a full measure?
Or do you give the minimum required to "fulfill your duty"?

Luke 14:26

"If anyone comes to me and doesn't hate their father and mother, their wife and children, their brothers and sisters, and even their own life – they aren't able to be my disciple.

Really? I have to hate my parents? And my wife?
What is Yeshua saying here? I know the Bible teaches me to honour my parents, and to love my wife. So it can't be that!
What would you do if your father said, "Stop being a Christian or I'll never talk to you again."?
What if your wife or husband said that?

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save those who are lost."

The Pharisees were all about earning their own righteousness by legalistically obeying the Old Testament Law.
I'm sure they thought the Messiah was coming to lead them into Heaven. (And only them).
I'm sure they expected the Messiah to tell everyone how wonderful they were.
But Yeshua came to save the lost, the downtrodden, the hopeless, the outcast.
Lucky for us.
And his message to the Pharisees was a bit different. He used the word "woe" a lot.
Would you have done that?
Who needs to hear the "woe" message these days?
Who needs to hear that Yeshua came to save them?

Luke 22:19-20

And he took the bread, and when he'd given thanks, he broke it and offered it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given on your behalf. Do this in order to remember me." And similarly after dining, the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out on your behalf.

This is where we get the idea of communion from. Yeshua said to do this in rememberance of him.
At the time he was eating a Passover meal. So it was special bread, made without yeast, which is used in the Bible as an picture of sin. His body had no sin.
Also, because it was Passover, maybe he only envisioned us remembering him every Passover. (Which the early Christians did).
Modern churches usually have communion weekly or monthly. And they usually use ordinary bread, not the flat "Lebanese" bread like the one Yeshua ate that day.
But it is the remembering that is important. Remembering what he did for us, and the significance of him offering up his body and sacrificing his own blood on our behalf.

Luke 22:31-32

And the lord said, "Shimon. Shimon. Look! Satan has demanded to winnow you [all] like grain. But I've pleaded for you [Shimon], that your faith won't cease. And when you've turned around, steady your brothers."

In English, "you" can mean you, one person, or you, a whole crowd. In Greek we use different words for each one.
This verse has both. Satan has demanded to winnow you (plural), but I have prayed for you (singular).
How would Petros have felt hearing that? Yeshua didn't pray for the others, just for him. How awesome.
But the next thing Yeshua said … But tonight you (singular) will deny me three times. Ouch.
But when you've turned around, … steady your brothers.

After You Read

What verses really stood out to you?

How would you summarize this book in a sentence or two? What is it about? What is God trying to say to us?

So, did Loukas achieve what he set out to do? Do you now know certainty of the gospel message? How would that help you explain it to someone else?
Have you ever thought of writing out a "proof" of what you believe?

Did you notice that the genealogy in Luke 3 is different from the one in Matthew 1? Most scholars seem to think the one in Matthew is the genealogy of Yosef, and the one in Luke is that of Maria.
If you go back far enough they become the same… they both come down through king David. One through Solomon, one through Nathan. If you take any two people on the planet they share some common ancestry… We are all, 100%, descendant from Noah.
And so, we have the common genealogy from Noah back to Adam… So everyone on the planet shares about 20 people in our ancestry.
Kind of makes racism look pretty stupid eh. There is only one race, the human race, and

dividing by skin colour is just as dumb as dividing by eye colour, or hair colour, or height,…

How old were you when you started your "ministry"?
How did Yeshua call you to follow him? How did you react? Did you just drop everything and follow, or did you take a bit longer to be convinced?
As you put the information in the different gospels together you might notice that Andrew and Peter had followed Yohannes for a while, and they had seen Yeshua outside Jerusalem. And then one day Yeshua walked by their boat up in Galilee and called them to follow him.
It was a decision they made over time. It wasn't the spur of the moment thing that it seems to be if you just read one account out of context.

This is an important thing as you read the Bible. Try to put the bigger picture together in your head. Not every teaching of the Bible is in black and white in one or two verses. Some of it requires you to put a few of the pieces of the puzzle together before you can understand them.
Only the Holy Spirit can do that for you. If you're struggling with that then ask him to help. (And be patient).

This free book has some of those ideas.

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