

Luke's relationship with Peter

Before we proceed any further with Luke's Gethsemane story, let's consider when Luke's relationship with Peter possibly began, because as we have noticed many times in this story of Luke, some of the things recorded both in LUKE, and ACTS were things only Peter could have told Luke about. So the question comes up, when did Peter, an Apostle to the Jews, become comfortable in discussing such personal things with Luke, who was a Gentile?

One more thing before we get into this discussion as a quick overview; what would we know about the history of the Apostle Paul, or the Apostle Peter without Luke? The Holy Spirit had our brother in the Lord Luke to be the one to record many historical details about these two famous Apostles, and their ministry. Luke learned the history of these two Apostles by spending much time interviewing both of them.

There are four key portions of New Testament scripture that truly enlighten us as to who Luke was. Once we understand these four key portions of scripture, then we find the clues necessary to see Luke's unique relationships with both the Apostle Paul, and the Apostle Peter. This then helps explain how Luke could write 52 chapters of New Testament scripture with the main focus being upon Jesus Christ, and how it was that His gospel message was spread throughout the world of Luke's day by the power of the Holy Ghost. Of the 89 scriptures that write the name "the Holy Ghost," Luke wrote 52 of them! So we must also note it was the Holy Ghost who inspired our brother Luke to write his 52 chapters.

The four key portions of scripture that reveal who Luke is are as follows. The first is 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 where the Apostle Paul writes at the end of his life: *Only Luke is with me.* Here we learn Luke was a follower of the Apostle Paul for a long time, but how long? Our second key portion of scripture gives us a partial answer to this question. We find this in ACTS 16:10, and the year referenced in this text is 52 A.D. during the early part of Paul's second missionary journey. ACTS 16:10 *And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.* Paul had the vision and saw a man of Macedonia saying "...Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Then we read "immediately we," who is "we?" The "we" references Paul and Silas, and Timothy, and a fourth person, who is the narrator, the writer of this account, who is Luke! Obviously Luke was for the first time joining Paul on this missionary journey by arrangements that are not told us in scripture. So we here learn that Luke knew Paul prior to joining him on this second missionary journey. Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke immediately travel by sea unto Macedonia. And Luke here writes: *...assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.* So having just read this, who was called to preach the gospel unto those in Macedonia? Luke says the "*...Lord had called us...*" meaning all four of them, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke! We know it was Paul's missionary journey, and he, being an Apostle was certainly going to preach the gospel, but now we also learn that Silas and Timothy also were going to preach the gospel, Paul's gospel, beginning here in Macedonia. And then Luke casually mentions himself as one of "us" that was called of the Lord to preach the gospel unto those in Macedonia! These four end up in Philippi, and the remainder of ACTS 16 tells how the church of Philippi was established. Luke quits writing "we," and "us" in ACTS 16:17, but quietly behind the scenes we find Luke remaining at Philippi where he ministers the word, and expounds upon Paul's gospel!

Six years pass, and the Apostle Paul has extensively traveled, and is near the completion of his third missionary journey. The year is 58 A.D. and Luke once again begins writing in the first person in this third important key portion of scripture. In 58 A.D. at the conclusion of his third missionary journey we find in ACTS 20:2 that Paul had once again visited Corinth. ACTS 20:3 *And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. 4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 These going before tarried for us at Troas. 6 And we sailed away*

from Philippi... . In verse 6 that this is where Luke once again writes in the first person. Luke had rejoined Paul after Luke himself spent six years of preaching Paul's gospel message at Philippi, and Luke will remain with Paul for the rest of Paul's life! It seems from studying ACTS 20:1-3 that Paul himself twice spent some more time at Philippi. Make no mistake Paul did establish the church at Philippi in ACTS 16, but it was Luke who remained behind that helped the Philippian Saints fully understand Paul's gospel. When the Apostle Paul writes his epistle to the PHILIPPIANS in 62 A.D. from his prison in Rome, we find that the book of PHILIPPIANS has no doctrines to expound upon, nor no errors to refute. PHILIPPIANS is known as the joy book of the Bible, "joy" being a pronounced theme throughout this epistle! Paul's focal point of joy was Jesus Christ, and the wonderful mighty work the Holy Spirit had done in the Philippian Saints these ten years since he first visited Philippi. The Philippian Saints are known as "lovers of horses," or "lovers of the racehorse." This too brought great joy in the heart of Paul, because the Philippian Saints were racecourse runners. Thus we find the book of PHILIPPIANS was written to encourage the heart of every potential full overcomer, and "lover's of the race course," who individually wants God's best in their own life! Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* We certainly can mark Luke as one of their examples, having himself preached Paul's gospel message unto them for six years. If you don't see Luke as being at Philippi for these six years, then re-read and study ACTS 16 through 20 until it becomes clear in your own mind.

The fourth key portion of scripture that explains who Luke is found in LUKE 1:1-4, which we have referenced quite often in this study. LUKE 1:1-4 *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.* Study again ACTS 16:10 and realize the Luke himself was a minister of the word. What Luke wrote in both The Gospel According to LUKE, and the book of ACTS came from eyewitness accounts.

As we go through this realize there is no historical proof beyond the scriptures that Peter and Luke ever even met. I couldn't find any historical proof beyond the scriptures that Luke got to interview Mary the mother of Jesus either. Sister Bodie also noted in her writings that scripture is the best commentary on scripture. Luke himself wrote in LUKE 1:1-4 of him writing this declaration of what was told him of eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word. Certainly Mary the mother of Jesus was an eyewitness to so much of Jesus history, and by the time Luke got to interview Peter, the Apostle Peter was, to say the least, a minister of the word of God. So in our discussion on Luke's relationship with Peter, the evidence when the two possibly met, or had an opportunity to meet, also comes from scripture, as we will point out in this discussion. Also we must remember the time frame when Luke was in Jerusalem was simultaneously when Paul was held prisoner in Caesarea from the spring of 58 A.D. unto late in 60 A.D. It was during these two years when Luke would have had the opportunity to interview those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word that Luke wrote about in LUKE 1:2.

Also recall that Luke was a traveling companion of the Apostle Paul, and had travelled with Paul from Philippi as is told in ACTS 20. And on this journey Paul was bringing to Jerusalem a collection for the poor Saints at Jerusalem, which Paul wrote about in 1 CORINTHIANS 16, and some other places. Once Paul arrived in Jerusalem at the conclusion of his third missionary journey, he was shortly thereafter arrested, sent to Caesarea about 75 miles away, and held prisoner by governor Felix for two years according to ACTS 24:27. The year of Paul's arrest according to Conybeare and Howson was 58 A.D. When asked to defend himself before Felix, Paul mentions this collection for the poor Saints at Jerusalem, stating in ACTS 24:17 *Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.* The reason for Paul's bringing this collection for the poor Saints at Jerusalem wasn't really Paul's idea, but rather it was because of a request made by Peter,

James and John some years earlier after the conference that was held in Jerusalem in ACTS 15. The time frame of that famous Jerusalem conference was 50 A.D. according to Conybeare and Howson. Recall in your thinking that the conference in Jerusalem was held after Paul and Barnabas completed their first missionary journey unto the Gentiles. When Paul and Barnabas concluded their first missionary journey they returned to Antioch, Syria *...from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled...* ...ACTS 14:26. Conybeare and Howson date Paul and Barnabas' return from this missionary journey as being in 49 A.D.

When we studied about Antioch, Syria at the beginning of this study, we noted how Barnabas was instrumental in bringing Paul, then still known as Saul of Tarsus, up to Antioch, Syria. According to ACTS 11:26 Paul and Barnabas spent a whole year teaching much people in Antioch, Syria. Conybeare and Howson give a time frame of 44 A.D. when this took place. Antioch, Syria at that time was the third largest city in the world, and an important city of much wealth, which had everything that Roman wealth, Greek culture, and Oriental luxury could produce. The citizens of Antioch were somewhat unique in that they were given by the Roman Empire the privilege of worship in their own way without fear of repercussion or persecution. Again according to Conybeare and Howson it was 45 A.D. when Paul and Barnabas made a trip to Jerusalem bringing "relief" to the drought stricken brethren of Jerusalem at the request of Agabus. Study ACTS 11:26-30 to review these facts. Conybeare and Howson have Paul and Barnabas back in Antioch, as ACTS 12:25 records, for the better part of two years! Some scholars think it was sometime during this time frame when Paul first got acquainted with Luke, and most likely Theophilus. Then Paul and Barnabas went on that first missionary journey of Paul's to the Gentiles, and as we mentioned above Conybeare and Howson date Paul and Barnabas' returning from this missionary journey as being in 49 A.D. They returned to Antioch, Syria, and stayed there again a long time according to ACTS 14:28.

ACTS 15:1 & 2 records what happened next in Antioch, Syria in early 50 A.D. where Paul and Barnabas were once again teaching the Christians both Jew and Gentile. ACTS 15:1 *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.* The rest of the chapter of ACTS 15 deals with the end results of that famous conference, which can be simply summed up by saying they agreed to make a resolution that the Gentiles were not under the law of Moses, and didn't have to follow any of the Jewish laws. While in Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas met with James, Jesus brother, and now Pastor of Jerusalem, along with Peter, and John. What they talked about in addition to what we just mentioned can be found in GALATIANS 2. GALATIANS 2:1 *Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.* (The "fourteen years" references Paul's first return visit to Jerusalem after he was saved; after he escaped Damascus by being let down by the wall in a basket. {See ACTS 9:25 and 2 CORINTHIANS 11:32 & 33}.) 2 *And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. 3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: 5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. 6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: 7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. 10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was*

forward to do. The remembering of the poor references the poor Saints at Jerusalem. Again the year was 50 A.D. when Paul, James, Peter and John, along with Barnabas made this agreement, and as we noted earlier it was 58 A.D. when Paul in ACTS 24:17 stated: *Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.* So back in 50 A.D. after attending this Jerusalem conference, Paul and Barnabas then returned to Antioch, Syria.

A short period of time passes, and within the year Peter himself travels up to Antioch, Syria. Paul wrote about this in GALATIANS 2:11 *But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.* What a bold and seemingly brazen thing for the Apostle Paul to do, to stand toe-to-toe with the Apostle Peter, who was an Apostle well before Paul came on the scene, and Paul opposed Peter for his conduct there at Antioch. Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost had some words of correction for Peter, which needed to be said. So we next read in GALATIANS 2 why Paul said what he said to Peter. GALATIANS 2:12 *For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.* So we see that when Peter initially came up to Antioch, Syria, Peter did eat with the Gentiles. But then a little later some Jews from Jerusalem then came to Antioch, and Peter when he saw them quickly withdrew and separated himself from the Gentiles he was fellowshiping with out of sheer fear of what the Jews might think. Peter wasn't alone in his actions as we find out next in GALATIANS 2. GALATIANS 2:13 *And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.* Dissimulation here means: hypocrisy, or insincerity. The Apostle Barnabas even did as Peter did, and withdrew himself from eating, and fellowshiping with the Gentiles, some of whom he had also taught the truth of the gospel for several years. (Think about it for a minute, and realize that Barnabas was at Antioch before Paul was, and certainly Luke also heard him teach, so Barnabas would have been one of Luke's teachers. {See ACTS 13:1.}) GALATIANS 2:14-16 summarizes what the Apostle Paul said to the Apostle Peter in front of all the Jews, Barnabas included, who had withdrew from fellowshiping with the Gentiles at Antioch, Syria. GALATIANS 2:14 *But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? 15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

Note Paul's emphasis noted in verses 5 and 14 was "the truth of the gospel." Our Apostle Paul by the grace of God was always interested in advancing "the truth of the gospel," which story is fully told in his one hundred chapters of New Testament scripture. Whenever we read the word "truth" in scripture we should immediately think of Jesus. Here again are some scriptures that emphasize this very point. JOHN 1:17 *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* JOHN 14:6 *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* EPHESIANS 4:21 *...the truth is in Jesus!* Furthermore on the day of Pentecost Christ Jesus sent us the Holy Ghost, who is the Holy Spirit of truth according to JOHN 14:17; 15:26 and 16:13, whose purpose is to guide us into all truth. Since Jesus Christ is the truth, and the truth is in Jesus, through the Holy Spirit in us, Christ in us becomes the same active truth, as we read, and heed His Word, the Word of Truth! Stated another way, one of the main ways the Holy Spirit sheds light, and reveals things unto us is through the scriptures, the written Word of God, who is Jesus, *...the way, the truth, and the life.* In 2 TIMOTHY 3:15 the Apostle Paul acknowledges that Timothy has known the holy scriptures since he was a child, and writes to him in 2 TIMOTHY 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* It is by the power of the Holy Ghost that we can rightly divide the word of truth, and fully know "the truth of the gospel" that the Apostle Paul wrote about in GALATIANS 2:5 and 14.

Back in GALATIANS 2 Paul was reminding Peter that the whole point of the conference in Jerusalem confirmed that the Gentiles were not under the law, and by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. That is “the truth of the gospel.” All who are saved, both Jew and Gentile, are saved by the faith of Jesus Christ; that too is “the truth of the gospel.” Paul wrote in ROMANS 3:28 & 29 -- *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.* That is “the truth of the gospel.” Peter himself had already acknowledged the very same thing at the conference in Jerusalem recorded in ACTS 15:7-11 -- *And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.* That also is “the truth of the gospel.”

Thus we find after this rebuke in GALATIANS 2 by the Apostle Paul to Peter, that there was never any excuse, or Godly reason why the saved Jews should withdraw themselves from fellowshiping with the saved Gentiles. Both groups shared the very same Lord, and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Peter himself some years earlier had said at the house of Gentile Cornelius in ACTS 10:34 *...Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.* Go back and read the first 18 verses of ACTS 11 where Peter explained to the Jews of Jerusalem his actions, and the reason he went to the house of Gentile Cornelius. ACTS 11:18 shows the Jews of Jerusalem glorified God because of Peter's witness. ACTS 11:18 *When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* Again it was Luke who wrote this, so Peter certainly told these events to Luke during the time frame when Luke was at Jerusalem.

Back to Luke's relationship with Peter, when Peter came to Antioch, Syria during the time frame of GALATIANS 2, which we have been discussing, (late 50 A.D.), it would have been a prime opportunity for the Apostle Peter to first meet Luke. Scripture doesn't record that Peter met Luke at this time, and history doesn't record this either. It would be eight years later at the end of Paul's third missionary journey in 58 A.D. when Luke would be at Jerusalem for two years, and have another great opportunity to meet Peter, or perhaps renew their acquaintance some eight years earlier at Antioch. It was during these two years while Paul was prisoner in custody of the Roman Empire that Luke would interview the Apostle Peter, an eye-witness from the beginning of Christ's ministry, and write down the many facts Peter told him that we read both in The Gospel According to LUKE, and what Luke recorded in ACTS 1-12.

Note what is said in ACTS 21 when Paul and company arrived in Jerusalem at the conclusion of Paul's third missionary journey in 58 A.D. ACTS 21:15 *And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. 16 There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. 17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.* (Was Peter one of the “brethren” that received them gladly at Jerusalem here?) 18 *And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.* (Obviously Luke was present here, but was Peter also present?) The “we,” and “us,” and “our” mentioned here is Luke writing in the first person. Mnason of Cyprus (verse 16) is only mentioned this one time in scripture, where he is noted to be a long-standing disciple with whom Luke and the other brethren should lodge. Obviously Mnason was very familiar with the disciples at Jerusalem. We wish we knew more about Mnason of Cyprus. Was he one of the men of Cyprus mentioned in ACTS 11:20 who went to Antioch, Syria? If Mnason was one of the men of Cyprus who visited Antioch, Syria, is that where he met Luke? If Mnason had never been to Antioch, Syria it is very apparent that Mnason met Luke in Caesarea or on the journey from Caesarea up to Jerusalem that we just read about in ACTS 21:15 & 16 in 58 A.D. And

furthermore Luke lodged in the residence of Mnason, who was a very hospitable host. So we must also realize how this old disciple Mnason could have very easily have been the one to introduce Luke to the Apostle Peter. Perhaps it was in the house of Mnason where Luke also got to interview Mary the mother of Jesus, and the Apostle Peter during the two years Luke was in Jerusalem when Paul was held prisoner by Governor Felix as note in ACTS 24:27. Such details are not revealed in scripture other than the clues Luke left us in LUKE 1:1-4 of him getting his information from eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word.

One more point concerning Mnason of Cyprus. Who else do we know in scripture from Cyprus? The answer is Barnabas, who Luke noted in ACTS 4:36 was a Levite from Cyprus, who was a close part of the early church at Jerusalem, who knew very well Peter and the other Kingdom Apostles. Note this too, we find Barnabas mentioned in 28 verses of scripture. Luke wrote twenty-three of the verses that mention Barnabas in the book of ACTS! So most of what we know about Barnabas, (whose name means: The son of Consolation), we know because of Luke. We then must also realize that Barnabas was one of Luke's teachers as ACTS 13:1 notes, which we also mentioned earlier. If Mnason went to Antioch, Syria during the time frame of ACTS 11, then Luke could have met him there. The last mention of Barnabas by Luke is in ACTS 15:39 where Barnabas sailed to Cyprus. But when Paul was arrested at Jerusalem in ACTS 21, there were Jews in town from all over the world, because they gathered at Jerusalem during these feast times as we have previously noted in this study. If Barnabas was in Jerusalem during this time of Paul's arrest, the possibility exists that Luke and his old teacher Barnabas re-connected, and maybe they did so at the house of Mnason of Cyprus, who lived in Jerusalem at that time. Certainly it seems Barnabas told some things to Luke that Luke recorded in ACTS. Perhaps Luke got to interview both Barnabas and Peter at the same time somewhere along the way; certainly this possibility exists.

Back to Luke and Peter. From many of the personal things Luke recorded concerning Peter that we have already noted in this study, it is obvious that not only did Peter meet Luke, but we have to also realize they must have had some long hours of good Godly fellowship. In GALATIANS 2 the words of the Apostle Paul said to the Apostle Peter up at Antioch in 50 A.D. didn't fall on deaf ears. That is why some eight to ten years later Luke could interview Peter, and both would be comfortable in fellowshiping the one with the other, Gentile and Jew. Keep in mind here in our study of the man Luke that our brother Luke got to write in scripture several chapters of privileged eyewitness information that only Peter could have told him.

One thing is certain, and that is what Luke wrote in LUKE 1. *LUKE 1:1-4, Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.* As we have many times already noted in this study, Luke did write two books of scripture, (LUKE and ACTS) that when read together puts in order about 65 years of early church history, beginning with the announcement of the birth of John the Baptist, until Paul was held prisoner in Rome for two years. Certainly Peter was an eyewitness from the beginning of Jesus ministry, and Peter also was a minister of the word of truth being one of the prominent Kingdom Apostles of Jesus Christ. When and where Luke and Peter initially met is really not important, what is important is the information Luke writes about Peter, and his eyewitness ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is a lot of things we would know nothing about if Luke and Peter had not spent hours in fellowship discussing many of the important events recorded in both The Gospel According to LUKE, and the book of ACTS. There are many opinions as to where Luke got his information that is recorded in both The Gospel According to LUKE, and the book of ACTS, however I think LUKE 1:1-4 explains it the best. Thank God for the beloved physician Luke, and his Holy Ghost inspired scriptural writings!