**November 08, 2026 Special Meetings**

We have learned a lot in Sunday School the last five years about the Gentile physician named Luke mentioned in COLOSSIANS 4:14, who wrote The Gospel According to St. LUKE, and the book of ACTS. Obviously Luke was educated and skilled in medicine, but more importantly Luke was a close follower of the Apostle Paul. Luke also was educated and skilled in Paul's gospel, and a close traveling companion of Paul the last ten years of Paul's life! Luke followed Paul as Paul followed Christ!

Luke's name means: **"light-giving."** Luke shed light on many thoughts, doctrines, themes, and discussed Christ in lives that we otherwise would know nothing about. His Latin name found in PHILEMON 1:24 is Lucas, which also means: **"light-giving."**

Luke was a man full of the Holy Ghost for we read in 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 that the Holy Ghost is the agency of the trinity who inspired what is written in scripture. 2 TIMOTHY 3: *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.* The Holy Ghost is also the agency of the trinity that will guide the Bride of Christ in full overcoming victory in Christ Jesus as a victorious racecourse runner. Luke referenced the Holy Ghost eleven times in LUKE, and forty-two times in ACTS, for a total of fifty-three times out of the ninety times the term "Holy Ghost" is found in scripture.

The very first sentence Luke wrote in scripture explains what he was all about. LUKE 1:1 *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.*

There is a wealth of information contained in these four verses that reveals why Luke wrote *...a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among* ***us****...* who are believers. What Luke wrote in both LUKE, and THE ACTS came from eyewitness accounts of those who were with, or around Jesus from His very beginning. As Luke wrote this sometime between A.D. 63-68, Luke was acknowledging that these eyewitnesses, some of whom were also ministers of the word, had told him about these events from personal experiences. Luke explains in verse 3 that he had perfect understanding given him from the Holy Ghost of the chronological order of things surrounding Christ from the very first. Luke, as author of both LUKE, and THE ACTS, was an educator.

Luke writes this to a man named Theophilus, whose name means "**friend of God.**" So who was Theophilus? History tells us that Theophilus was a high Roman official, and perhaps the Pastor at the church in Antioch, Syria, the assembly where they were first called Christians in ACTS 11:26. Luke writes two "treatise" as Luke calls them, which have now become scripture, to "O Theophilus." The second "treatise" Luke wrote to Theophilus is know as the book of ACTS where Luke continues documenting in chronological order of things concerning Christ after His resurrection, and ascension, and the giving of the promised Holy Ghost, and what took place afterward, thus continuing to educate the reader concerning the ACTS of the Holy Ghost through the lives of the Apostles up until the time the Apostle Paul was first held prisoner for two years at Rome. Obviously Luke knew Theophilus, and wrote him ACTS sometime after The Gospel According to LUKE. Luke's chronological history in scripture covers about 65 years.

Theophilus treasured Luke's two "treatise" realizing that they should be preserved for all that are friends of God. This church in Antioch, Syria was a mixture of both Jews and Gentiles, and the place where Luke was apparently born again, and met our beloved Apostle Paul. The church at Antioch, Syria, where Theophilus was from, became the Apostle Paul's home assembly from which all his missionary journeys began! Paul made five prolonged visits to Antioch, Syria between ACTS 11:26 and ACTS 18:23, and sometimes Paul taught there for a year or more at a time. At the end of his life Paul would have spent more time teaching in Antioch, Syria than anywhere else! Luke and

Theophilus, when with Paul, must have all enjoyed many hours of fellowship together as they learned Paul's gospel message.

Luke writes in the first person "we," "us," "I," and "me" referencing himself 48 times in LUKE and ACTS, but Luke wasn't one of the "eyewitnesses" of *...those things which are most surely believed among* ***us,...*** LUKE 1:1 until the time frame of ACTS 16:9 & 10, which was 52 A.D. By then the Apostle Paul was on his second missionary journey traveling with Silas, and Timothy, who later become Church Apostles themselves. In ACTS 16:9 Paul had a vision and saw a man of Macedonia saying *"...Come over into Macedonia, and help us."* In 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.* Here, for the first time since ACTS 1:1, Luke again writes in the first person: "we" and "us." In ACTS 16:10 Luke was for the first time joining Paul on this missionary journey by arrangements that are not told us in scripture. Obviously 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! Luke quits writing in the first person "we," and "us" in ACTS 16:17, but quietly behind the scenes we find that Luke remaining at Philippi where he ministers the word, and expounds upon Paul's gospel!

In ACTS 20 six more years have passed, and the Apostle Paul has now extensively traveled, and further established churches in Macedonia, Achaia, and Paul's Asia, and is near the completion of his third missionary journey. The year now is 58 A.D. and Luke once again begins writing in the first person. In ACTS 20:2 Paul has once again visited Corinth. Then we read in ACTS 20:3 *And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into* (Antioch) *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...* . Verses 5 & 6 is where Luke once again writes in the first person "**we**," and "**us**." Luke here had rejoined Paul after spending six years preaching Paul's gospel message at Philippi. 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. Brother Hill made this statement: "There is one book in the Old Testament, and one book in the New Testament written to the Bride of Christ. The Old Testament book is THE SONG OF SOLOMON, and the New Testament book is PHILIPPIANS." 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 fully expounded 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 journey that began with Luke once again joining Paul in ACTS 20:5 & 6 at the conclusion of Paul's third missionary journey was supposed to end once again in Antioch, Syria, the assembly Paul could call his home church. However the Holy Ghost had other plans. Luke is the one who documented these events in ACTS 20 and 21, and we don't have the time here today to tell all that happened in these chapters, but note these highlights. ACTS 20:16 informs us that Paul was first returning to Jerusalem before going back to Antioch, Syria, and Paul's intention was to be in Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost that year, 58 A.D. according to Conybeare and Howson's time-line. The men listed in Paul's traveling entourage in ACTS 20:4, along with Luke, had all participated in a collection for the poor Saints of Jerusalem as was requested by Peter, and agreed upon by Paul in GALATIANS 2:10. Literally Paul and company were returning to Jerusalem with a boat-load of money! Most of the eight men traveling with Paul were Gentiles, who had never before been to Jerusalem (as far as we know). (Remember Luke was also traveling with the seven men listed in ACTS 20:4.)

In ACTS 21:8-14 we learn that the Apostle Paul and company spent many days (ACTS 21:10) at Caesarea staying with Philip the evangelist having one of the earliest Grace Gathering Fellowship Meetings. Philip the evangelist was the same Philip that was a close companion of Stephen, chosen to minister with him in ACTS 6. Now consider this: Luke is the only author of scripture to write about Philip the evangelist, and he mentions him sixteen (LOVE) times in ACTS. Luke is the only author of scripture to write about Stephen, and he mentions Stephen seven (SPIRITUAL PERFECTION) times in ACTS! In ACTS 21:8 we find Philip's name for the sixteenth time. Recall that Saul of Tarsus was present at the stoning of Stephen in ACTS 7:58. Philip the evangelist inviting the former Saul of Tarsus to stay in his house for several days could not be possible without the love of God being shed abroad in the hearts of both Philip, and the Apostle Paul by the Holy Ghost; {see ROMANS 5:5}, and their hearts being knit together in the love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, {see COLOSSIANS 2:2}. This LOVE shown by Philip here is full overcoming LOVE that all full overcomers must have. Stephen's name certainly came up in the course of the conversation that took place between Philip and those traveling with Paul. Philip had his memories of Stephen, which included statements found in ACTS 6 stating that Stephen was *...a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost...*, and that Stephen was *...full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.* Paul had his memories of Stephen, which included a word for word recollection the powerful sermon of ACTS 7. Just think about this fact for a moment. How many sermons have you heard, and how many of them can you remember word for word? Stephen's sermon was remembered word for word by Saul of Tarsus, now the Apostle Paul! Stephen's sermon of ACTS 7 was a very powerful Holy Ghost inspired sermon, and in reality it closed out one age, and set the stage for a new age, the church age, to be ushered in. Who heard Stephen's last words that Luke recorded in ACTS 7:60 *...Lord, lay not this sin to their* charge... ? It was the Holy Ghost inspired words of Stephen's sermon that pricked the heart of Saul of Tarsus until he gave his heart to the Lord on the road to Damascus! As this discussion took place in the house of Philip the evangelist, who do you suppose took notes? The facts recorded in ACTS 6, 7, and 8 by our Gentile brother in the Lord Luke may have first been learned during this visit recorded in ACTS 21 as he first heard these eyewitness testimonies.

Paul and company left Philip the evangelist' house in ACTS 21:15 heading for Jerusalem. The Amplified Bible translation of ACTS 21:16 reads: *And some of the disciples from Caesarea came with us, conducting us to the house of* ***Mnason****, a man from Cyprus, one of the disciples of long standing, with whom we were to lodge.* Here in ACTS 21:16 our beloved Luke, is introducing, from a personal perspective, a precious brother in the Lord named **Mnason**, whom apparently Luke immediately afterwards got to spend about two years with! And even though Luke seems to have spent a couple years with this dear old Saint, Luke only mentions him this one time in scripture. In The King James version of ACTS 21:16 Luke records that **Mnason** is an "old disciple," which

doesn't necessarily mean he was well aged, and stricken in years, but rather this means that **Mnason** was a disciple of long standing as the Amplified Version states. Luke doesn't tell us when **Mnason** was saved, but the indication here is that **Mnason** was a disciple of the Lord a long time, perhaps from the early days of ACTS, or even before. Luke has recorded approximately 22-25 years of time between ACTS 1 and ACTS 21, so we can assume that **Mnason** has been saved at least this long. Apparently **Mnason** had accommodation in his home to comfortably house this large collection of Saints now traveling with the Apostle Paul. An "old disciple" like **Mnason** certainly knew his fellow disciple from Cyprus, Barnabas, yet Luke never mentions this. An "old disciple" like **Mnason,** no doubt, knew exactly when Stephen, and Philip the evangelist were chosen to assist the Kingdom Apostle in ACTS 6. As an "old disciple" **Mnason** would have remembered the day some twenty years earlier when Stephen was stoned to death. **Mnason** too would have remembered Saul of Tarsus, and how he made *...havock of the church...* there at Jerusalem in ACTS 8:3 after the stoning of Stephen. **Mnason** also would have remembered his fellow disciples scattering everywhere as a result of this persecution, which Luke recorded in ACTS 8:4. According to Thayer's Bible Dictionary, and Smith's Bible Dictionary **Mnason's** name means: "remembering." We must acknowledge that the feeling, the attitude **Mnason** had concerning Saul of Tarsus would have been much like that of Ananias of Damascus, who said in ACTS 9:13 "*...Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem.*" But recall also Jesus own words to Ananias of Damascus that Luke recorded in ACTS 9:15 & 16 *...Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* No doubt **Mnason** remembered all of this as he graciously invited the Apostle Paul and his large entourage of Saints to stay with him, thus manifesting the grace of God, and the immeasurable love of God, while forgetting those things which are behind!

One final thought that ties in what Luke wrote in LUKE 1:1-4 with **Mnason**. This was Luke's first, and last visit to Jerusalem, as far as we know. The Apostle Paul was arrested in Jerusalem in ACTS 21, and he was sent to Caesarea by the Roman government as a prisoner the Roman Empire until his case could be heard before proper Roman authorities. We find in ACTS 24:27 that Paul would be a prisoner there at Caesarea for two years, and ACTS 24:23 records that Governor Felix let Paul have this kind of liberty, that his acquaintance should not be forbidden to come and minister unto him. What many miss in all of this is that Luke, one of Paul's traveling companions at the end of Paul's third missionary journey, never left Paul, and it seem that Luke never left Paul from this point forward. When it finally came time for Paul to be sent to Rome for trial two years later in 60 A.D., Luke was still with Paul, and writes in the first person again in ACTS 27:1 *And when it was determined that <u>we</u> should sail into Italy,...* . Where was Luke staying these two years? Luke wasn't arrested, Paul was. It seems to me that Luke continued to stay with **Mnason**. In my minds eye I see **Mnason** as Luke's private tour guide for two years. **Mnason** was very familiar with all the old Saints at Jerusalem, and could have very well arranged for Luke to meet some of these, *...which from the beginning were <u>eyewitnesses,</u> and <u>ministers of the word</u>...* LUKE 1:2. Here in Jerusalem Luke got to interview those who followed Jesus from the very beginning, which included Mary the mother of Jesus! We know this because of what Luke wrote in LUKE 2:19 *But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.* And in LUKE 2:51 *...but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.* How did Luke know what Mary the mother of Jesus pondered in her heart had she not told Luke this?

The only way Luke got this perfect understanding of all things concerning Jesus Christ was by the Holy Ghost leading him to get the chance to interview these <u>eyewitnesses</u>, and this opportunity came while Paul was being held prisoner in Caesarea. There is no indication that Luke ever got back to Jerusalem after the Apostle Paul died in 68 A.D., so the only conclusion we can arrive at is that Luke took full advantage of the only time he visited Jerusalem, which was when Paul was held prisoner at Caesarea for two years.