HUMA 3422 Interpreting the New Testament II

**March 5: The Gospel of Luke**  
Read for today’s class: Ehrman, ch. 10; The Gospel of Luke.  
Assignment: Luke offers us our second look at the birth story of Jesus. For this assignment I want you to read both Matthew’s and Luke’s infancy narratives (Gospel Parallels #A-L) and note the differences and similarities between the two accounts. Working as a historian (i.e., looking at sources and trying to determine from them what actually happened), what do you think we can say about Jesus’ early years based on these two accounts? How do we reconcile the differences between the two accounts? Is it even possible?

1. Date and Authorship

* external evidence for dating:
  + P4 (ca. 200); Luke 1-6
  + P45 (ca. 150-200); most of the gospel
  + P69 (ca. 3rd c.); Luke 22:41-48 (but no vv. 42-44) and 22:58-61
  + P75 (ca. 175); Luke 4-24
* manuscript peculiarities in Luke:
  + no MS has both Luke and Acts together
  + the adulterous woman of John 8:1-11 also found in some Luke MSS after 21:38
  + Alexandrian vs. “Western” readings in Luke
  + both versions available in the second century; Alexandrian is more polished, Western more popular
  + *textus receptus* based on the Byzantine text (established by Lucian of Antioch in the 4th c.)
  + recovery of the original text begins 17th c. with new discoveries of Codex Alexandrinus (fifth c.), Codex Sinaiticus (fourth c.), and Codex Vaticanus (fourth c.); note also Codex Bezae (5th/6th c.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Western Text | Alexandrian Text |
| Luke 3:22 | |
| You are my Son, today I have begotten you (=Ps 2:7) | You are my Beloved Son, in you I am well pleased (=Isa 42:1) |
| Luke 6:5 | |
| The same day he saw someone working on the Sabbath and said to him, “Man, if you know what you are doing, you are blessed, but if you don’t know, you are cursed and a transgressor of the law.” | And he said to them, “The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” |
| Luke 22:17-20 | |
| And he took the cup and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you, from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the wine until the kingdom comes.” And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and he gave it to them, saying, “This is my body.” | And he took a cup and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you, that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the wine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is given for you. Do this in my remembrance.” And in the same way he took the cup after the meal, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood that has been poured out for you.” |

* patristic evidence: quotations by early church writers;
  + *2 Clement* (ca. 120-150?) and Justin Martyr (ca. 155) appear to use harmony of Matthew and Luke
  + Marcion of Pontus (ca. 85-160): “He mutilates the Gospel which is according to Luke, removes all that is written respecting the generation of the Lord, and sets aside a great deal of the teaching of the Lord’s discourses in which the Lord is recorded as most clearly confessing that the creator of this universe is his Father (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.25.1)
  + Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 3.11.8 (ca. 180): names four gospels
* internal evidence:
  + The Desolating Sacrilege (Luke 21:20-24 par; *Gospel Parallels* #216)
  + “delay of the parousia”
* Why Luke?the “we” section in Acts chs. 16, 20, 21, 27 and 28; Luke mentioned as a companion of Paul in Philemon 1:24, Colossians 4:14, and 2 Timothy 4:11

2. Lucan Redaction

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Mark** | **Matthew** | **Luke** |
| * Christology: messiahship as wandering wonderworker (Elijah) but not a military figure; “adopted” as the Son of God at baptism * Public vs. private: Messianic Secret * Portrayal of apostles: dimwitted * style: language awkward * structure: haphazard | * Christology: messiahship in the model of a prophet (Moses), not a military leader; Son of God at birth * Public vs. private: no Messianic Secret * Portrayal of apostles: not so dimwitted * style: language more refined * structure: improved with stylized blocks of speeches and expanded contexts for narratives | * Christology: * Public vs. private: * Portrayal of apostles: * style: * structure: |
| **Mark** | **Matthew** | **Luke** |
| * knowledge of Judaism: explains Jewish/Aramaic terms * behaviour of Jesus: raw, cantankerous, not in control (things happen to him) * Jewish problem: Jews misunderstood Jesus’ role; salvation goes to the Gentiles | * knowledge of Judaism: does not explain Jewish/Aramaic terms * behaviour of Jesus: more in control (allows things to happen to him) * Jewish problem: Jews know Jesus but reject him anyway; salvation to Jews (despite rejection) and Gentiles | * knowledge of Judaism: * behaviour of Jesus: * Jewish problem: |

Other redactional concerns:

* Delay of the Parousia: Luke 17:20-21; 9:23-27 (*Gospel Parallels* #183 and 123); 22:69 (*Gospel Parallels* #241)
* Luke’s knowledge of Judaism: changes “scribe” to “lawyer”, “Simon the Canaanaean” to “Simon the zealous one” etc.; references to house construction (Mark 2:4 vs. Luke 5:19)
* portrayal of the apostles: Luke 22:45-46 (*Gospel Parallels* #239)
* outcasts:
  + Parable of the Great Dinner (14:15-24; *Gospel Parallels* #170)
  + Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20-23; *Gospel Parallels* #73)
  + Parable of the Rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37), Parable of the Unjust Manager (Luke 16:1-13)
  + Mary Magdalene: prostitute (Luke 7:36-50) or benefactor (Luke 8:1-3)?

3. Writing Luke

* Luke as a historian
  + Lucian (ca. 120-190 CE): “[the historian’s role is] to give a fine arrangement to events and illuminate them as vividly as possible.”
  + Cicero (106-43 BCE) on speeches: “With references to the speeches in this history…it was in all cases difficult to carry them word for word in one’s memory, so my habit has been to make the speakers say what was in my opinion demanded of them by the various occasions, of course, adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what they really said.”
* three-period scheme of salvation history: the law and the prophets which ends with John Baptist, the “middle time” of Jesus on earth where Satan was absent and salvation was fully present, the third is the time of the church as told in Acts in which Luke and his readers lived
* Luke’s journey section ch. 9-19

4. The Infancy Narratives

* discussion of today’s assignment