

# THE WINGED OX

A GLIMPSE INTO THE GOSPEL OF  
LUKE



# SO, FLYING OXEN?

- Ezekiel and Revelation
  - Mark – Winged Lion
  - Luke – Winged Ox
  - Matthew – Winged Man
  - John – Eagle
- Sacrifice, Service, Strength



# PURPOSE & GROUND RULES

- Purpose:
  - Look at Luke's version and get familiar with major themes, issues, and narratives
  - Consider what Luke's Gospel has to say and offer to us in our modern context
- Ground Rules:
  - Opinions and stories shared are of the individual, not a larger community
  - Confidentiality
  - Assumed innocence; practice the 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment





WHAT DO  
YOU KNOW  
ABOUT LUKE?

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Sources

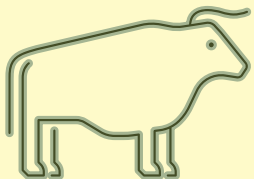
- Mark
- Q
- Other writings

- Timeline

- Post Mark (65-73 CE)
- Post Destruction of Temple (70 CE)
- ≈ 80's

- Author

- Anonymous
- Well Educated
  - ≈ 800 Greek words not found elsewhere in the NT
- Under patronage of Theophilus
- Author of Acts
  - Traveling companion of Paul?
- Gentile



# CONTENT, CONTENT, CONTENT

- Longest book in the NT
- ½ Unique Content
  - Infancy narrative, 17 parables, travel account, ascension story, etc.
- Editing Mark – wider appeal?



# CONTENT<sup>3</sup>

- Women, tax collectors, sinners
- Riches and Poverty
- Critical view of the Pharisees
- Establishing Jesus' validity





# THE TEXT

What stands out for you in the text?

What do you wonder about? What questions do you have for the text?

Where might you see yourself in the text?

What does this text tell us about the Gospel of Luke?





## LUKE 1:46-55 – The Magnificat

46 And Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord

47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

48 for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me—

holy is his name.

50 His mercy extends to those who fear him,

from generation to generation.

51 He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones

but has lifted up the humble.

53 He has filled the hungry with good things

but has sent the rich away empty.

54 He has helped his servant Israel,

remembering to be merciful

55 to Abraham and his descendants forever,

just as he promised our ancestors.”



## LUKE 4:16-30 – Rejection at Nazareth

16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free,

19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

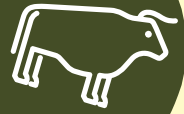
22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

23 Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”

24 “Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. 25 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. 27 And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. 30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.





## LUKE 6:6-11 – The Man with a Withered Hand

6 On another sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. 7 The scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see whether he would cure on the sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against him. 8 Even though he knew what they were thinking, he said to the man who had the withered hand, “Come and stand here.” He got up and stood there. 9 Then Jesus said to them, “I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to destroy it?” 10 After looking around at all of them, he said to him, “Stretch out your hand.” He did so, and his hand was restored. 11 But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.



## LUKE 12:49-53 – The Cause of Division

49 “I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! 51 Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! 52 From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; 53 they will be divided:

father against son


and son against father,

mother against daughter

and daughter against mother,

mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law

and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”



## LUKE 15:1-10 – Parable of the Lost Sheep/Lost Coin

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. 2 And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

3 So he told them this parable: 4 “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? 5 When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ 7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

8 “Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ 10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”



# WOMEN IN THE LUKE'S GOSPEL

# HOW WE APPROACH A TEXT

- With our selves
  - Identities
  - Experiences
  - Beliefs & Prejudices
  - Pre-knowledge

“Any interpretation conceals as much as it reveals.”

- Sam Giere, probably





## LUKE 10:18-42 – Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.

39 She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying.

40 But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me."

41 But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things;

42 there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."



## *Male-Female Parallels in the Gospel of Luke*

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<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>	
1:5–25	annunciation to Zechariah	1:26–38	annunciation to Mary
1:67–79	song of Zechariah	1:46–56	song of Mary
2:25–35	prophecy of Simeon	2:36–38	prophecy of Anna
4:27	man from Syria	4:25–26	woman from Sidon
4:31–37	demon in man rebuked	4:38	fever in woman rebuked
5:19–26	desperate man forgiven	7:35–50	desperate woman forgiven
6:12–16	list of male followers	8:1–3	list of female followers
7:1–10	man's servant saved from death	7:11–17	widow's son saved from death
11:32	men of Nineveh	11:31	queen of the South
13:18–19	man with a mustard seed	13:20–21	woman with yeast
14:1–4	man healed on Sabbath	13:10–17	woman healed on Sabbath
15:4–7	man loses a sheep	15:8–10	woman loses a coin
17:34	two men asleep	17:35	two women at mill

## WOMEN IN LUKE

Mentioned earlier and more frequently

Named (10 women, 133 men)

Crucifixion & Tomb

Parallel stories between men and women



IS LUKE A  
FEMINIST  
ICON?

# BEARING FALSE WITNESS: COMMON ERRORS MADE ABOUT EARLY JUDAISM

- Jesus was Jewish
- Early Judaism is portrayed as “... so misogynistic that it made the Taliban look progressive by comparison, and Jesus liberated women from this oppressive system.” – Amy-Jill Levine, *The Jewish Annotated NT*
  - Interpretations stemming from selective citations of rabbinic writings/histories
- Treating the Jewish faith, tradition, and interpretation as monolithic
- Liberative interpretations can quickly become [unintentionally] anti-Jewish

# SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

- Patriarchal Structure (Ideology):
  - Women: in the home and raise children, cook, clean, weave – possibly supply income through surplus (but surplus belongs to husband)
    - Men work in the fields, sow, tend sheep; gives wife housing, clothing, food
  - In Luke
    - men sow seeds and women put yeast in the dough (Lk 13:18–20); men tend sheep and women sweep the house (Lk 15:4–10)
- Reality of Daily Life (Nuance):
  - Women visit shops, raise livestock, assist husbands in the fields, sell at the markets, etc.
  - In Luke
    - Women owned their own homes (Lk 10:38), had use of their property (Lk 21:2), serve as patrons (Lk 8:1-3), appear in the Temple and synagogue, have freedom to travel
  - **The presence and actions of women are not commented on as abnormal because of their gender but other factors, such as the sinner who anoints Jesus' feet (Lk 7:36)**

# SO, HOW ARE WOMEN DEPICTED IN LUKE?

- Women “omnipresent, but properly behaved.”
- Women are silent patrons, supporting the men in their ministry
  - None are commissioned or given leadership role
- No women challenge Jesus (i.e. the Syrophoenician woman in Mark)
  - Women who do speak out are corrected
- The Device of Parallel/Pairing Stories
- Capitulating to Roman Standards?

# LUKE 8:1-3

1 Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him,  
2 as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,  
3 and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

“Luke accentuates Mary Magdalene’s demon-possession by depicting her as possessed not by a single demon but by seven. The number seven holds significance ... as it **connoted completeness**, thus implying that **Mary had not just been incidentally possessed but fully and completely so**. ... the Lukan text attributes afflictions to the entire group of women ... It is difficult to argue that Luke’s presentation of this group does not further disadvantage the women’s status insofar as **it describes the whole group of women as needing rescuing from evil spirits and diseases**.” – Anne Graham Brock, Oxford Handbook of NT, Gender, & Sexuality



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42 there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

# WORKS CITED/FURTHER READING

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