

Was Luke a Gentile? {www.TheWordNotes.com}

Note: many scholars assume that Luke was a Gentile based on Col. 4:11,14. According to **Romans 3:1-2 the scriptures were entrusted to the Jews.** Some early historians say that **Luke was one of the seventy that Jesus sent out [Lk. 10:1].** This fits with Luke 1 and Acts 1 which show that Luke was not present at Jesus' baptism, but probably joined the disciples shortly thereafter. Internal evidence suggests that not only was Luke a Jew, but possibly a Levitical priest [as well as a physician] – consider his knowledge of the priestly duties in chapter 1 and his detailed knowledge of the Law in chapter 2. He records medical details of some of Jesus' miracles that none of the other gospel writers record suggesting he was actually present when they were performed. See lists given below.

Note in **Acts 21:29** that Luke has been with Paul the whole time [see **Acts 21:1-18**] but Luke points out that **the Jews thought Paul had brought Trophimus an Ephesian** into the temple [although Luke tells us that was not the case]. If Luke was a Gentile as many speculate, since **Luke was with Paul the whole time**, it would seem that the Jews would have been concerned that Luke may have been brought to the temple. But **since Luke was in fact a Jew, the possibility that Luke had entered the temple was not an issue!** How would Luke know that Paul did not bring Trophimus into the temple **unless he was actually with Paul at the time he entered the temple?**

Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis of the fourth century stated that Luke was one of the seventy. While it is possible he was mistaken it is obvious that Luke knew the Old Testament, the Law, and the customs of the Jews very well and carefully explained them to the Gentile readers he was writing to.

Luke in chapter 10 is the only gospel which records the sending of the seventy.

Luke records Cleopas (and possibly himself) on the road to Emmaus – Lk. 24:13-35 Since Luke only names Cleopas, the implication is that he is the one talking to Cleopas.

The following miracles of Jesus are only recorded in Luke's gospel:

Escape from the crowd – Lk. 4:29-30

Draught of fish – Lk. 5:6

Raising of the widow's son – Lk. 7:11

Ten lepers – Lk. 17:12

Woman with spirit of infirmity – Lk. 13:11

Man with dropsy – Lk. 14:2

Malchus healed – Lk. 22:51

The following parables are only recorded in Luke's gospel:

Barren fig tree – Lk. 13:6-9
Building a tower – Lk. 14:25-35
Creditor and two debtors – Lk. 7:41-43
Faithful and evil servant – Lk. 12:35-40
Faithful and wise steward – Lk. 12:42-48
Friend in need – Lk. 11:5-13
Good Samaritan – Lk. 10:30-37
Great supper – Lk. 14:16-24
Importune widow – Lk. 18:1-8
Lost coin – Lk. 15:8-10
Pharisee publican – Lk. 18:9-14
Prodigal son – Lk. 15:11-32
Rich fool – Lk. 12:16-21
Rich man and Lazarus – Lk. 16:19-31
Ten, five, one pound – Lk. 19:11-27
Unjust steward – Lk. 16:1-13
Unprofitable servants – Lk. 17:7-10

The above miracles and parables of Jesus which only Luke records tends to suggest that he was present when they occurred.

Col. 4:11

(11) And Jesus, who is called Justus, who are of the circumcision {Jews}. These are my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God, who have been a comfort to me. ... (14) Luke, the beloved physician and Demas, greet you.

While this passage seems to imply that Luke was not a Jew, I'm not sold on that interpretation.

Paul in **Romans 3:1-2** tells us **the oracles of God were entrusted to the Jews.** Some would argue that he was only referring to the Old Testament. I believe that Paul, led by the Holy Spirit, was referring to all scriptures including the New Testament.