

Starting Thoughts

When it is written that there is a particular author named to a Gospel that is not to say that person wrote the Gospel in question. In fact we do not know who first put pen to paper.

Each of the Four Gospels comes from a different community with different needs. The prophet that God sent to each of the communities (Markan Community, Lucan Community, etc.) was asked about this Jesus person. The Evangelist told the people about Jesus, as the mouth piece of God, and it was written down. Alternatively, he may have been written to with a problem of a lack of understanding, just as Paul was. The Evangelist then wrote down “his” account of the Life of Jesus in a letter and it was sent to the community.

Luke for example, claims to be writing this of his own accord. We do not know why he was told to write in this way, but I theorize that it was him dictating to a scribe, but the text begins in this way to reflect this. Furthermore, Luke as a physician would have been one to try and study the evidence, but came to faith in his analysis.

Each one has a “style” that is indicative of the audience that was reached. Some communities knew about Judaic practices and others did not. These specifications were included so that God could reach as much of the world as possible.

Sects in Judaism

The Pharisees were the common everyday people who did not have much money. They focused more on oral traditions rather than what was written down. They believed that ritual purity brought them closer to God and were more focused on the letter of the law than the spirit of the law. They hated the Sadducees as much as the Sadducees hated them. However, they both hated Jesus more.

Sadducees were the wealthy and the Temple leaders. They did not believe in the Resurrection. Jesus rarely interacted with them. They hated the Pharisees as much as the Pharisees hated them. However, they both hated Jesus more.

The Essenes were a hermit-like sect that lived out in the wilderness that took ritual baths for the cleansing of sins. They are credited with writing the Dead Sea Scrolls and John the Baptist may have been a member.

The Zealots believed that the Romans should be ousted by force. Simon the Zealot/Canaanite, a Disciple, is the only one that The Bible names.

Chapters

The Coming of John the Baptist

Theophilus is Greek for “Lover of God” or “One who loves God”. Thus, Luke is writing this Gospel to us as well.

A lot is essentially putting all of the names of the people onto slips of paper and then drawing one out.

I had a professor that told me that the person who went in often had a rope tied around his waist in case he died inside. I am not sure as to the truth of this, so I decided not to include it.

This is where we first meet Gabriel. There have been a lot of depictions of angels over the years. Almost none of them are scripturally accurate and are based on Renaissance painters.

Aside from descriptions of angels in the prophetic books, which must always be taken with a grain of salt, there are very few descriptions of angels.

In the New Testament, they are described as men in white garments. I continued on this and thus angels are depicted as ordinary men, but they glow and shine like the face of Moses.

Their clothing is of whatever time and place they are in, but only of the purest white. Todd made the addition of greater radiance when the angel is speaking prophetically.

Lastly, let me say one thing about Zecharias. He doubted the angel, but I think the main problem with what he said was tone. The written word has neither tone nor inflection, save for punctuation. As such, I think that this priest was sarcastic, crude, and insensitive and that is why God gave Gabriel the authority to silence him.

The Foretelling of Christ

Girls were often married as soon as they were able to bear children (12-14) and boys at about the same age. Many depictions put Mary and Joseph as much older than they should be.

The really big difference that we need to see between Zecharias and Mary is her tone. Gabriel does not have nearly as much of a heavenly glow (save when prophesying) because Mary accepts his testimony.

One of the biggest problems I have with modern interpretations is that Mary is put as middle aged. People were married at a very young age in this era. Shorter lifespans meant that you needed to get started quickly Mary would have been between the ages of twelve and fourteen.

Mary and Elizabeth

Many cinematic depictions show Mary travelling by caravan, but Todd and I decided to just make it Mary and her companions.

There is an excellent example of culture in this section. If you look very closely at Elisabeth as she greets Mary, the table is very low to the ground. This is because people here actually sat on the floor around the table. Sorry to burst the bubble of anyone who has a painting of The Last Supper.

All throughout production, I was asked if I was reinventing the wheel. I simply responded with The Magnificat. Other people have illustrated this, but took the most beautiful prayer of The Gospels and reduce it to a few sentences. I believe that anything worth doing is worth doing right the first time.

Mary Returns

Because Joseph is maybe no older than 14 at this point, Todd and I did not give him a full beard as he is often depicted with in order to keep with the historical context.

The description of people seeing Mary and Joseph going to the priest is from the mind of Todd. I liked it because it added a bit more depth to the characters. It also explain a little bit more for those who are not as familiar with the story and the time period that it takes place in. Today if a girl gets pregnant, people will talk. In those days, she was ostracized from the community and might have been stoned.

The Birth of John the Baptist

Todd and I were rather unsure as to what a writing tablet was and so we both agreed that it was essentially a slate with a writing utensil.

Zecharias has not said anything for nine months and when he is finally able to speak, he gives a wonderful sermon on the love of God.

In addition to sounding the alarm, horns were also used for anointing Kings. Samuel anointed David with a ram's horn.

The Birth of Christ

Jesus was not born in a manger because there was no room in the inn. Jesus was born in a manger because there was no room in the house. Inns did not exist in towns like this in this time.

There might have been inns along the main roads, but not in the towns. They went to stay with Joseph's relatives.

It was very common to bring animals in at night to protect them from both the elements and from rogues. Thus the young couple would have stayed in the first century equivalent of a garage.

With both of these together, there were plenty of women to help out with the birth, just as Todd depicted.

The Presentation

Mary and Joseph brought their sacrificial birds because they were very poor. Because of the way that God provided access to this sacrifice, even the poor could just go out and capture a bird to sacrifice to God.

The Magi

There is no indication in any way that the Magi were kings, they were merely wise men.

There have been a lot of depictions of the devil over the years. (Also as a stylistic note, I will not capitalize his name.) I decided that to be the most true to the original text, satan is a fallen angel and would share traits in common with heavenly angels. For this reason, the individual that whispers into Herod's ear is a pale, sickly, and transparent figure. The other angels are strong and powerful, but satan has spent so much time away from God that he does not have as much strength. Furthermore, he also does not have the heavenly glow.

Since Herod demanded the information from the scribes, they are frightened and give the information out of fear.

The Finding of Jesus in The Temple

As a kid, I thought that Mary and Joseph were the worst parents ever to leave a tween alone in a big city. Twelve years old was the age when boys started to become men. Since men and women traveled separately in caravans, Jesus could have been traveling with his mother or his father. Thus, both Mary and Joseph both thought that Jesus was with the other.

After the two find Jesus, and He declares being about His father's business the priests are noticeably shocked. In saying this, Jesus is not only rejecting Joseph as His father, but is also claiming divinity. Perhaps since He was considered not quite an adult, the religious leaders just pretended to not hear this.

The Ministry of John

This is actually the first really big parallel passage portion that I wrote. This is for two reasons actually, one it is early on and two, this is the passage that my New Testament professor used to tell us that we should not take The Bible as literal history. You read that right, a theology professor that does not trust The Bible. It is indeed a strange world. (I would include his name, but I do not want his house to be stormed by angry villagers with torches and pitch forks.)

I found it very difficult at first, but then the obvious hit me like a tongue of fire on my head, it is not an event that takes place over the course of one day, but over several days. The Four Evangelists tell of the events, but the exact timing was irrelevant to The Almighty's plan for our salvation.

Day I

1. Introduction to John
2. The disciples of the Pharisees are sent to ask John questions. -John 1:24
3. The questions are answered over the next few verse and this culminates with John quoting Isaiah. -Luke 3:4

Day II

1. John calls the Pharisees, who now choose to confront him personally, to a “Generation of Vipers” -Matthew 3:7, Luke 3:7
2. Pharisees go to test John personally. –Luke 3:7
3. Tax collectors and soldiers are told what to do to obtain salvation. –Luke 3:10-14
4. The people wonder whether John is The Christ -Luke 3:15
5. John gives the first of two speeches that are recorded in the narrative. –Matthew 3:11-12

And although, I hate to do this to you all, but this passage is cut in the middle, because my next book picks up with The Baptism of Christ in The Jordan.

It will be called *The Luminous Gospel of Christ*.

Day III

1. John gives another speech. –Mark 1:7-8
2. Jesus approaches, possibly at the end of the line. –Mark 1:21
3. John tries to prevent Him. –Matthew 3:14
4. Jesus prayerfully enters the waters. –John 1:21
5. John relates the event to his disciples, because John knows that he will be arrested soon and he wants them to not fall away.

Day IV

1. John is arrested. –Luke 3:19

And thus, as usual, there is no contradiction in any passage found in The Good Book.