

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke: Introduction – 1

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord! God has preserved us through the year 2025, and very soon we will begin to welcome 2026. For God's protection and care, we offer Him our thanksgiving and worship. In the new year, we plan to read two books of the Bible: the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Numbers. Luke has 24 chapters, and Numbers has 36 chapters, for a total of 60 chapters. Roughly, we plan to go through these two books at a pace of one chapter per week.

We thank the Lord for richly leading us through 2025, and we now commit the coming year entirely into God's hands. May He grant us abundant grace and give us light, that we may see the words upon His heart—what He desires to speak to each one of us through His Word. May He also, through each saint's willingness to spend a little time every day in God's Word, build us up and supply us with help. We ask God especially to grant us grace to remove the veil from each of our hearts, that with unveiled faces we may be face to face with God's Word, allowing His Word to shine upon us, to guide us, and to give us a heart of obedience, willing to follow the Lord's daily leading in each of our lives.

Before entering the Bible-reading of Luke for 2026, I would like to spend a little time fellowshipping some introductory words with the saints. The birth of Jesus Christ is the greatest event in human history. As recorded in the Gospel of John, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). He who was originally the eternal and infinite God, for the sake of humanity, entered into time. Not only did He enter into time, but He also took the likeness of man and lived a human life on the earth, with the purpose of accomplishing God's predetermined work of redemption. This greatest event in human history divided the entire Bible into the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament begins with God's covenant with Adam, God's covenant with Noah, God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and God's covenant with David. All of these continued until Jesus Christ came to the earth and fulfilled all the former covenants. The Old Testament is a foreword; only when Jesus Christ came to the earth and established the new covenant in His blood did reality come. This new covenant is able to bring all that God has ordained into the experience of every one of His children. Therefore, the biblical record concerning Jesus Christ is of the utmost importance.

In the Old Testament, what the prophets spoke and prophesied was Jesus Christ. After Jesus Christ came to the earth, His thirty-three and a half years of life and ministry on earth were under God's sovereign authority. Thus, at the beginning of the New Testament, there are four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Through four of His servants, God portrayed Jesus Christ whom they knew from different angles. These four books are not biographies of Jesus Christ; rather, they are the words that four of God's servants, moved by the Holy Spirit, wrote according to what God wanted them to write.

In 2 Timothy 3:16 it says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God". The word "inspiration" in English comes from the original Greek meaning "breathed out." Scripture is God's breathing out. What God breathes out is the Holy Spirit. Each Gospel writer was moved by the Holy Spirit, and through their life experiences and through what they knew and experienced of Jesus Christ, they wrote these four books according to the Spirit's inspiration. These four books are like the four parts of a choral composition: each part can be sung on its own, but when combined, the beauty of the whole song is fully manifested. To fully know Jesus' life, ministry, and work on earth, we must be well acquainted with all four Gospels—none can be missing.

Concerning these fourfold portrayals of Jesus, God had already laid a foreshadowing in the Old Testament through the prophet Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 1:10 it speaks of the four living creatures, and each living creature had four faces. It says: "As for the likeness of their faces: each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side; each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side; and

each of the four had the face of an eagle". On each living creature were four different aspects: from the front, the face of a man; from the back, the face of an eagle; from the right, the face of a lion; and from the left, the face of an ox. The living creatures were created by God, and these four faces typify all the needs of God's creation.

Jesus Christ came to the earth to meet all the needs among God's created universe, so that all created things might ultimately be brought back to God's original intention in creation. Through His life, ministry, and work—especially through His great work of redemption—the entire universe has been restored.

Therefore, in Revelation chapter 4, there again appear four living creatures, and these four living creatures bring forth the worship and praise of the entire universe to God. At this point, the four living creatures are no longer one creature with four faces, but four distinct living creatures: "The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle" (Revelation 4:7). This fourfold description—lion, ox, man, and eagle—corresponds perfectly with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Matthew, the author of the Gospel of Matthew, emphasizes that Jesus is the Lion of Judah, who came to be King. Therefore, his genealogy begins with David's descendants and Abraham's offspring, because David was Israel's greatest king. The Gospel of Mark presents Jesus as the ox, serving like a slave. A slave does not need a genealogy; thus, Mark begins directly with Jesus' work and ministry. He served diligently and gave His life as a ransom for many. The Gospel of Luke presents Jesus as the perfect Man, especially emphasizing the beauty of His human virtues—how gentle, fine, and pure He is.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are generally called the Synoptic Gospels. Their manner of recording is basically similar, and much of their content overlaps, though each writes from a different perspective. They were all written around A.D. 60.

The Gospel of John was written nearly thirty years later than the other three Gospels. In the late A.D. 90s, when John was already in his nineties, he wrote the

Gospel of John. The purpose of writing John's Gospel was to testify that Jesus is the Son of God, like an eagle soaring above all earthly difficulties. John's Gospel was written to supplement the deficiencies of the other three Gospels; therefore, it includes much firsthand material from John's personal following of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These four Gospels clearly tell us that Jesus is the coming Messiah, who came to meet every kind of human need. Among the four Gospel writers, Matthew and John personally followed the Lord Jesus Christ, so their records are firsthand accounts. Mark, the author of the Gospel of Mark, was called by Peter his "son," so much of his account was written from Peter's perspective. For this reason, some also call the Gospel of Mark the Gospel of Peter.

Luke is the only Gentile author in the entire New Testament. He followed Paul closely and took care of him, so much of his material came from Paul. Therefore, some also call the Gospel of Luke the Gospel of Paul. Thank the Lord! God has placed these four Gospels into our hands. We will spend nearly half a year reading through the Gospel of Luke. May God help us to receive the daily supply of His Word from the Gospel of Luke, so that our living may gradually become like that of Jesus Christ, manifesting on the earth the beauty of His human virtues.

Let us pray together: Lord, we thank You. Thank You for Your leading in our lives, and thank You for placing the Gospel of Luke into our hands. We ask that You would lead us throughout the coming year, granting us light in our daily Bible reading, and giving us a willing and obedient heart, so that the words we read may become our help and our guidance in daily life. Bless our daily living. We pray in the Holy Name of Jesus Christ.