



THE HISTORICAL JESUS XV:

## **The Gospel of Luke: Jesus as the New Adam<sup>1, 2</sup>**

THE GOSPEL WRITTEN BY LUKE, the physician (Colossians 4:14) (ca. 60-CE), reflects the convictions of the apostle Paul, for Luke had been his student, colleague and staunch supporter. In two of his epistles, Paul inferred that Jesus Christ was the new or the last Adam:

Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam . . . who is the figure of him that was to come. — Romans 5:14.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. — 1 Corinthians 15:22.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. — 1 Corinthians 15:45.

Not surprisingly, in his Gospel Luke employs this typology of the old and the new Adam.

In the account of creation, the book of Genesis concludes with the creation of Adam (Genesis 1:27; 2:7). In the preface to his Gospel, Luke records the circumstances surrounding the birth of John the Baptist and of his cousin, Jesus of Nazareth. He then gives a brief account of Jesus' early life and of John's ministry. After addressing the preaching of John and the baptism of Jesus, Luke presents the genealogy of Jesus, "being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph . . ." (Luke 3:23). The genealogy then extends to "Adam, which was the son of God" (Luke 3:38).

Soon after his creation Adam succumbed to the temptation initiated by the serpent, and he ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. In Luke's typology, soon

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after Jesus was baptized and the Holy Ghost had descended like a dove upon him (Luke 3:22), he “was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat *nothing*: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered” (Luke 4:1, 2, emphasis supplied).

On the one hand, because of his transgression Adam was expelled from the garden and thereafter lived in the wilderness (Genesis 3:22-24). On the other hand, “when the devil had ended all the temptation [of Jesus in the wilderness], he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about” (Luke 4:13, 14).

While Adam lived the rest of his life in virtual obscurity, Jesus “taught in . . . [the] synagogues, being glorified of all” (Luke 4:15).

During the Passover season at the end of his ministry, Jesus left the upper room with his disciples and went to the garden (Gethsemane) to pray. Here he was betrayed and arrested. “Then took they him, and led him [out of the garden], and brought him into the high priest’s house” (Luke 22:54).

“ . . . [A]nd all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died [peacefully]” (Genesis 5:5). Legend records that Adam was buried on the site of Golgotha (Hebrew; Greek = Calvary = [Adam’s] Skull). Jesus, who never

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sinned, was tried, tortured and crucified on Calvary for telling the truth, for doing good and for transcending all temptations (Luke 23:33).<sup>3</sup> As Jesus was hanging on the cross, one of the malefactors who was crucified with him “said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise [the garden]” (Luke 23:42, 43).

## Conclusion

Let us then rejoice. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

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## Endnotes

1. See T. Austin-Sparks, “The Mission, the Meaning and the Message,” at [www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000946.html](http://www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000946.html).
2. See David Gibson, “Luke 4:1-13,” at [beginningwithmoses.org/briefings/luke4v1to13.htm](http://beginningwithmoses.org/briefings/luke4v1to13.htm).
3. “Golgotha was . . . the place where Adam had been created and buried. Thus the blood of the Saviour falls upon Adam’s skull, buried precisely at the foot of the Cross, and redeems him” (Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return, or Cosmos and History* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1954], p. 14).