Luke the Evangelist

Luke the Evangelist (Ancient Greek: Λουκᾶς, Loukãs) is one of the Four Evangelists—the four traditionally ascribed authors of the canonical Gospels. The early church fathers ascribed to him authorship of both the Gospel according to Luke and the book of Acts of the Apostles, which would mean Luke contributed over a quarter of the text of the New Testament, more than any other author. Prominent figures in early Christianity such as Jerome and Eusebius later reaffirmed his authorship, although the fragile evidence of the identity of the author of the works has led to discussion in scholarly circles, both secular and religious.

The New Testament mentions Luke briefly a few times, and the Pauline epistle to the Colossians refers to him as a doctor (from Latin for teacher); thus he is thought to have been both a physician and a disciple of Paul. Christians since the faith's early years have regarded him as a saint. He is believed to have been a martyr, reportedly as having been hanged in an olive tree, though some believe otherwise.

Life

Many scholars believe that Luke was a Greek physician who lived in the Greek city of Antioch in Ancient Syria, though some other scholars and theologians think Luke was a Hellenic Jew. Bart Koet for instance considered it as widely accepted that the theology of Luke–Acts points to a gentile Christian writing for a gentile audience. Gregory Sterling though, claims that he was either a Hellenistic Jew or a god-fearer.

His earliest notice is in Paul's Epistle to Philemon—Philemon 1:24. He is also mentioned in Colossians 4:14 and 2Timothy 4:11, two works commonly ascribed to Paul. The next earliest account of Luke is in the Anti-Marcionite Prologue to the Gospel of Luke, a document once thought to date to the 2nd century, but which has more recently been dated to the later 4th century. Helmut Koester, however, claims that the following part, the only part preserved in the original Greek, may have been composed in the late 2nd century:

Luke, was born in Antioch, by profession, was a physician. He had become a disciple of the apostle Paul and later followed Paul until his [Paul's] martyrdom. Having served the Lord continuously, unmarried and without children, filled with the Holy Spirit he died at the age of 84 years. (p. 335)

1 From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia