

Zacchaeus, Cleopas and friend). The outcasts of society were ministered to in real life (7:36-50; 19:8-10; 23:40-43) and in parables (7:41-42; 15:11-32; 18:9-14). Luke wrote so that someone who had just begun in the Christian faith could understand the life of Jesus both chronologically (in the light of Jesus' times) and theologically (1:1-4).

#### Questions:

Who was Luke's source for the personal information about Mary in chapters 1-2? Mary, herself? Was Theophilus an actual person of simple comparable to the "dear reader" of Victorian novels (cf. "theophilus" means "lover of God")? Why are there differences between Matthew and Luke in such important texts as the Lord's Prayer or the Beatitudes?

#### Archaeology:

During the 19th century it was customary to dismiss Luke's claims to historical accuracy as fictitious. Archaeology has since increased respect for him as an historian to the point of his being called "the chief of historians" or "an historian of the first rank." No reference to Nazareth, Jesus childhood home in Galilee, was known from any ancient source until a list of the 24 courses of the priestly rotation (cf. 1:5) was found on a fragment from Caesarea, naming the town.

The accuracy of Luke's heading in 3:1 was doubted for many years because the only Lysanias known had been executed in 36 BC, 50 to 60 years before John the Baptist's ministry. Two Greek inscriptions, however, prove that another Lysanias ruled from AD 14-29. Luke's designation of Philip as "tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis" is also now supported by a Greek inscription.

The ten drachmas mentioned in Jesus' parable of the lost coin (15:8-10) were silver shekels from Tyre, acceptable currency for the temple offerings.

#### Keys:

Luke is the only author of any historical book in the Bible who tells why and with what goals he wrote (1:1-4). Luke 2:22-24, 39, and 41 all give evidence to support a subsidiary motive for writing--to prove that Christians were not an anti-Jewish sect. Isaiah 40:3-5, quoted in full in Luke 3:4-6, shows that Jesus ministry was beyond Israel to all people (cf. also 5:20-26 and 19:10 for the central point of the Gospel). Jesus self-confession (22:67-70) reveals Luke's theme, and his interpretation of the Old Testament record (24:26-27) echoes the connection with the Old Testament seen in chapters 1 and 2.