

AUTHORS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

by
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Christian Cult Dogma teaches that certain people wrote various parts of the New Testament. Most of the Evidence upon which these teachings are based comes from Cult writings and is thus to be inherently distrusted. This is even more true in light of the fact that there is internal Scriptural Evidence that Contradicts this Dogma. We offer three examples: the writings of Luke/Acts; Hebrews; and the Johannine literature. Dogma teaches that Paul's alleged physician, Luke, was the author of the two volume work which is called The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles in the Orthodox New Testament. Old Dogma taught that Paul wrote Hebrews, but this teaching has been mostly abandoned in light of the clear differences of thought between Hebrews and Paul's other writings. Most Believers attribute this work to people like Barnabas or Apollos of Alexandria. Most inexplicable of all, however, is the attribution of the Johannine literature to the Apostle Paul, whom the author of Acts tells us was Illiterate. (Acts 4:13.) The author of the Johannine literature was just the opposite: a very learned man! Thus, we have abandoned the Dogma in favor of identifications of the authors whom more accurately reflect the internal Scriptural Evidence.

(1) Luke/Acts: Scholarly consensus and common sense speak of the unity of Luke/Acts as a two volume work dedicated to a man called Theophilus (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1). The author tells us that he studied all of the available information on the life of Jesus and the Early Christian Cults and put them "in order," that is, in their alleged right chronology. However, since he disagrees many times with the accounts of the Apostle Paul, we do not have to take always take him at his word. As in a court of law, the trier of fact may pick and choose a witnesses testimony once it has been proven that the witness has Lied or Misrepresented the Truth. Thus, we will accept the author's account when it agrees with Paul, and discount it when it disagrees.

The only hint the author gives us as to his actual identity is to be found in Acts 16, where the account shifts mysteriously from the third person to the first person, the first of a series of passages

that have become known to scholars as the “we” passages. This first “we” passage occurs in Troas in the Roman province of Mysia:

“And a Vision Appeared to Paul in the night; there stood a Man of Macedonia, and Prayed him, Saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had Seen the Vision, immediately WE endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had Called US for to Preach the Gospel unto them.” Acts 16:9-10

In our opinion, just prior to the first “we” account, we are introduced to a mysterious figure known as “the Man from Macedonia,” a man that Paul allegedly sees in a Vision. As soon as this person is identified, the account switches to the first person and continues in the first person until Paul is arrested in Philippi, a Chief City of Macedonia. This is strong Evidence that the author was the Man from Macedonia and resided in Philippi.

As a result of his ties with Paul, he would have had Preeminence in the Philippian Church, since he was responsible for bringing the Gospel to Philippi, to wit, by being the Source of Paul’s Vision. Therefore, in our teaching, the author of Luke/Acts is the Man from Macedonia. Is there anything else we can know about him?

Fortunately, there are other clues in the writings of Paul as to the identity of this author. Paul’s letter to the Philippians actually gives us another strong clue. In this letter we discover that a person named Epaphroditus is called the Apostle of the Philippians:

“Yet I supposed it necessary to sent to you Epaphroditus, my Brother, and Companion in Labor, and Fellow-Soldier, but your Apostle [the word “Apostle” is usually mistranslated as “Messenger” in the English versions, so as not to Contradict the Orthodox teaching on Apostolic succession], and he that Ministered to my wants....Receive him therefore in the Lord with all Gladness; and hold such in Reputation: because for the Work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.” (Philippians 2:25,29-30; Paul also mentions two Brothers in Christ who are Apostles of the Churches, one who was chosen by his Church to travel with Paul on his journey to Jerusalem to bring in the Glory of the Gentiles [2 Corinthians 8:18-24; again, “Apostles” is wrongfully translated as “Messengers” in most English translations.] If one of these Apostles was Epaphroditus, it would agree with the second “we” passage of Acts, which begins in Philippi with that author accompanying Paul to Jerusalem with the Money Gift for the Poor in Jerusalem, “the Glory of the Gentiles.” [Acts 20:6].)

This is no unwarranted stretch of the imagination since Eaphroditus had been intrusted with a Monetary Gift from the Philippians to give to Paul in one of his imprisonments. This virtually clinches the author's identity as the Philippian Epaphroditus, especially since he was known as the Apostle of Philippi. Who else would Paul have entrusted to carry the Philippian Gift to Jerusalem with him?

And, if the imprisonment of Paul in Philippians was in Caesarea following his arrest in the Temple (the place where the second “we” passage ends), it would allow a period of time for Epaphroditus to return to Philippi after Paul's arrest, tell them about what had happened to Paul, and then return with another Monetary Gift to help him through his time as Caesar's guest in Caesarea. He may have also brought a Gift for his fellow Macedonian, Aristarchus of Thessalonica, for he too was a prisoner with Paul. (Acts 27:1-2.) It is at the beginning of Paul’s sea voyage to Rome that the final “we passage” begins, ending after two years of Paul’s house arrest in Rome. From a passage documenting Paul’s alleged “last words” to the Ephesian Elders, it is to be inferred that the author wrote Acts after Paul’s death. (Acts 20:17-38.)

Another interesting point about Acts is the number of people that are never mentioned who are mentioned in the letters of Paul to the Corinthians and Philippians. For example, Paul mentions by name very few people in his letter to the Philippians, specifically, Epaphroditus, Euodias, Syntyche, Clement, and the dear Yokefellow, but none of these people appear in Acts by name. Instead, we are told of the Man from Macedonia (never named), a Roman jailor (never named), Lydia of Thyatira, and the Pythoness (also never named)

As shown above, we can imagine that the Man from Macedonia is Epaphroditus, but there is nothing to stop us from also imagining, for the sake of argument, that the Yokefellow in the letter to the Philippians is Lydia, that the jailor is Clement, and that the Pythoness is either Euodias or Syntyche. Of course, this all pure conjecture, but by assuming these things to be true, avenues are opened in the Study of Scripture that would be otherwise foreclosed. The Holy Bible is a Mystery

Book and should Reveal its Mysteries with Proper Study and Meditation.

Things are no better when we compare Acts and the letters to the Corinthians. We find Timothy and Silas, Apollos, Aquilla and Prisca, and Sosthenes mentioned in both, but that is about it. Sosthenes, although close to Paul in the Corinthian correspondences, is disgraced as an enemy of Paul before the Roman prefect Gallio in Acts (18:17). We never hear of Stephanas, Fortunatas, Achaicus, or the House of Chloe in Acts, even though they are key players in 1 Corinthians. We do, however, hear of the factions of Cephas, Apollos, Paul, and Christ in 1 Corinthians, and perhaps the people that are mentioned that took different sides in the Cult Wars that followed the execution of Paul. And, of course, although Titus is a key player in 2 Corinthians, he is never once mentioned by name in Acts, strong indication that he and the author became Rival Cult Leaders in Macedonia and Greece following Paul's death..

As for other people that are mentioned by Paul but who are not in Acts, there are, inter alia, Philemon and his slave, Onesimus, Epaphroditus (of course, if he is the author, then this would explain why), Demas, Luke, and, even though John Mark is mentioned by both, he is disgraced in Acts as a traitor (15:36-39), allegedly causing Paul and Barnabas split up. Of course, we get the totally opposite opinion of John Mark in Paul, who holds him in high regard (2 Timothy 4:11), an opinion supported by Peter (1 Peter 5:13).

(2) Hebrews: The author of Hebrews is even easier to deduce under our System. We know from Acts that the only time that Silas and Timothy were separated from Paul was on their First European Expedition, after they had Preached the Gospel to the Hebrews of Thessalonika and Berea (Acts 17:1-13). Because of heavy persecution, Paul had to leave Silas and Timothy behind in Berea while he was secreted away to Athens, leaving instructions that Silas and Timothy were to come to him with all speed (Acts 17:14-15; cf., 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2, where Paul, Silas, and Timothy are all in Athens together, whereas they are not reunited in Acts until Paul is already established in Corinth).

We are given no information in Acts why Silas and Timothy were left behind, but there are some intriguing clues.

A good explanation would be that they had been arrested and incarcerated, while Paul managed to get away before being arrested. Silas and Timothy would have been left in prison until they could make bail (cf., Jason of Thessalonica had to post bail for himself and others after being arrested for "turning the Kosmos upside down" with their Gospel, where they had been accused of rebelling against Rome by calling Jesus a "King" rather than Caesar: Acts 17:6-9). We are then told that Paul and Silas were secreted to Berea (it is assumed that Timothy was with them, for he is with Silas in Berea when Paul goes alone to Athens: Acts 17:10-14). We are thus allowed to imagine Timothy getting out of prison in Thessalonica, and while he is on his way to Berea, Silas takes time to write his letter to the Hebrews of Thessalonica and Berea.

The author of Hebrews has a very different writing style and vocabulary than Paul, but his ideas appear to be very Pauline at their core. We are given a lot of information about Silas: he was a Chief Man and a Prophet in the Jerusalem Church, at least until James took it over (Acts 15:22,32). In the two letters he co-authored with Paul, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, the tone is much different than the tone in the rest of Paul's letters. There is a decidedly a more Judgmental bent to these two letters that are rare in Paul's other letters, and this bent is fully reflected in some passages in Hebrews, especially in those passages where the loss of Salvation is threatened (e.g., Hebrews 3:8 - 4:11; 6:4-8).

Moreover, the author of Hebrews is not only familiar with Timothy (Hebrews 13:23), it appears that they were both incarcerated at the same time while the letter was being written, even though Timothy had just been released (Hebrews 10:34; 13:3,19,23). Finally, the letter is written soon after a severe persecution of believers in the area, even though so far no one had yet been killed (Hebrews 10:32-39; 12:4-13; 13:3). This is precisely the same situation of Acts 17.

All of this Evidence from Scripture allows us to state that, in our opinion, based on Biblical Factual Study, Silas was the author of Hebrews.

(3) The Johannine Literature: As mentioned in the introduction, it is so unlikely that this material was written by John, brother of James, a Son of Boanerges ("Thunder"), that we will waste no time eliminating him as the author. However, we can see very close similarities in this literature with the Pauline Gospel, causing us to conclude that this author came under strong Pauline influence while Paul was still alive.

The author, who calls himself the Beloved Disciple in the Gospel of John, and the Elder in 1,2, and 3 John, is not one of the Twelve Apostles. It is obvious that he is very educated, especially in the "Logos" teachings contemporaneous with Jewish Platonic authors such as Philo of Alexandria. The author, although not of the 12, is allowed to sit at Christ's Right Hand in the Upper Chamber ceremony of the Last Supper, a place that appears to be in his own house. His account of the Last Supper is also contrary to the Synoptic Gospels (which limits Christ's inner circle to the Twelve), and occurs on the day before Passover, the day the lambs are slain, rather than on the Passover, as related by the Synoptics.

The Beloved Disciple is also concerned about separating himself from the Daniel-Enoch Apocalyptic Christians, that were slowly easing towards war with Rome. This probably accounts for why he reports the incidence of the Cleansing of the Temple at the beginning of Jesus's Ministry, rather than at the End, as it appears in the Synoptic tradition (John 2:13-22).

Furthermore, the author reinterprets the Second Coming of Christ as the coming of the Holy Pneuma, the Paraclete, in contrast to the Apocalyptic Judgment Second Coming of the Synoptics. Such a view could only have been written after the Temple was destroyed, since Christ predicted that his coming would coincide with its destruction (Matthew 24:1-3). Since the Second Coming did not occur as expected, just like the First Coming, it had to be reinterpreted. This crucial insight of the Johannine literature was soon lost in the Gnostic controversies of the Second Century.

The only person in the New Testament who fits all of this evidence is the cousin of Christ, John Mark, son of Clopas (brother of Joseph) and Mary of Jerusalem (the "Other" Mary, who was

Christ's aunt, his mother Mary's sister-in-law: Luke 24:13-35; John 19:25; Acts 12:12,25; 13:5,13; 15:36-41; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book III, Chapter XI).

John Mark's brother, Simeon, became Pope of the Jerusalem Church after his cousin James, the evil brother of Jesus, was murdered by the High Priest, an event which was a key spark causing the war against Rome (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book XX, Chapter IX; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book II, Chapter XXIII; Book III, Chapter XI). The irony, of course, is that John Mark did not write the Gospel of Mark, as dogmatic tradition attests, but the Gospel of John and its progeny. He was certainly not the author of Revelation.

The great truth that Christ's extended family was rich, educated, and influential in Jerusalem, also belies the Dogma that Jesus was a poor carpenter's son. The Greek word for carpenter, Tekton, is more accurately translated as "Builder," since a Tekton would have been skilled not only in wood, but also in stone and other building materials. Because the Sons of David, Solomon and Zerubbabel, were the "Builders" of the First and Second Temples respectively, the term Tekton could have been a code-word signifying the title of the Underground King, the Son of David who should have been Reigning if not for the power politics of the day.

Thus, Joseph and also Jesus may have been called Tekton because of their Underground Kingship, not because of their profession. Between Zerubbabel and Joseph, the Tektons were all Underground. It was not until Christ came out of the closet when he rode on David's Donkey to Gihon, like Solomon before him (1 Kings 1:32-40), as prophesied by Zechariah (Zechariah 9:9), that the Kingship was reinstated for eternity.