

In my previous post I argued that in the narrative of Luke's Gospel, Jesus has to die for a rather specific reason. In Luke, more than in his predecessor Mark, Jesus is portrayed as a great prophet (like Samuel, like Elijah, etc.), and in Luke's understanding, that is why Jesus had to die. The Jewish people, in his view, always reject their own prophets sent from God. Jesus was the last of the great prophets. He too had to be rejected and killed at the hands of the Jewish people.

Some scholars have argued that because of this denigration of the Jewish people for always rejecting the prophets and Jesus, Luke is probably to be seen as an "anti-Jewish" Gospel. In my judgment there is a lot to be said for this view. The only Jews that the Gospel appears to approve of are the ones who recognize Jesus as a great prophet and son of God (his mother, Symeon and Anna, John the Baptist, his own disciples, etc.). The other Jews seemed to be lumped together as those who reject God's messengers. It is true that Luke is not as forthright in his rejection of "the Jews" as Matthew is (who has "the entire crowd" of Jews at Jesus' trial cry out responsibility for his death: "His blood be upon us and our children" Matt. 27:25) or as John, who, most remarkably of all, claims that the Jews are not the children of God but the children of the devil (John 8). But still, the anti-Jewish element is strong in Luke, both in his Gospel and the book of Acts.

All of these New Testament authors are living in a time when the followers of Jesus were in serious conflict with Jews who did not accept Jesus as the messiah. And this context of tension and strife, in which the authors of the Gospels were living, seriously affected how they portrayed their stories of Jesus.

This has been one of the most significant findings of...

**THE REST OF THIS POST IS FOR MEMBERS ONLY. If you don't belong yet, JOIN UP!!
You could do worse things with your money than spending on learning and giving to charity!!!**

You need to be logged in to see this part of the content. Please [Login](#) to access.



[Luke's Understanding of Jesus' Death](#)
[Jesus' Death as a Prophet in Luke](#)