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On Dating Luke-Acts, and It's Synoptic Consequence

When looking at the dating of the New Testament Documents, we are quickly approached by scholarly presuppositions. In analyzing why certain critical scholars may be inclined to favor later dates, the first reason that would come to mind is, as a liberal biblical critic, one may be trying to find a way to shake the historicity and reliability of Gospel claims. By no means is this an over-all claim of critical scholarship and scholars in general, but due to the existence of a bias in human nature, it's understandable that some scholars may overlook internal and external evidences for the pursuit of a conclusion that agrees with their presuppositions against Christianity's claims; or they may solely find agreements to their previous biblical conclusions. The reason why they would seek to separate the writing of the documents to the life of the original disciples has to do with the concept of the Gospels containing mythology. Some of these scholars enter the dating arena with the notion that the gospels contain a degree of mythology (miracles, virgin birth, resurrection, etc), and because of this they date the books with an innate bias for later dates. Sadly, some scholars build from this bias when the reverse should be attempted. Many of these biblical critic's arguments rely on the fact that the window between the disciple's lifetime, and the drafting of the documents, is so extensive that time allowed certain 'myths' to develop surrounding Jesus. This then allows them to analyze certain scriptural claims in light of mystified information, and

thus oversee certain crucial Christian and biblical statements. From here, the scholars conclude that “the writers created the events contained, rather than reported them.”¹ On the other side, certain scholars hold biases seeking out early dates to the documents, as this further strengthens the tenets to their arguments, and the reliability of the Gospels themselves. With these two opposing views, and the importance not only behind the dates, but the ramifications dating itself brings to their opposing arguments, we can understand how important it is to explore the possibility of dating the Gospels.

Of these Gospels, conservative scholars in particular have championed one as *the* historical narrative, and its author as the biblical historian himself. This is none-other than Luke the Physician, and his writings of Luke-Acts. In analyzing Luke-Acts we will get a feel for both the dating and historicity of the Gospel documents, and thus come to a conclusion regarding the conservative and liberal scholarly traditions. This paper will explore the possibility of dating Luke-Acts, and will conclude as later argued and illuminated through various professionals and their observations, that the traditional dating estimate is most accurate, while the critical argument for a second century date results from ignored internal and external evidences.

The date the books of the New Testament were written is a very important question to both Scholars and Christians. The time in which these documents were drafted gives us an idea of the reliability of the texts themselves, and the ability to bypass an argument of Jesus-mythology in favor of actual witness-based accounts. This paper will argue the above thesis of the dating of Luke-Acts in the following format: First we will analyze the arguments and conclusions of some of the world’s best scholars,

¹ Norman Geisler, *Baker’s Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 528

apologists, and historians. This list includes the observations of Roman historian Colin J. Hemer, the statements of the ending of Acts and Paul & Prophecy from Adolf Harnack, and the arguments of historicity and special local knowledge by Norman Geisler. After analyzing these three individuals and their argumentation, we will then analyze the conclusions of an ex-liberal biblical scholar, William F. Albright, and the conclusion of a biblical critic and a leader in the “God is Dead” movement, John A. T. Robinson. After observing the conclusions these two renowned individuals came to, we will go into the internal and external methods of dating Luke-Acts by analyzing early Greek citations, and the numerous early Greek manuscripts. After analyzing these external evidences of Greek manuscripts and citations, we will quickly review the arguments made by critics, and where their assumptions fail. We will finally finish off with the summarized conclusions of the above-mentioned scholars, historians, and apologists, and weigh whether the internal & external evidences and the various arguments favor the traditional or critical date.

We can start analyzing the dating of Luke-Acts by taking into account their single authorship. For the sake of this paper's focus, we will take for granted that Luke and Acts had the same author.² Also tradition has given the authorship to Luke the Physician, and whether or not we take this for granted, this paper shall focus more on the date written then by who it was written by.³ However, dating will also bilaterally illuminate the issue of authorship, as the question of dating can roughly aid the decision by the timeframe in

² Ernest F. Scott, *The Literature of the New Testament*, 77, “That two writings are by the same hand might have been gathered from their many similarities of language and outlook, but it is placed beyond all question by the opening verse of Acts, in which the author refers to his previous work and dedicates the second, like the first, to his friend Theophilus,”

³ Scott 89; “Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings.” (*NIV* Col. 4:14). “Paul, as we know, was subject to sudden attacks of illness, due apparently to some form of epilepsy, and the company of a physician in his travels would be valuable to him.”

which the documents were written. As Ernest F. Scott mentioned, “if the book can be dated at any time within the first century, there is every inclination that Luke was its author.”⁴ If the conservative estimates are true, and the date finds itself within the first century, then the traditional application of Luke as the author holds more ground, and if the dating seems to find itself in the second century, then the authorship by Luke becomes impossible and can be cast aside without any further exploration. Acts 1:1 initially claims to be part of another document, which potentially refers to Luke as its “former account”. Also, “the destiny (‘Theophilus’), style, and vocabulary of the two books betray a common author.”⁵ In addition to the two having the same author, we can further conclude that by dating Acts we may automatically assume Luke to have an earlier date, as Acts claims to be a later second portion of another document, with this first portion being Luke (Acts 1:1).⁶ With the long-standing and accurate position of the two having the same authorship, we can now start analyzing the dates of the documents as a whole.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, which represents at best the viewpoint of the Catholic Church and that of apostolic tradition, argues that the date of Luke-Acts is reliable on the time in which Paul dwelt peaceably in Rome.⁷ Acknowledging that Acts ends abruptly, and that Acts gives only two verses to explain the two years of relative peace Paul had preaching the Gospel in Rome, the Catholic Church suggests that these two quiet years were a time St. Luke spent drafting the Book of Acts. St. Luke then quickly terminates

⁴ Scott 91

⁵ Norman Geisler, *Baker's Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 528

⁶ Ernest F. Scott, *The Literature of the New Testament*, 7,7, “The two works must be taken together before we can form a right estimate of the purpose of Luke's Gospel, as well as of its date and authorship.”

⁷ A. E. Breen, *New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Acts of the Apostles”, 1

his work due to some emergency, concluding with the result of the abrupt end to the document of Acts. For this reason, the Catholic Encyclopedia suggests that the “date of the completion of Acts is therefore dependent on the date of St. Paul's Roman captivity. Writers are quite concordant in placing the date of Paul's coming to Rome in the year 62; hence the year 64 is the most probable date for the Acts.”⁸

Having explored the traditional date and the conclusion of the Catholic Church, we may now analyze the various arguments of scholars, historians, and apologists. In the last two hundred years following the enlightenment, the critical analysis of the New Testament has been extremely popular. It hasn't been until recently, with the focused tool of Archaeology, that the traditional claims of Christianity have been strengthened. During this time of Biblical Criticism, there has been a series of Roman Historians that have argued against the Critic's claims; instead advocating for the reliability of early-authored dates. One Roman Historian in particular is that of Colin J. Hemer. While the critics toyed with positioning the date of Luke-Acts sometime in the 2nd century, Hemer offered a list of seventeen arguments favoring the early placement of Luke-Acts within the traditional dating sphere of A.D. 62. Although all of Hemer's seventeen claims carry powerful weight, a few in particular will be discussed here for the purposes of time and their ability to bring the most powerful of Hemer's claims:

1. There is no mention in Acts of the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, an unlikely omission, given the content, if it had already occurred.
2. There is no hint of the outbreak of the Jewish War in A.D. 66, or any drastic or specific deterioration of the relations between Romans and Jews, which implies it was written before that time.

⁸ Breen 1

5. There is no hint of the death of James at the hands of the Sanhedrin in ca. 62 recorded by Josephus. (*Antiquities* 20.9.1.200)⁹

7. The prominence and authority of the Sadducees in Acts belongs to the Pre-70 era, before the collapse of their political cooperation with Rome.

16. The ending of the book of Acts. Luke does not continue Paul's story at the end of the two years of Acts 28:30. 'The mention of this defined period implies a terminal point, at least impending.'¹⁰ He adds, 'It may be argued simply that Luke had brought the narrative up to date at the time of writing, the final note being added at the conclusion of the two years',^{11 12}

In agreement with the arguments of Roman historian is the scholar Adolf Harnack. In his book *On Dating Acts and the Synoptic Gospels*, Adolf Harnack also argues for an early dating of Luke-Acts. One point Harnack brings up regarding Luke and his detailing of Paul's journey to Rome, is that "Throughout eight whole chapters St Luke keeps his readers intensely interested in the progress of the trial of St Paul, simply that he may in the end completely disappoint them — they learn nothing of the final result of the trial!"¹³ In addition to this odd void in the narrative, Harnack then goes on to mention how "in the last half of the book the trial of St Paul has become the subject which overshadows all others, and that it is against all the laws of psychology to suppose that the author could have been so much master of himself as to suppress the account of the result of the trial, because, according to the general plan of his work, its mention was not

⁹ Flavius Josephus, *The Complete Works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews* 20.9.1.200 "Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the Sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned;,"

¹⁰ Colin J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, 383

¹¹ Hemer 387

¹² Norman Geisler, *Baker's Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 5

¹³ Adolf V. Harnack, *The Date of the Acts of the Synoptic Gospels*, 95

necessary.”¹⁴ Why exactly would the author of Acts detail the adventures of Paul’s missionary journeys, and then focus on his arrest and trial, only to end the book without any mention of his death around 64-67?¹⁵ Harnack argues that:

The more clearly we see that the trial of St Paul, and above all his appeal to Caesar, is the chief subject of the last quarter of the Acts, the more hopeless does it appear that we can explain why the narrative breaks off as it does... It is no use to struggle against this conclusion. If St Luke, in the year 80, 90, or 100, wrote thus he was not simply a blundering but an absolutely incomprehensible historian!¹⁶

In addition to this striking absence of the mentioning of his death, nowhere in the book of Acts do we find any hint or presupposed notion of Paul’s Death, which is something the author would have surely attempted with the writing style of the day.^{17 18} Harnack concludes his argument on the basis of the narrative ending of Acts by stating that “the concluding verses of the Acts of the Apostles, taken in conjunction with the absence of any reference in the book to the result of the trial of St Paul and to his martyrdom, make it in the highest degree probable that the work was written at a time when St Paul’s trial in Rome had not yet come to an end.”¹⁹

A second argument that Harnack brings up in his book is that of Paul and prophecy. In Acts chapter 20:25, and 38, the author quotes Paul as telling his Asiatic

¹⁴ Harnack 96

¹⁵ Paul’s first three Missionary Journeys are found in Acts 13-14 (1st), 15:36-18:22 (2nd), 18:23-21:16 (3rd), and his arrest and trial are found in Acts 21:17-28:31

¹⁶ Harnack 97

¹⁷ Harnack 97

¹⁸ Harnack 98, “There is no doubt that directly after the death of the Apostles legends grew up which included prophecies of their martyrdom. Concerning St Peter we know of two (St John xxi., 2 Peter i.), and St Paul himself gave expression to forebodings of his violent death. How, then, could a chronicler of the character of St Luke have overlooked this if St Paul had already attained to the crown of martyrdom!”

¹⁹ Harnack 99

friends that they would not see his face again.²⁰ However, if his second imprisonment is taken as a historical event, this directly contradicts the letter of 2 Timothy 4, where Paul came back to Asia. With the conflicting accounts of the prophecy in Acts 20:25, and the second arrest of 2 Timothy 4, Harnack argues that “it cannot be imagined that St Luke would have reported the prophecy or would have placed it in the mouth of St Paul.”²¹ Simply stated, if the prophecy in Acts 20 was contradicted in a second arrest and visit, and with someone so keen on using accurate prophecies as Luke, the contradiction is strong evidence and testimony for an earlier date. Harnack concludes this Paul & Prophecy argument by saying if “on the assumption that the Apostle was released from his first captivity, the passage Acts xx. 25 affords strong testimony that St Luke wrote previously to that release.”²²

Having analyzed the internal historical observations of the Roman historian Hemer and the scholar Harnack, and their insights on narrative voids, which become illogical given the context of Luke-Act’s, we may now analyze the observations of the world renown apologists, Normal Geisler. In his *Baker Apologetics Encyclopedia*, Geisler illuminates the issue of dating by targeting the historical and geological information that only a local with specialized knowledge could contain, as well as the general historicity of the account. “Luke manifests an incredible array of knowledge of local places, names, conditions, customs, and circumstances that befits an eyewitness contemporary recording the time and events. Acts 13-28, covering Paul’s travels,

²⁰ *New International Version, Archaeology Study Bible* Acts 10:15, “ ‘Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again,’ ”

²¹ Adolf V. Harnack, *The Date of the Acts of the Synoptic Gospels*, 102

²² Harnack 102

particularly shows intimate knowledge of local circumstances.”²³ World-renowned Apologist and author, Norman Geisler, offers a list of 43 different historical finds that, through archaeology and historical methods, have affirmed certain specialized claims from the book of Acts. These 43 different historical affirmations not only show the amount of historical accuracy found in Acts, but also information that only someone who personally visited all these locations could have known.²⁴ The argument that such details could have been identified during the second century is incredibly timid, as the amount of specialized and local knowledge behind the assorted facts necessitates a first-hand experience of the travels and events; something Luke had as a companion of Paul.²⁵ This focus on the author actually traveling to these areas further sheds light on a Luke-authorship of the text, and a general authorship during the time of Paul’s travels (once again pointing back to the traditional date of A.D. 62). Although time and space will not require me to list all 43 examples Geisler uses, I will provide six of Geisler’s examples that I believe highlight the detail of first-hand knowledge required, which then underscore Acts as having an author from the traditional date of Paul’s travels (A.D. 62):

Exp 1: “The Proper river port, Perga, for a ship crossing from Cyprus,” (13:13)

Exp 2: “The proper port, Attalia, for returning travelers (14:25)

Exp 3: “The correct route from the Cilician Gates (16:1)”

Exp 4: The proper locations where travelers would spend successive nights on this journey (17:1).”

²³ Norman Geisler, *Baker’s Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 7

²⁴ Ernest F. Scott, *The Literature of the New Testament*, 80 “That Luke had something to do with the authorship of Acts is certain, for in a series of passages the first person plural is used, indicating that the writer was himself in Paul’s company.” (Scott 89) “After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia,” (*NIV* Acts 16:10).

²⁵ Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28; 16

Exp 5: “The correct explanation that sea travel is the most convenient way to reach Athens in the summer with favoring east winds (17:14)

Exp 6: “The permanent stationing of a Roman cohort in the Fortress Antonia to suppress disturbances at festival times (21:31). The flight of steps used by guards (21:31, 35).²⁶

In the end, Norman Geisler concludes by telling us that the historicity and accuracy of the traditional date is found in two pieces of evidence. The first is that “nothing like this amount of detailed confirmation exists for another book from antiquity.”²⁷ Geisler argues that this record of detail not only confirms the data given by the earliest Christian’s belief in the life and death of Jesus, but also that the accuracy and historicity of Luke-Acts confirms the message given in the other Gospels. Secondly, he concludes that the “best evidence is that this material was composed by A.D. 60, only twenty-seven years after the death of Jesus.”²⁸ Thus, Geisler argues and concludes that the narrow gap in which it was written, as according to the traditional date in the 60’s, gives no room for the development of myth, and thus confirms the truths stated in the previous gospels and the documents themselves.

In addition to the various arguments made by the previously discussed individuals, the conclusions and comments of two other renowned scholars are worth mentioning. The first of these two is none-other than William F. Albright, a former liberal scholar who sides with the early dating of the Gospels. In his book, *Recent Discoveries in Bible Lands*, Albright concludes that “We can already say emphatically that there is no longer any solid basis for dating any book of the New Testament after about A.D. 80, two full generations before the date between 130 and 150 given by the

²⁶ Norman Geisler, *Baker’s Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 7-8

²⁷ Geisler 8

²⁸ Geisler 8

more radical New Testament critics of today.”²⁹ In addition to this conclusion, Albright also comments in his article “Toward a More Conservative View” that “every book of the New Testament was written by a baptized Jew between the forties and the eighties of the first century (very probably sometime between about A.D. 50 and 75).”³⁰

In addition to William F. Albright, a second former critic is worth mentioning. John A. T. Robinson is a leader of the “Death of God” movement, and who wrote the book *Redating the New Testament*.³¹ In this revolutionary book, “Robinson places Matthew at 40 to after 60, Mark at about 45 to 60, Luke at before 57 to after 60, and John at from before 40 to after 65.”³² The ramifications for these extremely early dates by an extremely critical skeptic is that all Gospels were composed within the lifetime of those who witnessed Jesus birth, death, and resurrection, which further add credibility to their accounts.

In addition to the various arguments given by the above-mentioned individuals, we may also analyze the external citations of the Gospels in early Greek manuscripts, and thus affirm the reliability of an earlier date.

Of the four Gospels alone there are 19,368 citations by the church fathers from the late first century on. This includes 268 by Justin Martyr (100-165), 1038 by Irenaeus (active in the late second century), 1017 by Clement of Alexandria (ca. 155-ca. 220), 9231 by Origen (ca. 185-ca. 254), 3822 by Tertullian (ca. 160s-ca. 220), (ca. 160s-ca. 220), 734 by Hippolytus (d. ca. 236), and 3258 by Eusebius (ca. 265-ca.339)... between 110 and 150 Polycarp quoted from all four gospels, Acts, and most of Paul's epistles. Shepherd of

²⁹ William F. Albright, *Recent Discoveries in Bible Lands*, 136

³⁰ William F. Albright, “Toward a More Conservative View,” 3

³¹ The Death of God movement was his Liberal Theological efforts to denounce the ancient view of God as living in some material heaven, and thus abandoning him as a *Cosmic Supremo*. See his books *Honest to God* (1963), and *Exploration into God*.

³² Norman Geisler, *Baker's Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 529

Hermas (115-140) cited Matthew, Mark, Acts, 1 Corinthians, and other books. Didache (120-150) referred to Matthew, Luke, 1 Corinthians, and other books.³³

What exactly do these citations show? They argue in favor of an earlier date sometime before the end of the first century, as time would have been necessary for these outside citations to find their way towards penmanship. This was not the day of UPS and the Postal Service, and as such, the massive amounts of citations from early church leaders and other individuals argue in favor of an earlier date in which this massive throng of documents could have the time to be circulated.

One other remarkable thing about the New Testament is the relatively small time gap between the drafting of the Gospel documents and the earliest manuscript copies of the New Testament we have discovered. “No other book from the ancient world has as small a time gap between composition and earliest manuscript copies as the New Testament.”³⁴ The Bodmer Papyri, containing whole books, are available from around 200 A.D. Most of the New Testament can also be found in the Chester Beatty Papyri manuscripts, which are available around 250 A.D. Another interesting manuscript, which deems mentioning, is that of the John Rylands papyri (P52), which contains fragments of John’s Gospel. This manuscript was found in Egypt and is dated around 117-138 A.D. Given the time it would take to circulate to Egypt, the John Rylands papyri would mean that John must have been written within the 1st century.³⁵ In addition to the remarkable early arrivals and editions of Greek manuscript copies, Jose O’Callahan has recently claimed to identify nine fragments from the caves of Qumran with New Testament texts. Although his finds are highly contested, the implication of his observations are enormous

³³ Geisler 529-530

³⁴ Geisler 530

³⁵ Geisler 530

if shown accurate, as it would prove beyond a reasonable doubt that these early editions of the Gospels found in fragments 7Q6, 7Q15, 7Q5, 7Q7, and 7Q6 conclude them as dated well before the ending of the first century.³⁶

If Acts were written by the traditional date of 62 A.D., then it would offer great historical value to the claims made within the Gospels. We could also say that the Gospels in general are dependent on the date of Acts, for if Acts is proved to have an earlier date, the Synoptic Gospels must be dated before that of Acts. In addition, if it were written around this time, it would also have been within the time frame of witnesses who viewed firsthand Jesus' claims, and these witnesses could have also been the individuals Luke could have interviewed while writing his Gospel. In addition, this date fits within the lifetime of Luke, giving further credibility to the possibility of his authorship, and "If Acts was written by Luke, the companion of the apostle Paul, it brings us right to the apostolic circle, those who participated in the events reported."³⁷ If written by or before A.D. 62, we have the historical value of the Gospel, the potential 1st-person witnesses, the apostolic perspective, and the timeframe of Luke's lifetime. If shown to be historically accurate, this would all add further credibility to the Christian claims of the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, further supporting the miracles and

³⁶ Geisler 533

Text	Fragment	Approx. date
Mark 4:28	7Q6	AD 50
Mark 6:48	7Q15	AD ?
Mark 6:52, 53	7Q5	AD 50
Mark 12:17	7Q7	AD 50
Acts 27:38	7Q6	AD 60+
Rom. 55:11, 12	7Q9	AD 70+
1 Timothy 3:16, 4:1-3	7Q4	AD 70+
2 Peter 1:15	7Q10	AD 70+
James 1:23, 24	7Q8	AD 70+

³⁷ Geisler 5

ascension of Jesus as an *actual* and not *mythological* event.³⁸ This is why the topic of dating Luke-Acts alone is so important to the backbone of Christian Doctrine and its claimed truths. We could also claim that the dating of Luke-Acts becomes the standard by which we date Matthew, Mark, and Luke, for neither of them could have been drafted after Acts.³⁹

Having discussed the various arguments and evidences in favor of the early traditional date, we will now analyze and shortly refute general critiques of an early date. One problem that we find with the estimates offered by different biblical critics is their efforts of dating Luke-Acts in attachment to the other synoptic Gospels. They tend to ignore certain internal evidences that we previously illuminated and instead focus on dating Luke-Acts relative to other gospel accounts. Ernest F. Scott isn't that far off in his observations, and makes astute claims regarding Luke the Physician's role in the gospel (siding with a usage of a Lukan diary as source-material), but he commits the above mentioned grievance by placing the dating of Luke-Acts around 90 A.D., because "the author is unacquainted with Matthew's work, and may have written a little earlier, but more probably just about the same date."⁴⁰ Scott should not commit the error of dating Luke-Acts in terms defined by Matthew, but should instead use the high degree of historicity of Luke-Acts to aid in dating Matthew. Although Ernest F. Scott is by no means far off in his dating, the credibility and historical data of Luke makes it a better standard in which to date the other synoptic Gospels, which in turn Luke's material confirms. In Raymond E. Brown's *An Introduction to the New Testament*, he makes

³⁸ Geisler 5

³⁹ Ernest F. Scott, *The Literature of the New Testament*, 92

⁴⁰ Scott 76

roughly the same mistake, arguing that if “Luke used Mark is most plausible from internal evidence; and if Mark is to be dated in the period 68-73, *a date earlier than 80 for Luke is unlikely.*”⁴¹ Although the usage of Mark by Luke is internally evident, this problem fades away when the date of Mark is found to be earlier than previously stated, and the reasonable argument for the early dating of Acts further pushes back all the previous Gospels (including Mark).^{42 43} Even when we understand the validity of dating Acts early as credible, the Gospel of Mark has compelling arguments in favor of an early-authored date by such scholars as Harnack and Maurenbrecher.⁴⁴ The combined arguments of Luke-Acts being the standard by which the other documents should be dated (due to its historicity), and the strong arguments for earlier dating of Mark, result with the repudiation of opposing critique’s by Scott, Brown, and other scholars.

After having analyzed the various arguments of Hemer, Harnack, and Geisler, the observations of renowned scholars Albright and Robinson, the external and internal evidences of early Greek manuscripts and citations, and the refutation of several critiques, we can now come to the conclusion on whether this paper confirms an earlier date. However, before this paper comes to its own affirmation, the added weight of the conclusions of authoritative individuals are once more warranted. Norman Geisler

⁴¹ Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 273

⁴² D. A. Carson, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 117, “if Mark is earlier than critics allow, Luke may also be earlier than they say. Both Mark and Luke were in the group associated with Paul, so it is probable that Luke obtained a copy of Mark’s gospel quite early,”

⁴³ One good well-researched source for an early dating of Mark is found in the *NIV Archaeology Bible*, and the *NIV Study Bible*. John Wenham did extensive work on the early dating of Mark in his *Redating Matthew, Mark and Luke: A Fresh Assault on the Synoptic Problem*. Two other scholars previously mentioned who have shared this approach are William F. Albright and John A. T. Robinson.

⁴⁴ Adolf V. Harnack, *The Date of the Acts of the Synoptic Gospels*, 91, Also Maurenbrecher In his work *Von Nazareth nach Golgotha*, concludes that the early dating for Mark is not only well reasoned, but “that no weighty objection can be raised against a date of about 60 A.D. for the gospel of St Mark — a date which is necessarily presupposed by the earlier dating of the Lukan writings,”

concludes that: “The historicity of the book of Acts is confirmed by overwhelming evidence. Nothing like this amount of detailed confirmation exists for another book from antiquity.”⁴⁵ D. A. Carson concludes that: “the evidence for an early date seems more convincing than that of a later time, and while it comes short of complete proof, it should be accepted.”⁴⁶ William F. Albright concludes that: “We can already say emphatically that there is no longer any solid basis for dating any book of the New Testament after about A.D. 80, two full generations before the date between 130 and 150 given by the more radical New Testament critics of today.”⁴⁷ The combined conclusions of these individuals and that of the previous mentioned scholars are conclusive: by the proposed arguments, observations, and evidence, Luke-Acts *clearly* favor an earlier date sometime around 62 A.D.

In conclusion, we can safely say that Acts’ early date of authorship is not only supported by overwhelming evidence, but that this evidence adds greater weight to the claims of the life, death, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus as not mythological events fictionalized by later writers, but as actual historical claims recorded within the peer-reviewed generation of first person witnesses and first person apostles.⁴⁸ The later dating and the argument of mythology simply hold no ground, and leave no other reason not to conclude that the earlier traditional dating of 62 A.D. is reasonably and historically warranted.

⁴⁵ Norman Geisler, *Baker’s Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 8

⁴⁶ D. A. Carson, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 117

⁴⁷ William F. Albright, *Recent Discoveries in Bible Lands*, 136

⁴⁸ Norman Geisler, *Baker’s Apologetic Encyclopedia*, 8, “Julius Muller (1801-1878) challenged the scholars of his day to produce even one example in which an historical event developed many mythological elements within one generation (Muller, 29). None exist.”

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