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0521809487 - The Trial of the Gospel: An Apologetic Reading of Luke's Trial Narratives

Alexandru Neagoe

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THE TRIAL OF THE GOSPEL

For many years Luke–Acts has been studied as a work of history and theology. *The Trial of the Gospel* sets out to examine Luke's writings as an apologetic work, by focusing on those parts of Luke's story where the apologetic overtones seem most prominent – the trial narratives. By analysing the trials of all major Lukan characters – Jesus, Peter, Stephen, and Paul – Alexandru Neagoe argues that the narratives are best understood when viewed as part of Luke's *apologia pro evangelio*, a purpose which is in keeping with the author's declared aim to give his readers 'assurance' about the 'matters' in which they had been instructed (Luke 1.4). Neagoe concludes that the specific role of the trial narratives is to provide the framework within which important tenets of the Christian faith are themselves put 'on trial' before the reader, with the intended result of the gospel's confirmation.

ALEXANDRU NEAGOE is Lecturer at the Areopagus Centre for Christian Education and Contemporary Culture and Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Timișoara, Romania.

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To Nuți, my love

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PREFACE

I cannot hope here to do justice to all those who have made possible the completion of this book, but special mention must be made of the following: I am honoured to express my special gratitude to Professor Max Turner, for his sharp yet constructive advice, and for the model of scholarly competence combined with Christian commitment which I saw in him as supervisor of my PhD dissertation on which the book is based. (The dissertation was supervised at London Bible College and submitted to Brunel University in the spring of 1998.) Thanks are also due to my second supervisor, Dr Conrad Gempf, for his willingness to offer critical evaluation on certain areas of my research and to my friend James McGrath, who undertook the tedious task of proofreading the thesis.

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I am also deeply grateful to my parents and to my sister's family for their ceaseless prayers on my behalf during the period of my studies. Last but not least, special thanks are due to my precious wife Nuți, who kindly accepted to put up with a very busy husband during the first few months of our marriage, while the preparations for publication were being made.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ABD</i>	D. N. Freedman <i>et alii</i> (eds.), <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , 6 vols., New York: Doubleday, 1992
<i>ANQ</i>	<i>Andover Newton Quarterly</i>
<i>AV</i>	Authorized Version
<i>BAFCS</i>	<i>The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting</i>
<i>BETL</i>	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
<i>BHPT</i>	<i>Bibliotheca historico-philologico-theologica</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BK</i>	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
<i>BR</i>	<i>Biblical Research</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>BWANT</i>	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>Exp</i>	<i>The Expositor</i>
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>The Expository Times</i>
<i>FRLANT</i>	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>GELNT</i>	J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida (eds.), <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains</i> , 2 vols., United Bible Societies, 1988
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>ICC</i>	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JOTT</i>	<i>Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>

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JSNTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i> , Supplement Series
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LXX	The Septuagint
MT	The Masoretic Text (of the Old Testament)
n.d.	not dated
NEB	New English Bible
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NIDNTT	C. Brown (ed.), <i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> , 4 vols., revised edition, Carlisle: Paternoster, 1992
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NTG	New Testament Guides
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RHPR	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
RQ	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
RSR	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SC	<i>The Second Century</i>
<i>ScEsp</i>	<i>Science et esprit</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
ST	<i>Studia theologica</i>
<i>StudBT</i>	<i>Studia biblica et theologica</i>
TDNT	G. Kittel and K. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , translated from German by G. W. Bromiley, 9 vols., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76
TLZ	<i>Teologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TNTC	<i>Tyndale New Testament Commentary</i>
TQ	<i>Teologische Quartalschrift</i>
TU	<i>Texte und Untersuchungen</i>

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TynB Tyndale Bulletin

WTJ Westminster Theological Journal

WUNT Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

ZNW Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft

ZTK Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche