

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE

## Lesson 1: Introduction and Chapter 1:1-25

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**Why four Gospels?** Each Gospel presents Jesus Christ from a different viewpoint, emphasis, and degree of detail.

**Matthew:** This book was especially written to the Jews and it presents Christ as the King of the Jews. It gives the royal genealogy of Christ to prove Him to be in the Messianic line of David. He gives the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) as a rule of life for the kingdom.

**Mark:** Christ is the servant of God (as He serves man). Mark is the shortest of the gospels and has the least teaching of the four gospels. It is a book of action using words like "straightway." The birth of Christ is not mentioned. It is the ministry of Jesus that this book portrays.

**Luke:** shows Jesus Christ to be the Son of man. It is His humanity and His understanding of man that is emphasized. The genealogy of Christ in Luke goes back to Adam. Luke is filled with teaching for the disciples. Subjects like prayer are mentioned more in Luke than in the other gospels. Luke presents Jesus Christ as what God intended man to be.

**John:** In John, Jesus is presented as the Son of God. The book begins with His identity as God and His work in creation. John clearly states the purpose of his book: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). John was written to identify Jesus Christ as the Son of God and to lead others to believe in Him in order to have eternal life.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are grouped together and labeled by scholars as "Synoptic Gospels," to suggest that they are basically the same (which is not true, or God wouldn't have given us each one). John is singled out as being the only Gospel that is different.

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**The writer:** Luke was a Gentile. He was a partner with the apostle Paul on some missionary journeys (Col 4:14, 2 Tim 4:11, Philemon 24). The oracles of God were committed to the Jews (Rom 3:2), but Luke writes as a Gentile (primarily) unto Gentiles (non-Jews). This Gospel will have the most direct application to a Gentile.

**Purpose:** to present Jesus as the Man whose name is The BRANCH (Zech 6:12). He is shown to be a friend of publicans and sinners.

### Unique emphasis in Luke:

Jesus' friendship with the common people caused the religious leaders to hate Him.

His tenderness, compassion, and sympathy are seen more often in this Gospel.

His care for non-Jews is observed (10:33, 17:16, 4:25-27, 2:32) as well as His care for women.

He demonstrated His dependence upon the Father through much prayer. (The ideal man prays!)

He glorifies God 7 times; does not exalt Himself, but the Father.

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**Ezekiel's vision of Cherubim (Ezekiel 1:10, 10:14).** Cherubim have 4 faces (ox, lion, eagle, man). This matches the characteristics of the 4 Gospels:

**Matthew:** Jesus Christ the **King**. The **lion** is a majestic "King of Beasts."

**Mark:** Jesus Christ the patient **laborer**. The **ox** is a strong servant.

**John:** Jesus Christ as **God**. The **eagle** soars high above all of God's creatures; a picture of deity.

**Luke:** Jesus Christ, the ideal **man**. If God could come down from heaven and become **man**, this is how He'd be.

## Breakdown of Luke:

1. The youth of the Lord Jesus Christ (1:5-4:13). **Key verse:** Luke 2:10-11.
  2. Christ's ministry in Galilee (4:14-9:50). **Key verse:** Luke 4:14. This section records the most miracles.
  3. The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51-19:44). **Key verse:** Luke 9:51.
  4. The Final Tragedy and Triumph (19:45-24:53). **Key verse:** Luke 20:14.
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## Luke Chapter 1 Highlights

- 1-4** The certainty of God's written words. Luke was an "eyewitness" with "perfect understanding." We can read these words with confidence; knowing that these are God's inspired words. Luke used the word "certain" (in its various forms) 101 times in Luke and Acts. That's more than the rest of the 64 Bible books combined.
- 5-6** When God chooses a man for a special purpose, He begins with the parents. If they are godly, they will raise a godly child. Zacharias and Elisabeth were selected by God because of their godly lives. See what God said about Abraham (Gen. 18:19).
- 7** Elisabeth was barren. Righteous people suffer tragedy. You can be right and still have trouble.
- 8-9** Zacharias was a priest serving in the temple, according to the "order of his course." This order of service was given to Aaron in 1 Chronicles 24:1-19. Since this "course" is according to a strict schedule, it is useful in determining the date of the Birth of Jesus Christ (certainly not December 25).
- 10** Zacharias is serving inside the Holy Place. The people are participating in the outer court by prayer.
- 11-15** The Angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias, who exhibited a proper fear of the Lord (he's a humble man). The angel brought good news; answered prayer. His wife would bear a son named John. Having a baby in those days was a joyous occasion. Today women rejoice when they don't have a child (Luke 23:29).  
John would be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. In the dispensation that we live in, you are not filled with the Holy Ghost until you are regenerated by receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior.
- 16-17** John will go before (vs 17) "the Lord their God" (vs 16). John was the forerunner of Jesus Christ. These two verses teach that Jesus is God. The spirit and power of Elias (Elijah) would rest on John just like it rested on Elisha after Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2).
- 18-19** Zacharias doubts because he is old and so is Elisabeth. Gabriel informs him of his position in Heaven before God. God Himself sent him to deliver the glad tidings; there is no reason to disbelieve.
- 20** Zacharias is stricken dumb for his unbelief.
- 21-25** The promise was fulfilled; Elisabeth conceived and counted it all joy. Her reproach among men was taken away.