

# THE GOSPELS AT A GLANCE

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
<i>Author</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Author</i>
A civil servant, a tax collector from Galilee; an outsider because of his association with the Roman government; evidences the accountant's attention for detail.	A member of a Levitical family with a home in Jerusalem; a cousin of Barnabas; a confidant of Peter; an erstwhile rejected and later restored companion of Paul.	A medical doctor, the beloved physician; of Greek origin; traveling compatriot of the apostle Paul; a respected historian; author also of the Acts of the Apostles.	The son of a well-to-do fisherman; with his brother, James, one of the inner circle of the Lord's own; also penned three epistles and the Revelation of Jesus Christ.
<i>Theme</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Theme</i>
Matthew, despised by his own people, offered Christ to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; presented Him as Son of David (i. e., Solomon, as the ruling Sovereign) and as Son of Abraham (i.e., Isaac, as the willing Sacrifice).	Mark wrote for the Romans, a super-power dominated by their military; he stressed the virtues of service, discipline, and obedience; the Lord is seen as the tireless Servant of Jehovah, the Prophet of God on a mission.	Luke presents Christ as Physician-Priest, Healer of stricken humanity—physically to prove His ability spiritually. He was seeking the wider Greek-speaking world with its ideals of physical and intellectual perfection.	According to John, Jesus is not primarily the Son of any one. His genealogy is this: "with God . . . was God." He is the Maker of the worlds, manifested in the flesh and is to be worshiped as "my Lord and my God."
<i>Unique Emphases</i>	<i>Unique Emphases</i>	<i>Unique Emphases</i>	<i>Unique Emphases</i>
Matthew begins with one of two genealogies in the Gospels. Luke begins with Jesus and travels back to Adam. Matthew does exactly the opposite, tracing the line forward, but not from Adam. He begins with Abraham. When giving the King's credentials, seven witnesses are called: "The virgin conceives" (Isa.); "Out of Bethlehem" (Micah); "Out of Egypt" (Hosea); "Rachel weeping" (Jer.); "Called a Nazarene" (perhaps Zech.); "The voice in the wilderness" (Isa.); and "Light for those in darkness." Matthew talks about what the King is building (ch. 7, the house; ch. 16, the church; ch. 21, the tower; ch. 26, the temple). Earthquakes test buildings. Can you find three of them in Matthew? There is none in the other Gospels.	Mark, in keeping with his Roman readers, inserts helpful explanatory notes (that Olivet was over against Jerusalem; that the Passover was killed on the first day of unleavened bread; etc.). He adds Greek translations for the Aramaic words the Lord used (3:17; 5:41, <i>Talitha cumi</i> , Little lamb, arise; 7:11; 7:34; 14:36; 15:22, 34). He uses a number of Latin words, and supplies interpretative notes as to the meaning of obscure words such as Gehenna, Beelzebub, and Bartimaeus.	Luke, in his record of the genealogy, wants us to know that Mary was kindred of the daughters of Aaron. Our Lord is revealed here as a Priest, but not by His link to Aaron. This good doctor includes the exceeding intimate story of the Lord's conception and birth. Only Luke quotes, "Physician, heal Thyself." Regarding the illustration of the camel going through the eye of a needle, Matthew and Mark use the ordinary word for needle, but Luke calls it a surgeon's needle. Three times Luke points out "the right side": the angel on the right side of the altar, the man's withered hand, and that Malchus' severed ear was the right one (Matthew and Mark give the incident) as you would expect. Note too his careful treatment of Lk. 13:11-16.	The miracles included (seven up to the cross) are referred to by the stronger word, signs. Then notice the water in almost every chapter, and the common threads: life, love, light.
<i>Omissions</i>	<i>Omissions</i>		<i>Omissions</i>
	No genealogy, no birth, nor any reference to Christ's infancy. Only one trip to Jerusalem is mentioned. The Sermon on the Mount, Woes to Pharisees are omitted; only four parables.		No birth story, no account of the Lord's baptism, temptation, transfiguration, institution of the Lord's Supper, no agony in the garden, no ascension to the sky. There are no parables (one "wise saying" in ch. 10), no mention of lepers, scribes, or of demon-possessed persons (the charge of demon-possession is only leveled at the Lord Himself—seven times). There are no charges for His disciples to keep silent about Him, and never do we hear about His impending death at Jerusalem.