

The Gospel according to Luke

parallel passages in **Mark**

in **Matthew**

1:1-2:52	Preface and infancy narratives birth of John the Baptist; annunciation and birth of Jesus; circumcision and presentation in the temple; Jesus at 12 years		
3:1-9:50	<u>Jesus' ministry in Galilee</u>		
3:1-20	the ministry of John the Baptist	1:1-8	3:7-10 +
3:21-4:13	the baptism of Jesus; genealogy ; <i>the temptations</i>	1:9-11	4:1-11
4:14-44	rejection at Nazareth ; healings in Capernaum	1:21-38	
5:1-11	the call of the first disciples		
5:12-26	healing of a leper, the paralysed man	1:40-45; 2:1-12	
5:27-6:11	call of Levi; controversy about fasting and keeping the Sabbath	2:13-3:6	
6:12-49	call of the twelve; <i>Sermon on the plain</i>	3:13-19	cf.5:2-48; 7:1-27
7:1-17	<i>the centurion's slave</i> ; the widow of Nain's son		cf.8:5-13
7:18-8:3	<i>Jesus and John</i> ; anointing by a sinful woman ; ministering women	cf.14:3-9	11:2-19
8:4-21	parable of the Sower; Jesus' true family	4:1-25; 3:31-35	
8:22-56	the storm; Gadarene demoniac; Jairus' daughter & the bleeding woman	4:35-5:43	
9:1-17	sending of the Twelve; feeding of 5000	6:6-16, 30-44	
9:18-27	Peter's confession, 1st passion prediction, teaching on discipleship	8:27-9:1	
9:28-50	the Transfiguration, the epileptic boy; 2nd passion prediction	9:2-8, 14-41	
9:51-19:27	<u>Jesus' journey to Jerusalem</u>		
9:51-62	the urgency of the situation and <i>the call to follow</i>		8:19-22
10:1-24	sending of Seventy ; <i>Jesus' praise of the Father and of the disciples</i>	cf.6:6-11	11:21-27, 13:16-17
10:25-42	the lawyer's question; the Good Samaritan ; Martha and Mary	12:28-31	
11:1-13	<i>the Lord's Prayer</i> ; the Friend at midnight ; "ask and you will receive"		6:9-13; 7:7-11
11:14-36	the Beelzebul controversy; <i>the unclean spirit</i> ; true blessedness ; the sign of Noah; <i>light of the body</i>	3:22-27 8:11-12	12:43-45 6:22-23
11:37-12:12	<i>Jesus and the Pharisees</i> ; <i>on faithfulness under trial</i>		23:4-36; 10:19-33
12:13-46	parable of the Rich Fool ; "Do not worry"; "Keep awake"		6:19-33; 24:43-51
12:47-59	the slave's wages ; <i>Jesus causes division</i> ; <i>settle with the accuser</i>		10:34-36; 5:25-26
13:1-21	time to repent ; <i>healing of crippled woman</i> ; <i>parables of mustard & yeast</i>		12:11f; 13:31-33
13:22-35	the narrow door ; <i>lament over Jerusalem</i>		23:37-39
14:1-24	healing of man with dropsy; on humility , <i>parable of Great Dinner</i>	3:1-6	22:1-10
14:25-15:32	the cost of discipleship ; parables of Lost Sheep, Coin, Prodigal Son		
16:1-31	the unjust steward ; <i>about divorce</i> ; the rich man and Lazarus	cf.10:11,12	11:12-13
17:1-10	on causing sin, <i>on forgiveness</i> , on faith; on slave's wages	9:42, 11:22-23	18:15, 21-22
17:11-37	healing of ten lepers ; <i>the day of the Son of Man</i>		24:17-41
18:1-14	parables of Widow and the Unjust Judge, Pharisee and the Tax Collector		
18:15-34	blessing of children, the rich young man; 3rd passion prediction	10:13-31; 10:32-34	
18:35-19:27	healing of Bartimaeus; Zacchaeus ; parable of the Pounds	10:46-52	
19:28-24:53	<u>Jesus in Jerusalem</u>		
19:28-48	entry to Jerusalem, prediction of city's destruction , Temple cleansing	11:1-11, 15-19	
20:1-47	dispute about Jesus' authority, parable of Wicked Tenants questions about tax, resurrection, David's son, woe against Pharisees	11:27-12:12 12:13-40	
21:1-38	the widow's gift; the apocalypse and the Son of Man	12:41-44; 13:1-32	
22:1-20	the conspiracy of Judas, preparation and the Last Supper	14:1-11, 12-25	
22:21-39	Jesus' last words	cf.14:18-21, 26-31; 10:42-45	
22:40-71	in Gethsemane, Jesus' arrest, trail by Caiaphas and Peter's denial	14:32-42, 43-52, 53-72	
23:1-25	Jesus delivered to Pilate, to Herod ; Jesus is sentenced	15:1-5, 6-20	
23:26-56	the crucifixion, death of Jesus and burial	15:21-47	
24:1-12	the empty tomb	16:1-8	
24:13-53	the Emmaus Road, Jesus' appearance to the Eleven, the Ascension		

Structure. Luke's "orderly account" of Jesus' life and ministry, claimed to be based on "eyewitnesses" (1:1-4), roughly follows Mark, but with a more deliberate and ordered sense of progression and with Jerusalem as a special focus of Jesus' destiny (cf. 13:33), to which he deliberately "sets his face" at the turning point of the gospel (9:51) and from where his message will spread out into all the world (cf. 24:49; Acts 1:8). Luke draws some 30% of his text directly from Mark (mainly in Chs.3-6, 8-9 and 18-24). 15% of the gospel employs material also used by Matthew (from the hypothetical Q source, mainly in Chs.6-7 and 9-18) and 45% is his own unique material (especially Chs.1-2 and 24, but found throughout), with the remainder a mixture of sources. Luke's own material particularly reflects his special concerns for the poor, women and Gentiles, for prayer and praise. Luke will go on to tell the story of the early Church in his second volume (the Acts of the Apostles) and how all "came to pass" (a phrase used 65 times in the two volumes).

Birth of a new age of salvation. Luke begins in a decidedly Old Testament style. John the Baptist represents something of the old; his parents are “righteous before God” like Noah (1:6; cf. Gen 6:9) and childless like Abraham and Sarah (1:7; cf. Gen 16:1; 18:11). Like Moses and Miriam, and Hannah of old Zechariah and Mary burst into praise at God’s miraculous intervention (1:67-79; 1:46-55; cf. Exod 15:1-21; 1 Sam 2:1-10). The story of Jesus’ birth is told not from Joseph’s point of view (as in Matthew), but from Mary’s. He is born of lowly stock (cf. 1:48; 2:24), in the poverty of a stable (2:7) and worshipped by poor shepherds (2:8-20) and by pious Simeon and Anna (2:25-38) as one destined to “put down the mighty and raise up the lowly” (1:51-53). In songs of praise Jesus is proclaimed joyfully (1:14, 47; 2:10) as the Davidic king (1:32-33, 69-71; 2:11) who is a Saviour bringing salvation (1:47, 69, 71, 77; 2:11, 30), mercy and forgiveness (1:50, 54, 72, 77, 78; cf. 3:3) and peace (1:79; 2:14, 29) to all peoples (2:14, 29-32, 31-32). As one destined to fulfil the Temple sacrifices, Jesus’ coming begins in the Jerusalem Temple (1:8-23), to which he is taken as a baby (2:22-24) and again at twelve years old (2:41-51). But, set against events on the world stage (2:1-2; 3:1-2) and with his origins traced back to Adam (3:38), the salvation Jesus brings, as John proclaims, will be for “all flesh”: for Gentile and for Jew (3:6). In this sense, Jesus’ story represents the centre of history, the “necessary” (a phrase used more than 10 times in the gospel) act by which the scriptures and the prophets would be fulfilled (24:26-27, 44) and “today” becomes the day of salvation (cf. 2:11; 4:21; 19:9; 23:43) for those who receive the good news.

Jesus, mighty Saviour. Luke emphasise Jesus’ family background and humanity. He grows and develops (2:40, 52), though Luke omits Mark’s references to his human feelings and ignorance, since he is portrayed as a prophet, like Elijah (4:24-26; 7:11-17; 9:8, 19) or Jonah (11:29-32), “mighty in deed and word” (24:19). He suffers and dies as a prophet (in Jerusalem: 13:33), but also as the Son of Man (9:22, 44) who will return in vindication and judgement (9:26; 11:30; 18:8; 21:27). He is *openly* revealed as the (anointed: cf. 4:18) Messiah (1:32-33; 2:11, 26; 9:20; 23:2; 24:26), the Lord (2:11; 7:13, 19; 10:1, 39, 41; 11:39, etc), the Saviour (2:11; cf. 7:50; 17:19; 18:42; 19:9-10), the Son of God (1:32, 35; 3:22; 4:34, 41; 8:28; 9:35; 22:70). To all intents and purposes he is the saving presence of Israel’s and the world’s God.

His disciples, representatives of the Church. Alongside the Twelve, Luke is interested in the individuals who respond to Jesus (like the woman in 7:36-50 and Zacchaeus: 19:1-10) and he views positively the crowds who welcome him (8:40), rejoice in what he does (13:17), hang on his words (19:48; 21:38) and even follow him to the cross (23:27). In this gospel the call of the disciples takes place after Jesus’ initial ministry of preaching and healing in Ch.4, and the twelve are called out from a larger group (6:13). Seventy are sent out in mission (10:1-16) in addition to the twelve (9:1-6). Only Luke mentions named women among his disciples (8:1-3) and tells of Mary and Martha (10:38-42). Luke broadly paints the disciples in a more positive light, omitting criticism of them (8:11 cp. Mk 4:13; 9:22 cp. Mk 8:32-33; 22:40-46 cp. Mk 14:33, 37) and their questions (9:37 cp. Mk 9:10), and either explaining (9:32-34; 22:45) or omitting (as Mk 10:35-45; 14:50) their failures, even if they do not fully grasp his teaching about humility (22:24-27) or non-violence (22:35-38, 49-50), or the promise of his resurrection (23:25-27, 32). Among the disciples, Peter, who is to lead the Church in Acts, is treated more sympathetically than in Mark (e.g. 22:60 cp. Mk 14:71) and is treated to a personal encounter with the risen Lord (24:34).

The religious leaders. As in Mark and Matthew, the religious leaders question Jesus’ attitude to the law (5:21-22, 33-39; 6:1-2, 6-11; 7:49; 11:38; 13:14; 14:16) and complain about his keeping company with sinners (5:29-32; 7:39; 15:1-2), but the debate is somewhat less confrontational. Jesus is invited to a meal by Pharisees (7:36; 11:37; 14:1) and warned by them of Herod’s wish to kill him (13:31) – though these settings become the context for teaching that opposes their attitudes. He tells the parables of the lost sheep, coin and prodigal son against them (15:1-3). He calls them “lovers of money” (16:14) and derides their self-righteousness (18:9-14). The Pharisees, though, disappear from the scene after 19:39 and Luke omits Matthew’s diatribe against them (Mt 23), presumably because Luke’s church, unlike Matthew’s community, is not in conflict with rabbinical Judaism. It is “the chief priests... and leaders of the people” that plot against Jesus (19:45-47) and lead the questioning of him drawn from Mark 12; they are concerned to protect their Temple-based power base and try to undermine him, but must tread carefully due to Jesus’ popularity (20:6, 19-20; 22:2). In the end it is Satan that enables Judas to betray Jesus to them “in the absence of the crowd” (22:3-6). Luke alone includes a trial before Herod (23:6-11), but both he and Pilate declare that Jesus has done “nothing deserving death” and propose to release him (23:12-16), but the vehement accusation of the chief priests and scribes (23:10, 23) seals his fate (23:24-25).

Rich and poor. Instead of “repent, the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mk 1:15; Mt 4:17), Jesus’ message in Luke is declared as good news for the poor and release for the captives (4:18-21; cf. 4:43; 8:1). He alone warns of the dangers of wealth in the parables of the rich fool (12:13-21) and the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31) the command to “sell your possessions” (12:33). In Luke the young man is said to be “*very rich*” (18:23) and told to sell “*all* that (he) owns and the money distribute to the poor” (18:22; cp. Mk 10:17-31; Mt 19:16-30). Zacchaeus is also called “rich”, but finds salvation through his readiness to make good his ill-gotten gains (19:1-10). In fulfilment of the Magnificat (cf. 1:52-53), it is the poor to whom Jesus declares the good news (4:18; 7:22), pronounces blessed (6:20) and are to be invited to the feast (14:12-14; cf. 14:21). Poor Lazarus is comforted (16:25), whereas the rich are cursed (6:24) and “go empty away” (cf. 14:18-20, 24).

Lost and found. Jesus sits and eats with “sinners” (5:29-32; 15:1-2; 19:7), for he is “a friend of sinners” (7:34). In line with his opening manifesto (4:18-19), he consorts with lepers (5:12-16; 7:22), the crippled (5:17-26; 7:22), the blind

(7:21-22; 18:35-43) and tax collectors (5:27-30; 15:1-2; 19:1-10), that is, the socially and religiously excluded. Such as these (powerfully portrayed in the parables of Ch.15) are “found”, healed and restored by Jesus. Among the less acceptable in Jesus’ day were women, but they take central stage in Luke’s gospel: Elizabeth (1:24-25, 39-45); Anna (2:36-38); Peter’s mother-in-law (4:38-39); the widow of Nain (7:11-17); the penitent woman with the ointment (7:36-50); the women disciples (8:2-3); Jairus’ daughter and the woman with the haemorrhage (8:41-56); Mary and Martha (10:38-42); a woman in the crowd (11:27); the woman healed on the Sabbath (13:1-17); the poor widow offering all she has (21:104); and especially Mary the mother of Jesus (who is mentioned by name thirteen times). Women also appear in Jesus’ stories alongside men (cf. 13:18-21; 15:3-10; 17:34-35; 18:1-8). Likewise, showing his concern for the salvation of all (cf. 2:32; 4:24-27), as in Matthew and Mark, Luke’s Jesus embraces Gentiles who turn to him (7:1-10; 8:26-39) and includes them in his work where his own people reject him (11:29-32; 14:15-24; 20:9-19). But, in addition, a Samaritan is revealed as an exemplary practitioner of compassion, unlike the priest and Levite (10:29-37), and of gratitude to Jesus (17:11-19), while Jesus refuses the disciples’ request for judgement to fall upon the Samaritan people (9:51-56). Thus Jesus looks ahead to “the times of the Gentiles” (21:24) and a mission in his name to all nations concludes the gospel (24:47) and frames the beginning and end of his second volume (Acts 1:8 and 28:28).

Piety and praise. Luke’s gospel begins and ends with worship in the Temple (1:8ff; 24:53) and features prayer and praise throughout. Jesus is portrayed throughout as a person of prayer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 11:1-3; 22:31-32), who instructs his disciples to pray (*with him*) in Gethsemane (22:40 cp. Mk 14:32). As well as the Lord’s Prayer (11:1-4), his parables of the friend at midnight (11:5-8) and the persistent widow (18:1-8) teach the importance of persistent prayer and the Lukan story of the Pharisee and the tax-collector in the temple emphasises holding the right attitude for prayer (18:9-14). Through prayer the Holy Spirit (mentioned 18 times by Luke in his gospel and 57 times in Acts) strengthens and provides for the believer (cf. 11:13; 24:49), just as it was the empowering force behind Jesus’ ministry, from the days of Mary (1:34), Elizabeth (1:41), John (1:15, 80) and Simeon (2:25, 26, 27); at his baptism (3:22), temptation (4:1, 14) and anointing for ministry (4:18); and throughout his journey to Jerusalem (10:21; 11:13; 12:10, 12). Appropriate to one of the key fruits of the Spirit, Luke’s gospel (unlike the darker Mark and the conflictual Matthew) is full of joy and praise, from that which greets the births of John and Jesus (1:14, 41, 44, 47, 64, 68; 2:10, 13, 20, 28, 38), through that which attends the mission of Jesus (10:17, 21; 15:6, 9, 24-25, 32) greets his arrival in Jerusalem (19:37) and responds to his resurrection (24:41, 53).

The innocent sacrifice. According to Luke “it is necessary” that the Christ should suffer and die and rise again (cf. 9:22; 13:22; 17:25; 22:37, and especially 24:7, 26, 44). His account of the Passion of Jesus omits various elements from Mark and Matthew (such as the repeated sleeps of the disciples in Gethsemane and their subsequent flight; the false witnesses at Jesus’ trial and his own silence; the mockery of the soldiers and passers-by and his final cry of desolation) as well as altering the order of some events, but Luke includes material unique to his gospel. His Last Supper account is developed as a final discourse by Jesus instructing them how to behave in his likeness when he has gone (22:24-27), promising them a reward (22:28-30) but warning of violence ahead (22:35-38), and establishing Peter as his successor to strengthen the others (22:31-32). In Gethsemane Jesus invites the disciples to pray with him (22:40), their failure is downplayed (22:45) and an angel appears to sustain Jesus in his agony (22:43-44). He continues his healing work by restoring the ear of the high priest’s slave (22:51) and maintains his care for the needy, including the weeping women of Jerusalem (23:27-31) and the one crucified alongside him (23:39-43). Jesus literally suffers with (and for) outcasts and sinners. His concern is to save them, not himself (a point ironically made in the taunts that surround his dying: 23:35, 37, 39). Luke especially emphasises Jesus’ innocence throughout his various trials: no charges of blasphemy are made by the High Priest (22:66-71 cp. Mk 14:55-64) and he is declared free of guilt by Pilate (23:4, 13, 22), by Herod (23:15), by the penitent thief (23:40) and by the centurion (23:47). In this way his is the perfect sacrifice (replacing the temple rites) that brings forgiveness, as he declares over those who crucify him (23:34) and the penitent thief (23:43). As a man of prayer he dies not with a cry of despair but trusting his spirit to the Father’s care (23:46) and the theme of praise returns with the centurion’s acclamation at his death (23:47). His disciples, including the women, remain near him, “watching”, as the crowd return home “beating their breasts” (23:48-49); an altogether more positive appraisal of those who attended the crucifixion than in Matthew and Mark. All along it was the rich and powerful who opposed him: the chief priests and elders (19:47-48; 20:19; 22:2, 52, 66).

Into all the world. After his death Jesus returns to be with his friends and his resurrection is recounted in a more matter-of-fact way (24:1-10), without the questions Mark leaves or the supernatural earthquake of Matthew. The key-note is one of disbelief (24:11, 37), notably in Luke’s extended story of the two travellers on the Emmaus Road (24:13-27, see verses 21-25). The confusion is dispelled by Jesus himself as he explains the scriptures to them (24:27) and breaks the bread (24:3-31) – surely a reference to his continuing presence in the worship of the Church. Again doubt is dispelled by Jesus’ appearance (24:36-40) and all concludes with a final joyful meal (24:41-43) and a reiteration of Jesus’ story as the fulfilment of the old faith of the law and the prophets and told in the scriptures (24:44-45); of the divine necessity of the Messiah’s suffering and resurrection (24:46); and of the Church’s role to tell forth the saving message of repentance and forgiveness “to all nations” beginning from Jerusalem (24:47-48). With this, Jesus ascends to the Father, leaving the disciples to await the empowerment of the Holy Spirit (24:49-51). And the gospel ends as it began with worship and joy in the temple (24:52-53), or rather it continues in the story of the Church in the Acts of the Apostles.