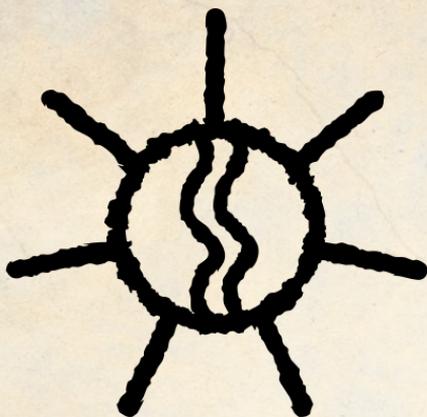


**CONCISE  
HARMONY**  
*of the*  
**FOUR  
GOSPELS**  
*New Testament Study Guide*  
*Gene Van Shaar*



# **CLEAR CREEK CANYON PRESS**

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# CONCISE HARMONY of the FOUR GOSPELS

## ~ INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS ~

**A**CCURACY AND SIMPLICITY are primary objectives of this harmony. However, differences in scriptural accounts make it impossible to chronologically harmonize all of the events in Christ's life with perfect accuracy. As Bruce R. McConkie said, "And we repeat that no one is able to make a harmony of the Gospels or to list chronologically the events of Jesus' life. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John did not do it ... the chronology of President J. Reuben Clark ... often disagrees with Elder James E. Talmage, just as Edersheim does with Farrar, or as Mark does with Luke ... and it is doubtful if any author—nay, it is a surety that no author—has made right choices in all cases." (MM, 2:64–65) The Gospel writers (especially Matthew) sometimes seem to be more concerned about content than chronology.

As stated by Andrew C. Skinner, "The [Gospel] authors were different individuals, writing from their own perspectives based on personal knowledge or remembrances of events, or in the case of Luke and perhaps Mark, reflecting what eyewitnesses had told them ... The Gospel writers were not infallible nor flawless. They may have seen things differently or understood things differently. But they were authentic witnesses." (TGT, 103; see also Luke 1:1–4; 2 Peter 1:16–21; D&C 1:24–28; Mormon 9:31)

Events that have similar circumstances and teachings, which may have occurred at different times, are occasionally listed together. Cross-references that do not fit the table format, including some from the JST, are in the notations. The small letters a, b, c, and d are given after references suggesting a study or teaching priority based on passage content. Those references with an "a" are the most informative. The "greater than sign" (>) is occasionally used to suggest study of additional passages on that event line. Scripturally verified Passover feasts are marked with dark blue and asterisks. Other significant feasts are also marked with dark blue.

Concerning the LOCATION COLUMN: Bethlehem and Jerusalem were in the province of Judea. Nazareth and Capernaum were about 65 miles north, in the province of Galilee. The names of cities or provinces are usually followed by N, S, or C, indicating whether they are

located in a North, South, or central area. The province of Perea was located east of Judea and is designated as SE.

This harmony is not an official statement of the doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

## ~TEXTUAL VARIANTS~

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There are no known “original” manuscripts of the New Testament Gospels. The earliest manuscripts are fragmentary and contain numerous variant readings. Controversy concerning textual variation, translation, and interpretation can be resolved with the key given by Peter: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Peter 1:20–21; JST 2 Peter 1:20–21) Without revelation it is not possible to have anything but private interpretation, which is inadequate. Since it was given by inspiration it can be understood through inspiration.

Variants due to human frailty do not reduce the significance of a divine message. The Lord knows how to deal with human weakness. “Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding. And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known; And inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed; And inasmuch as they sinned they might be chastened, that they might repent; And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time.” (D&C 1:24–28)

In addition to examination of the written text it is possible to receive the same inspiration as the original writer, which has been described as follows: “There are three grand secrets lying in this chapter, [2 Peter 1] which no man can dig out, unless by the light of revelation, and which unlock the whole chapter as the things that are written are only hints of things which existed in the prophet’s mind, which are not written concerning eternal glory.” (TPJS, 304)

Related information can be found in the following: 2 Peter 3:15–16; Mormon 9:31; Ether 12:23–28; 1 Nephi 13:25–40; TPJS, 327; TPJS, 290–291; D&C 128:18; Luke 24:25–32.

## CONCISE HARMONY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS

#	Event/Circumstances	Matt	Mark	Luke	John	Location
1	Prologue	1:1	1:1	1:1–4	1:1–5	See note
2	Annunciation concerning John			1:11–25		Jerusalem S
3	Annunciation of birth of Jesus Christ	1:18–25b		1:26–38a		Nazareth N
4	Birth of John and prophesy			1:57–80		Judea S
5	Joseph and Mary go to be taxed			2:1–5		Bethlehem S
6	Jesus Christ is born	1:25; 2:1b		2:1–20a	1:1–14c	Bethlehem S
7	Annunciation to the shepherds			2:8–20		Bethlehem S
8	Taken to temple as a baby			2:21–38		Jerusalem S
9	Wise men; flight to Egypt	2:1–18				Bethlehem S
10	Return to Galilee; Jesus grows	2:19–23a		2:39–40b		Nazareth N
11	**Teaches in temple at age 12**			2:41–50		Jerusalem S
12	Increased wisdom, stature, favor			2:51–52		Nazareth N
13	John preaches	3:1–10a	1:1–6b	3:1–14c		Bethabara S
14	John testifies of Christ	3:11–17a	1:7–11c	3:15–18d	1:19–36b	Bethabara S
15	John baptizes; the Beloved Son	3:13–17a	1:9–11b	3:21–22c	1:28–34d	Bethabara S
16	The genealogies of Jesus	1:1–17b		3:23–38a>	1:1–5,14c	See note
17	40 days in wilderness; temptations	4:1–11a>	1:12–13c	4:1–13b		Judea S
18	Meets Andrew and Simon				1:35–42	Bethabara S
19	Finds Philip and Nathanael				1:43–51	Bethabara S
20	Marriage at Cana; water to wine				2:1–11	Cana N

~**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS**~

- BD** *LDS Bible Dictionary*
- D&C** *Doctrine & Covenants*
- DNTC** *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,*  
by Bruce R. McConkie
- GSS** *A Guide to Scriptural Symbols,* by McConkie and Parry
- JTC** *Jesus the Christ,* by James E. Talmage
- JTJ** *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus,* by Joachim Jeremias
- JD** *Journal of Discourses*
- LOF** *Lectures On Faith*
- LTJA** *The Life and Teachings of Jesus and His Apostles*  
(Institute manual 1978)
- LTJM** *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah,*  
by Alfred Edersheim
- MM** *The Mortal Messiah,* by Bruce R. McConkie
- OLG** *Our Lord of the Gospels,* by J. Reuben Clark Jr.
- PGP** *Pearl of Great Price*
- STRONG'S** *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*
- TAJ** *The Antiquities of the Jews,* by Josephus
- TGT** *The Garden Tomb,* by Andrew C. Skinner
- TPJS** *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*
- VINE'S** *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary*  
*of Old and New Testament Words*
- WOJ** *The Wars of the Jews,* by Josephus
- WPNT** *Word Pictures in the New Testament,*  
by A.T. Robertson

- 6** Jesus was born in Bethlehem, which means house of bread. (See BD) It is probable that he was born on 6 April 1 B.C. Concerning the date, see the note that goes with Luke 23:33; also LTJA, 22.
- 7** Angels and shepherds were witnesses that the promised Savior had been born. (See MM, 1:347–349)
- 8** Joseph and Mary were careful to fulfill the requirements of the Law of Moses. Simeon and Anna were additional witnesses that Jesus was the promised Savior. (MM, 1:351–356)
- 9** The wise men did not arrive on the night Jesus was born. When they arrived months later, Joseph and Mary were living in a house and Jesus was a “young child.”
- 10** Joseph and Mary returned from Egypt to their previous hometown of Nazareth in Galilee where Jesus could be raised in safety and anonymity. Joseph and Jesus were later identified as carpenters from Nazareth. (Mark 6:3; Matthew 13:55)
- 11** The JST says that the doctors were asking him questions. “When still a boy He [Jesus] had all the intelligence necessary to enable Him to rule and govern the kingdom of the Jews, and could reason with the wisest and most profound doctors of law and divinity, and make their theories and practice to appear like folly compared with the wisdom He possessed; but He was a boy only, and lacked physical strength even to defend His own person; and was subject to cold, to hunger and to death.” (TPJS, 392)
- Jesus was born with the veil of forgetfulness common to all. Therefore he had to learn who he was and what he was supposed to do. His response to Mary at the temple showed that he understood his true identity and mission by the time he was twelve years old. (See LTJA, 24)
- Concerning Passover, see note with John 2:13.
- 12** Note that Jesus grew intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially. (See D&C 93:11–19; John 1:16)
- 13** John forcefully declared that repentance and bringing forth good works were required of everyone. See also Jacob 5.
- 14** John ministered the blessings of the Aaronic priesthood and said that Jesus would restore the blessings of the Melchizedek