

Discipleship Questions

What was special about Jesus when He was born?

What was significant about the events surrounding Jesus's baptism?

What was shown in Jesus's temptations?

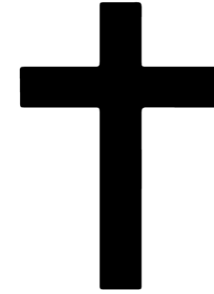
What were some key elements of Jesus's earthly ministry?

What was Jesus's commitment to doing the Father's will?

What did Jesus experience before being crucified?

Why did Jesus die?

What happened to Jesus after His death?



PART 7: THE MESSIAH

THE BIG PICTURE
Of The Bible Story

Ever since sin entered the world, mankind has needed a Savior. Although God gave a system of animal sacrifices and a Law, the Savior was still needed. After fulfilling two of His three main promises to Abraham (making his descendants into a great nation and giving that nation a special land), God's promise to bless all peoples of the earth through Abraham's Seed still needed to be fulfilled. In fact, God had given many prophecies through the years that pointed to the One He would send (known as the Messiah, the Anointed One). Ultimately, this One would suffer greatly so that others could be saved (Isaiah 53). Now, we focus on the seventh major section of the Bible story: "The Messiah."

Matthew 1:18-25

After many years, it was now time for the Messiah to arrive (Galatians 4:4-5)! This One, however, had been with God in the beginning and was, in fact, God Himself (John 1:1-3)! At this time, God became flesh by being born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; John 1:14). According to prophecy, He was born through the physical ancestry of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as King David (Matthew 1:1-17). His name was Jesus (which means, "Jehovah is salvation") because He would save His people from their sins (both the Jews and Gentiles; Luke 2:28-32)!

Matthew 3:13-17

As prophesied, one (John the Baptist) went before the Lord to prepare people for Him (Malachi 3:1; 4:4-6). Jesus was baptized by John to fulfill all righteousness, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove, and the voice of the Father was heard. In this, Jesus was declared to be the Son of God and Messiah (Isaiah 11:2; 42:1; 61:1; John 1:32-34)! This is also

commonly identified as the beginning of Jesus's earthly ministry, being about 30 years old (Luke 3:21-23).

Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God in that He possessed the Divine nature, but He was also the Son of Man in that He possessed human nature (John 1:51; Hebrews 2:14-18). After being baptized, Jesus went into the wilderness and was tempted by the devil. Three specific temptations are recorded in this text. In every way Jesus was tempted throughout His life, Jesus never sinned (Hebrews 4:14-16)! In this, Jesus demonstrated His devotion to doing the Father's will (John 4:34), provided the perfect example for others who want to please God (1 John 2:3-6), and maintained His opportunity to be an unblemished sacrifice (1 Peter 1:18-19)!

Matthew 4:23-25

Jesus's earthly ministry is believed to have lasted around 3 or 3 ½ years. Two major components of His public ministry are highlighted in this passage. First, Jesus taught the good news about the kingdom of God. While God had foretold an eternal kingdom the Messiah would reign over (Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 9:6-7), many of the Jewish people were expecting an earthly kingdom that would restore the physical nation of Israel to glory. Yet, Jesus taught the spiritual nature of the kingdom rather than a physical nature (John 18:36). Jesus taught many things in parables (earthly stories that would convey spiritual truths about the kingdom of God, Matthew 13:10-17, 34-35) to help people understand this spiritual kingdom. Second, Jesus worked many miracles. He healed the sick, walked on water, caused the blind to see, caused the paralyzed to walk, cleansed the lepers, cast out demons, raised the dead, etc. Through these miracles, Jesus demonstrated that He truly is the Son of God by the fulfillment of prophecy (Matthew 8:16-17; Isaiah 53:4) and by the demonstration of God's power (John 20:30-31)!

Matthew 26:36-46

Near the end of Jesus's earthly ministry, He foretold His suffering, death, and resurrection (Matthew 16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; 26:1-2). The Jewish leaders had come to hate Jesus, rejecting Him as the Messiah and His teachings (Matthew 15:1-20; 23:1-36). They had now conspired with one of Jesus's apostles to arrest and kill Jesus (Matthew 26:3-5, 14-16). Now, as Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, He knew that the time for His suffering had come. Although Jesus did not want to experience the physical and emotional pain that would be involved, He was willing to endure it all to accomplish the Father's will and the plan of redemption (Isaiah 53; Matthew 26:52-54). After His prayer, Jesus was betrayed by Judas, abandoned by His other apostles, arrested by His enemies, unfairly

tried, mocked, severely beaten, and condemned to crucifixion despite having done no wrong (Matthew 26-27).

John 19:16-30

The Messiah was sent as the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world (John 1:29)! The animal sacrifices under the Law of Moses could never take away sins by themselves. Instead, the perfect sacrifice of God's Son would be the only remedy to the problem of sin (Hebrews 9-10). Jesus willingly allowed people to nail His hands and feet to the cross (Acts 2:22-24; Philippians 2:5-11). He suffered for about six hours on the cross until He died. With His death, the sinless sacrifice had now been made that would provide all people with the opportunity to be saved from God's wrath, which people deserve to experience because of their sins (Romans 3:21-26; 5:6-11)! His body was then taken down from the cross and put into a tomb, which was closely guarded so that no one would steal His body (Matthew 27:57-66).

Matthew 28:1-7

On the third day (the first day of the week), Jesus's tomb was found empty! He had risen, just as He had said (Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19)! Although claims were made that Jesus's body was stolen by His disciples (Matthew 28:11-15), Jesus appeared to many people after His resurrection to prove that He really did rise from the dead (Luke 24:13-49; John 20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8). Through His resurrection, God provides powerful testimony for all-time that Jesus really is His Son (Romans 1:1-4), and gives assurance of the future resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15)! After His resurrection, He later ascended to Heaven (Acts 1:9-11).

Conclusion

God had fulfilled His first two promises to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-7) by making Abraham's descendants into a great nation (Israel) and giving that nation a special land (Canaan). Additional prophecies had been made throughout the Old Testament, however, that continued to point to the fulfillment of the third promise concerning all peoples of the earth being blessed through Abraham's Seed. Now, Jesus (from the ancestral line of Abraham, Judah, and David) had fulfilled all the prophecies and provided the perfect sacrifice to take away sins and allow all people to experience the spiritual blessings of God through Him! With the Messiah having come, the Bible story focuses on what God would now accomplish with people through Him.

Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

Written by Eric Krieg

Watch video @ WWW.GODSAIDSO.COM/DGW97