

# The Life of Jesus

## **Birth, Early Life and Childhood**

---

### **The virgin Mary is told she'll give birth to Jesus—Luke 1:26–38**

The angel Gabriel told the virgin Mary that she would have a son, Jesus, and that Jesus would be born of her and of the Holy Spirit of God. This event was predicted 700 years earlier when the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14) spoke of a virgin having a child who would be referred to as “Immanuel,” which means “God with us.”

### **Jesus is born in the town of Bethlehem—Luke 2:1–7**

Shortly before Jesus was born, His mother Mary and her husband Joseph had traveled to Bethlehem to be counted in a census. While they were there, Mary gave birth to Jesus. This event was foretold 700 years beforehand by the prophet Micah (Micah 5:2).

### **King Herod tries to kill the new-born King (Jesus)—Matthew 2:3–12**

When Jesus was born, a star-like object appeared over Bethlehem. The star was seen by wise men in the East who, believing it portended a king's birth in Israel, traveled to Jerusalem. Once there, they told King Herod of the omen. Herod, fearing his kingship might be threatened, ordered that all the male infants two years old and under in the town of Bethlehem and in the surrounding area be killed.

### **The infant Jesus and His parents escape to Egypt—Matthew 2:13–15**

Being warned by an angel in a dream, Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus and fled to Egypt for their safety.

### **Jesus is taken back to Israel, to the town of Nazareth—Matthew 2:19–23**

After King Herod died, Mary, Joseph and Jesus returned to their homeland. They journeyed to the district of Galilee and settled in a town called Nazareth.

### **Jesus as a young child visits the Temple—Luke 2:41–52**

When Jesus was about 12 years of age, He visited the Temple in Jerusalem, the capital city of the land of Judah. While at the Temple, Jesus spoke about God and about the Scriptures. His knowledge impressed the people who were in the Temple that day.

## **First Year of Jesus' Ministry**

---

*Jesus began His ministry at about the age of 30. His ministry lasted about three and a half years. His ministry has changed the world more so than the work of any man in history.*

### **Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist—Matthew 3:13–17**

When Jesus had reached the age of about 30, it was nearly time for Him to begin His ministry. But first He went to John the Baptist and was baptized in the Jordan River.

### **Jesus resists the temptations of Satan—Matthew 4:1–11**

After He was baptized, Jesus went into the desert where He fasted (ate no food) for 40 days and nights. He spent much of this time praying. But Satan used this time to tempt Jesus. *Satan* is a Hebrew word which means “adversary,” “enemy,” or “devil.” Satan tried to tempt Jesus with offers of instant glory and worldly power. Jesus never gave in to the temptations but, quoting Scriptures from the Bible, each time overcame them.

### **Jesus calls His first disciples—John 1:35–51**

Then Jesus returned to the place where John was baptizing. John then pointed Him out to some of his own disciples as the one on whom he had seen the Spirit descending and proclaimed that Jesus was the Son of God. These disciples then followed after Jesus. One of these was Andrew, who also brought his brother Peter to see Jesus. The next day Philip and Nathanael met him and began to follow.

### **Jesus’ first public miracle, turning water into wine—John 2:1–11**

Afterwards, Jesus went to Cana, a town in the district of Galilee to attend a wedding party. His mother, Mary, also attended. But the host of the wedding party did not have enough wine for everyone who had gathered. This was an embarrassing situation for the wedding host. So Mary intervened on behalf of the wedding host. She told Jesus about the problem. Jesus then miraculously changed six large clay pots of water into fine wine for the wedding party.

### **Jesus cleanses the Temple in Jerusalem—John 2:13–17**

Jesus went to Jerusalem and visited the Temple. When He arrived He saw that many people were selling animals and exchanging money in the Temple. This angered Jesus because the Temple was intended to be a place to worship God, not a place to operate business and make money. Jesus made a whip out of some strands of rope and chased the merchants out of the Temple.

### **Jesus talks of God’s love and plan of salvation—John 3:1–17**

Jesus explained to Nicodemus what a person must do to have salvation and eternal life.

### **Jesus tells a Samaritan woman about the “living water”—John 4:5–42**

As Jesus and His followers traveled through Samaria, Jesus took a rest near a well. There He met a Samaritan woman and spoke to her about the “water of life.” In this discussion with the Samaritan woman, Jesus showed that the Word of God was meant to be shared with all people, even enemies (the Samaritans and the Jews were hostile towards one another). And He showed that it was to be shared with men and women, Jews and Gentiles—a very radical idea in those times. (Gentiles include everyone who isn’t Jewish.)

### **Jesus’ early ministry in Galilee—John 4:3, 43–45**

During much of Jesus’ ministry, He was in the region around Galilee, where Jews and many Gentiles lived. Jesus preached and performed many miracles there. This was foretold by the prophet Isaiah about 700 years beforehand (Isaiah 9:1–2).

### **Jesus heals a nobleman’s son—John 4:46–54**

A royal official begged Jesus to heal his son who was very ill. Jesus then sent the nobleman on his way, telling him that his son would recover from the illness and become well again. The nobleman went home and learned that his son had indeed recovered from his illness at the same time Jesus said he’d be healed. The nobleman and his family became believers.

### **Jesus announces that He is the Messiah—Luke 4:14–21**

Jesus went to a synagogue (a Jewish place of worship) in his hometown of Nazareth. He read from the scroll of Isaiah (Isaiah 61:1–2) to the people gathered there. That Bible passage speaks of

an anointed one who brings the Word of God to the people. When Jesus finished reading Isaiah 61: 1–2, He told the people that: “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” Jesus had proclaimed that He was the anointed one—or Messiah—that the Bible verse spoke about.

### **Jesus is rejected as the Messiah—Luke 4:28–30**

Shortly after Jesus announced that He was the Messiah, the people at the synagogue in the town of Nazareth rejected Him as the Messiah and tried to kill Him.

Though many of the Jews rejected Jesus, some received His message gladly. In fact, the original Christians were Jews who in turn won other nationalities to Jesus.

## **Second Year of Jesus’ Ministry**

---

*The second year of Jesus’ ministry is sometimes referred to as the “Year of Popularity.” During this time Jesus became increasingly popular. The crowds that gathered to hear His teachings grew. Jesus performed many of His miracles during this time.*

### **Jesus explains He is salvation; God is His father—John 5:17–47**

Here, Jesus explained that God is His father. Jesus also explained that He (Jesus) is the only source of salvation for people. There is no other way to gain salvation than through Jesus Himself.

### **Jesus gives the Sermon on the Mount—Matthew, chapters 5–7**

About mid-way through His ministry, which lasted about three and a half years, Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount. That speech has been the most recited, most remembered, and most widely known of any speech in history. During the sermon Jesus said that He is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and promises, that people should forgive their enemies and settle disputes quickly, and that people sin even when they just think about sinning. Therefore by inference we are all sinners and need a savior.

### **Jesus heals the servant of a Roman officer—Matthew 8:5–13**

When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a town in Galilee, Jesus was asked to heal the servant of a centurion (a Roman officer). Jesus said He would go to the servant and heal him. But the centurion replied that he was unworthy to have Jesus come to his home, and he said “just say the word, and my servant will be healed.” By saying that, the centurion was attesting that he had faith in Jesus, and that he knew that Jesus could heal his servant simply by giving the order from a distance. Jesus then told the people that He had not seen such great faith in a man before and that the servant would be healed—and the servant was healed.

### **Jesus brings back to life a widow’s son in Nain—Luke 7:12–16**

Jesus was about to enter the town gate of Nain when a group of people approached, carrying out a dead body. The dead person was the son of a widow, who was crying. When Jesus saw her, He told the woman not to cry. He touched the bier and commanded the young man to get up. He arose and began to speak. All the people were filled with awe.

### **Jesus calms a raging storm—Matthew 8:24–27**

Jesus was in a boat with His disciples when a storm began to toss high waves and rock the boat. The disciples were concerned that the boat would tip over, so they awoke Jesus, who was sleeping. Jesus told the men to have faith. Then Jesus commanded the storm be calmed. Immediately, the storm went away. This was one of the miracles where Jesus showed that He could command the forces of nature.

### **Jesus brings back to life Jairus' daughter—Matthew 9:18–19, 23–26**

A ruler of the people came to Jesus and said that his daughter had just died. Jesus and His disciples went to the ruler's home and saw a gathering of mourners. Jesus told the mourners to leave the house, and He told them that the girl was not dead, but asleep. The mourners laughed at Him. But, after the mourners had left the home, Jesus took the girl by the hand and the girl rose up, alive.

### **Jesus heals two blind men—Matthew 9:27–34**

Two blind men learned that Jesus was nearby and they called out to Him, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." Jesus asked the blind men if they truly believed that He had the power to heal them. They told him that they did. Jesus then touched their eyes and restored their sight.

### **The 12 Apostles are ordained—Matthew 10:1–4**

Jesus called together His 12 disciples to Him and gave them authority to heal people of their diseases and illnesses. The 12 disciples were Simon (who is called Peter), Andrew (Simon Peter's brother), James son of Zebedee, John (James' brother), Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot (who betrayed Jesus).

## **Third Year Of Jesus' Ministry**

---

*This period of Jesus' ministry is sometimes called the "Year of Opposition." Some religious leaders became increasingly jealous of Jesus, as Jesus became increasingly popular.*

### **Jesus feeds 5,000 people—Matthew 14:13–21**

Soon after Jesus had learned that John the Baptist had been beheaded, Jesus went out into a boat to pray in solitude. But a large crowd gathered at the shore to meet Jesus. He felt compassion for the crowd, so He went ashore and healed the people in the crowd who were sick.

It was getting late in the day, and Jesus' disciples were concerned that the crowd did not have any food. Jesus told His disciples to feed the crowd, but the disciples said they only had five loaves of bread and two fish. And the crowd was very large with 5,000 men, as well as many women and children. Jesus gave thanks, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples who gave them to the people, who all ate and were satisfied. 12 baskets of leftover crumbs were later gathered, so much had the food been multiplied!

### **Jesus walks on water—Matthew 14:22–33**

Jesus told His disciples to go out into the water in a boat while Jesus went to a private place to pray. Later, Jesus walked out to the boat and startled the disciples. They thought they were seeing a ghost walking on the water. But after they realized that it was Jesus, they worshiped Him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

### **Jesus prophesies His own death—Matthew 16:21–26**

Jesus foretold events that happened later in the future. For example, He prophesied that the Temple would be destroyed, that Jerusalem would be destroyed, and that the Word of God would be preached to every corner of the world. All of those prophecies have come true. As explained in Matthew 16:21–26, Jesus prophesied His own persecution, death and resurrection. Jesus told His disciples that He would go into Jerusalem where He would suffer at the hand of religious leaders before being put to death. He also said that He would rise again on the third day.

### **Jesus is transfigured—Matthew 17:1–3, 5–8**

Jesus took Peter, James, and John to a high mountain. There He was transfigured—His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. Moses and Elijah (a prophet who had died hundreds of years before) appeared from the world beyond, talking with Jesus.

### **Jesus heals a man who was born blind—John 9:1–41**

When the disciples of Jesus had seen a man who had been blind since birth, they asked Jesus if the man's blindness was a result of his own sins or if it was the result of his parents' sins. Jesus answered them that the man's blindness was not due to the man's sins or his parents' sins. Jesus said the man's blindness happened "so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." Jesus then healed the man of his blindness.

### **Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead—John 11:1–44**

When Jesus received word that His friend, Lazarus, was seriously ill, He said: "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."

Taking His time, a few days later, Jesus traveled to Lazarus' town, where he was told Lazarus had been dead for four days. Jesus told Martha, Lazarus' sister, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Then, Martha answered Jesus: "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world." Jesus went to the tomb and called out for Lazarus. Lazarus rose back to life and walked out of his tomb.

## **Final Months of Jesus' Ministry**

---

*In the final months of Jesus' ministry, many of the religious leaders plotted against Jesus.*

### **The triumphal entry into Jerusalem—Matthew 21:1–11**

About 500 years before the time of Jesus, there was a prophet of God named Zechariah (Zechariah 9:9) who spoke of a king presenting himself to Jerusalem while riding on a humble donkey. This is how Jesus entered Jerusalem shortly before He was crucified and killed. He rode on the back of a donkey into the city. Along the way, a crowd of people gathered near Him, praising Him as He went by.

### **The question about paying taxes—Matthew 22:15–22**

As Jesus became increasingly popular, some of the religious leaders (Pharisees) became jealous and tried to trap Jesus into saying something or doing something for which He could be arrested.

The land of the Jews at that time was part of the Roman Empire. The Jews were ruled over by a Caesar (emperor). So, a few of the religious leaders tried to trap Jesus into saying something that would anger the Romans. They asked Jesus about the issue of Jews having to pay taxes to a Roman Caesar. His wise reply amazed them. They could not trap Him.

### **The great commandment (the Golden Rule)—Matthew 22:34–40**

Later others asked Jesus what was the greatest commandment of the Law (the first five books of the Bible). Jesus answered that to love God and your neighbor as yourself are the greatest commandments, and upon them hang "all the Law and the Prophets."

### **The widow's offering—Mark 12:41–44**

In Mark 12:41–44, the Bible explains a lesson in giving. Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were given and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus pointed out the value of what she had given, for she had given all that she had.

## The Persecution of Jesus

---

*The Jewish leaders conspired with Judas, one of Jesus' followers, to arrange Jesus' arrest. Jesus was falsely accused of being an anti-government rebel and was executed by crucifixion. His persecution and death fulfilled many Bible prophecies that had been written hundreds of years beforehand.*

### **The plot against Jesus—Matthew 26:1–5, 14–16**

A few days before the Jewish feast of the Passover, Jesus again predicted His death. He told His disciples that He would be handed over to be crucified. At about this time, the chief priests and other leaders plotted to have Jesus arrested so they could kill Him. They conspired with Judas, one of Jesus' 12 apostles, and paid him 30 pieces of silver to look for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

### **Jesus is betrayed by Judas—Matthew 26:47–56**

Jesus and His followers had entered the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. His disciples were sleeping when a crowd of Jewish officials and temple guards showed up to arrest Jesus. Judas told the guards which man was Jesus. Then the men began to arrest Jesus, and in the confusion that ensued Peter, with his sword, cut off one man's ear. Jesus scolded Peter for doing that. Jesus healed the injured man's ear and then allowed Himself to be arrested and led away.

### **Peter denies knowing Jesus—Matthew 26:58,69–75**

Chapter 26 of the Gospel of Matthew begins with a prophecy from Jesus that He would be betrayed and handed over to be crucified. And the chapter ends with the fulfillment of another of Jesus' prophecies—that Peter, Jesus' close disciple, would deny knowing Jesus three times before the break of dawn.

After Jesus was arrested and led away by the soldiers, Peter followed them into the courtyard of the high priest. He took a seat near some of the guards and waited to see what would happen with Jesus. A servant walked up to Peter and asked him if he was with Jesus. Peter said "I don't know what you're talking about."

Peter then got up and went outside of a gateway where another person saw him and identified him as a follower of Jesus. Peter again denied knowing Jesus. Other people then identified Peter as being a follower of Jesus and again Peter denied knowing Jesus. In all, Peter had denied knowing Jesus three times before dawn, just as Jesus had predicted.

When Peter remembered that Jesus had predicted Peter's denials, Peter began to weep because he had denied knowing the Lord.

### **Jesus is interrogated, mocked and put on trial—Matthew 27**

Chapter 27 of the Gospel of Matthew explains how the religious leaders conspired to put Jesus on trial. They falsely accused Jesus of being an anti-government rebel. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of the land of the Jews, tried to release Jesus and give Him His freedom. But the Jewish leaders conspired, successfully, to force the governor to order Jesus' execution.

### **Jesus is crucified—Matthew 27:35–38**

After the trial, Jesus was whipped. Then He was given a cross to carry and led to a hill we refer to as Calvary. There, He was nailed to the cross, through His wrists and feet. The cross was raised and Jesus was left to die. Many people had gathered to watch. Many mocked Jesus as He was dying. A few, His mother among them, mourned for Him.

### **Jesus is buried—Matthew 27:57–61; Mark 15:42–47; Luke 23:50–55; John 19:31–42**

After Jesus had died on the cross, a Roman soldier pierced Jesus with a spear to make sure He was dead. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus asked permission to take Jesus' body and bury Him. Jesus was taken down from the cross, wrapped in cloth and placed into an empty tomb owned by

Joseph. A large stone was placed in front of the tomb to close off the burial chamber. The Romans also posted a guard at the tomb to prevent anyone from stealing the body.

## **The Resurrection of Jesus**

---

*After Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried, He rose again.*

### **Mary Magdalene discovers Jesus' tomb empty—John 20:1–19**

The morning after Jesus had been buried, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been removed from the front of the tomb and that the tomb was empty. She afterwards saw Jesus, who told her He had risen and to go tell the news to the others. She then went to Peter and the others and told them that the tomb was empty and Jesus was alive, but they didn't believe her. Other people also came to visit the tomb and saw that it was empty.

### **The report of the Roman guards—Matthew 28:11–15**

According to Matthew 28:11–15, some of the guards who were guarding the tomb went into the city of Jerusalem and told the chief priests that the tomb was empty. The chief priests paid the guards to say that the disciples had stolen the body while the guards had fallen asleep.

### **Jesus appears to ten of His disciples—John 20:19–23; Mark 16:14**

Shortly after it had been discovered that Jesus' body was no longer in the tomb, Jesus began appearing to several people. He appeared to two believers on the road to a city called Emmaus, and He appeared to Peter. He also appeared to ten of His disciples, including Peter, when they were gathered together. Jesus had prophesied that He would be handed over to be crucified, that He would die, and that He would rise again. But that wasn't enough proof for the disciple named Thomas. Thomas wasn't present when Jesus visited the ten disciples. He still had doubts that Jesus had risen from the dead.

### **Jesus appears to Thomas—Mark 16:14–18**

Jesus again appeared to His disciples, and this time Thomas was present, and saw and touched the resurrected Jesus Himself.

### **The resurrected Jesus was seen by over 500 people—1 Corinthians 15:3–7**

According to the testimony of the apostle Paul, more than 500 people saw Jesus after His resurrection.

*1 Corinthians 15:3–7—For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, (5) and that He was seen by Cephas [Peter], then by the twelve [apostles]. (6) After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. (7) After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.*

### **Jesus ascends into Heaven—Mark 16:19–20; Acts chapter 1**

After Jesus had visited His disciples and told them to go into the world and preach the Word of God, Jesus was taken into Heaven. Angels appeared and promised that in the same way that Jesus had been taken, He will return! Jesus ascended 40 days after He rose from the dead.

*Acts 1:8–11—(Jesus told His disciples:) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (9) Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. (10) And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, (11) who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*