

# Who Is Jesus?

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## *A Study Outline*



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The following is a study outline about Jesus Christ. The person and work of Jesus Christ is crucial to the Christian faith. It is the basis of our salvation, and the means by which we understand how we enter into a new relation with God, and into everlasting life.

## I. WHAT YOU'LL GAIN FROM THIS STUDY

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- A. A greater appreciation for the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- B. A deeper understanding of the culture and characters during Jesus' time.
- C. The ability to recognize "counterfeit" views of Jesus Christ.
- D. The ability to effectively share Jesus Christ with those who are looking for life's answers.
- E. An increased sense of excitement about the return of Jesus Christ.

## II. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT JESUS WAS FULLY GOD?

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- A. Jesus displayed God's authority.
  1. He had the authority to raise the dead (John 6:39-40, 54; 10:17-18; 11:43-44).
  2. He had the authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:10).
  3. He has the authority to judge men (John 5:22).
- B. Jesus possessed God's attributes.
  1. He demonstrated power over nature (Mark 4:39).
  2. He demonstrated power over physical disease (Mark 3:10).
  3. He demonstrated power over demons (Luke 4:35-36).
  4. He demonstrated power over death (John 11:43-44).
  5. He is omnipotent (Matt. 28:18).
  6. He is omniscient (Mark 2:8; John 2:25).
  7. He is omnipresent (Matt. 28:20).
  8. Jesus claimed his deity (John 10:30)
  9. He claimed to be the Messiah (Matt. 26:63-64).
  10. He claimed his equality with God the Father (John 5:18, 10:30).<sup>1</sup>
  11. He claimed to be YHWH (John 8:58).
  12. Jesus' Messiahship is confirmed through prophecy.
- C. Acknowledging Jesus' deity is necessary to understand atonement, justification, and worship.

1. Atonement. If Jesus was a created being and not divine, he could not have atoned for man's sins.
2. Justification by faith alone. If Jesus is not fully God, we would rightly doubt whether we can really trust him to save us completely.
3. Worship. If Jesus is not infinite God, should we pray to him or worship him?
4. Creature worship. If Jesus was a created being, but nonetheless one who saved us, then we would be attributing credit for salvation to a creature and not to God.

**D. Other religious leaders never claimed to be God—Jesus did!**

1. Josh McDowell points out that other religious leaders, such as Buddha, Mohammed, and Confucius never claimed to be God, but Jesus did.<sup>2</sup>
2. This is what makes Jesus so different from other religious leaders.

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### III. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT JESUS WAS FULLY MAN?

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**A. Jesus had a human body.**

1. He had a human birth but by a divine conception (Luke 2:7).
2. He showed human growth (Luke 2:40, 52).
3. He got tired like we do (John 4:6, Matt. 8:24)
4. He got thirsty like we do (John 19:28).
5. He got hungry like we do (Matt. 4:2).
6. He died like we will (Luke 23:46).
7. His human body ceased to have life in it and ceased to function, just as ours does.
8. Jesus rose from the dead in a physical, human body—though one that was made perfect and was no longer subject to weakness, disease, or death.
  - a) His resurrected body had flesh and bones and could be touched physically (Luke 24:39).
  - b) He had the scars and nail prints from his crucifixion (John 20:25-27). He ate food after his resurrection (Luke 24:41-43).
  - c) Our resurrected bodies will be like his (I Cor. 15:42-49).
  - d) He ascended into heaven in a resurrected body (Acts 1:9-11), and continues to exist in that same resurrected body in heaven as the ascension is designed to teach us.

**B. Jesus had a human mind.**

1. He learned like we do (Luke 2:52).
2. He learned obedience like we do (Heb. 5:8).
3. With each increasingly difficult task, even when it involved some suffering, Jesus' moral ability, his ability to obey under more and more difficult circumstances, increased.<sup>3</sup>

**C. Jesus had a human soul and human emotions.**

1. He experienced and expressed love (Matt. 9:36).
2. He experienced wonder (Matt. 8:10).
3. He experienced anger (Matt. 21:13).
4. He experienced temptation (Matt. 4:1-11).
5. He experienced grief (John 11:35).
6. He experienced distress (John 12:27).

**D. If Jesus was not fully human, he could not represent us on the cross or be our High Priest.**

1. He could not represent us on the cross (Hebrews 2:14)
2. He could not be our High Priest (Hebrews 2:17)
3. He could not feel what we feel (Hebrews 2:18; 4:15).

**E. Conclusion: Jesus is 100% man and 100% God.**

1. Jesus is theanthropic.<sup>4</sup>
2. Claiming to be rational, the Christian is asked to explain or attempt to explain a seeming paradox in Christian teaching. How can Jesus be both God and man? There are four essentials to the orthodox understanding of the person of Christ.
  - a) Christ is truly God.
  - b) He is truly human.
  - c) He is one person.
  - d) There are in him two distinct natures, divine and human, clearly distinguishable and substantially different, yet undivided, inseparable, and unconfused.
3. This issue is important because:
  - a) To be a vicarious sacrifice Jesus had to be fully human.
  - b) To be a worthy sacrifice Jesus had to be divine.

## **IV. THEORIES ABOUT JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS**

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The very heart and hope of the Christian faith rests in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His deity and sovereignty also rest upon his resurrection. The Bible states that Jesus came to save man from sin, and from its penalty of death, but if he did not die and rise from the dead, then there is no gospel, no good news, no hope for mankind. This would mean that Christian faith is misplaced, that the basis of Christianity is invalid, and that there is no hope for the resurrection of the believer.

Various theories have been proposed to rationalize Jesus' death on the cross—many of these theories attempt to discredit or discount what actually happened.

**A. Moral Influence Theory: Jesus Christ's life and death is primarily a moral example to humanity.**

1. As a moral example it can inspire us to lift ourselves out of sin and grow towards union with God.
2. Objection.
  - a) The great difficulty with this viewpoint is that it is contrary to so many passages of Scripture that speak of Christ dying for sin, bearing our sin, or dying as a propitiation<sup>5</sup>.
  - b) It robs the atonement of its objective character, because it holds that the atonement had no effect on God himself.
  - c) Finally, it has no way of dealing with our guilt—if Christ did not die to pay for our sins, we have no right to trust in him for forgiveness of sins.<sup>6</sup>

**B. Governmental Theory: Christ did not exactly pay the penalty for the actual sins of any people, but simply suffered to show that when God's laws are broken there must be some penalty paid.**

1. Christ's death demonstrates God's high regard for his law.
2. It shows God's attitude toward sin and was God's demonstration of the fact that his laws had been broken, that he is the moral lawgiver and governor of the universe, and that some kind of penalty would be required whenever his laws were broken.
3. Objection: God is holy and a penalty must be paid for sin. But he is also a God of love who has paid the penalty through Christ's death on the cross (Rom. 5:12; John 3:16).

**C. The Accident of History/Martyr Theory: Jesus' death as being unexpected and unforeseen--it was an accident of history.<sup>7</sup>**

1. Similarly, some view Jesus' death as that of a martyr who was the victim of political and religious turmoil.
2. Objection:
  - a) Jesus taught that his whole purpose was to come into the world, suffer, and die on the cross (John 12:27).
  - b) Jesus had full power to lay down his life in death, he was not a victim of circumstances (John 10:17-18).

**D. Ransom to Satan Theory: Christ's death was a ransom (bribe) paid to Satan to purchase captive men from Satan's charms.**

1. This theory asserts that Satan rather than God is the one who required a payment to be made for sin
2. Objection:
  - a) It completely neglects the demands of God's justice with respect to sin.

- b) This theory finds no direct confirmation in Scripture and has few supporters in the history of the church.
- c) It views Satan as having much more power than he actually does, namely, power to demand whatever he wants from God, rather than as one who has been cast down from heaven and has no right to demand anything of God.
- d) Nowhere does Scripture say that we as sinners owe anything to Satan, but it repeatedly says that God requires of us a payment for our sins.
- e) This view also fails to deal with the texts that speak of Christ's death as a propitiation offered to God the Father for our sins, or with the fact that God the Father represented the Trinity in accepting the payment for sins from Christ.

**E. Mystical Theory: Christ took on a human sinful nature but through the power of the Holy Spirit triumphed over it, and that knowing this will mystically influence man.**

- 1. This theory assumes that Jesus had a sinful nature.
- 2. The mystical theory asserts that knowing how Christ overcame his sinful nature will mystically influence man and awake his "god-consciousness."
- 3. Objection.
  - a) Clearly this is one of the most heretical of all these theories because of the fact that to believe this one must believe that Christ had a sin nature.
  - b) This is in clear contradiction to Scripture (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:22; 1 John 3:5).

**F. Example Theory: Christ's death simply provided an example of faith and obedience to inspire man to be obedient.**

- 1. Christ's life and atonement were simply an example of true faith and obedience and should serve as inspiration to men to live a similar life of faith and obedience.
- 2. Objection.
  - a) While it is true that Christ is an example for us even in his death, the question is whether this fact is the complete explanation of the atonement.
  - b) The example theory fails to account for the many Scriptures that focus on Christ's death as a payment for sin, the fact that Christ bore our sins, and the fact that he was the propitiation for our sins.
  - c) These considerations alone mean that the theory must be rejected. Moreover, this view really ends up arguing that man can save himself by following Christ's example and by trusting and obeying God just as Christ did.
  - d) Thus it fails to show how the guilt of our sin can be removed, because it does not hold that Christ actually paid the penalty for our sins or made provision for our guilt when he died.

**G. Penal-Substitution Theory: This view sees the atonement of Christ as being a vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice that satisfied the demands of God's justice upon sin.**

1. This view holds that Christ's death paid the penalty of sin for those whom God elects to save and that through repentance man can accept Christ's substitution as payment for sin.
2. In doing so Christ paid the penalty of man's sin bringing forgiveness, imputing righteousness and reconciling man to God.
3. Those that hold this view believe that every aspect of man, his mind, will and emotions have been corrupted by sin and that man is totally depraved and spiritually dead.
4. This is the generally accepted view of Christ's atonement and is supported by strong biblical evidence.<sup>8</sup>

**H. Conclusion: The greatest amount of biblical evidence concerning Jesus Christ's death on the cross best supports the penal-substitution view.**

## **V. WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE OF JESUS' RESURRECTION?**

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**A. There is evidence in the empty tomb.**

1. If Christ were not raised, then where is His body?
2. The disciples and others saw the tomb where He was buried. When they returned, His body was not there.
3. Angels declared that He had been raised from the dead as He had promised (Matthew 28:5-7).

**B. There is evidence in Jesus' appearance to over 500 people**

1. He appeared first to his eleven disciples (Matt. 28:1-17; Mark 16:15-18).
2. Then he appeared to over five hundred people (1 Cor. 15:6).

**C. There is evidence in his appearance to people 15 times after his death.<sup>9</sup>**

1. To Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; John 20:14).
2. To women returning from the tomb (Matt. 28:9, 10).
3. To Peter later in the day (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5).
4. To the Emmaus disciples (Luke 24:13-33).
5. To the apostles without Thomas (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-24).
6. To the apostles with Thomas present (John 20:26-29).
7. To the seven by the lake of Tiberias (John 21:1-23).
8. To a multitude of 500-plus believers on a Galilean mountain (1 Cor. 15:6).
9. To James (1 Cor. 15:7).
10. To the eleven (Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:33-52; Acts 1:3-12)



11. At the ascension (Acts 1:3-12).
12. To Paul (Acts 9:3-6; 1 Cor. 15:8).
13. To Stephen (Acts 7:55).
14. To Paul in the temple (Acts 22:17-21; 23:11).
15. To John on Patmos (Rev. 1:10-19).

**D. He appeared to people physically for 40 days after his death.**

1. Following his death and resurrection Jesus appeared to people for forty days (Acts 1:3).
2. He ate in the presence of the disciples, and could be touched (Luke 24:36-43).

**E. His resurrection made a dramatic change in his disciples.**

1. They went from a group of men frightened and hiding to strong, courageous witnesses sharing the gospel throughout the world. They were willing to die for their faith in Jesus Christ. Josh McDowell summarizes how they faced death by some of the cruelest methods then known.<sup>10</sup>

| Apostle                 | Execution Method                       |
|-------------------------|--|
| Peter                   | Crucified                              |
| Andrew                  | Crucified                              |
| John                    | (Not executed, died of natural causes) |
| James, son of Alphaeus  | Crucified                              |
| Philip                  | Crucified                              |
| Simon                   | Crucified                              |
| Thaddaeus               | Killed by arrows                       |
| James, brother of Jesus | Stoned                                 |
| Thomas                  | Spear thrust                           |
| Bartholomew             | Crucified                              |
| James, son of Zebedee   | Sword                                  |

2. What else could explain this dramatic change other than the risen Christ appearing to them?

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## VI. CONTEMPORARY FALSE VIEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

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Many heresies concerning the nature of Jesus Christ were taught during the early church period. Why then should Christians living today be concerned with them? Because these same views have been embraced down through time and can be found in the ancient and contemporary<sup>11</sup> heretical doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Islam, and others. They must be recognized for what they are—unbiblical!<sup>12</sup>

- A. Jehovah's Witnesses: Jesus is not God. Before he lived on earth, he was Michael, the archangel. Jehovah made the universe through him. Jesus is not coming again.

- B. Mormonism: Jesus is a separate god from the Father (Elohim). He was created as a spirit child by the Father and Mother in heaven.
- C. Christian Science: Jesus was not the Christ, but a man who displayed the Christ idea. ("Christ" means perfection, not a person). Jesus was not God because God can never become a man or flesh. He did not die on the cross, nor will he be coming back.
- D. Scientology: Jesus was not the Creator, nor is he an "operating thetan" (in control of supernatural powers, cleared from mental defects). Jesus did not die on the cross.
- E. New Age: Jesus is not the one true God. He is not a savior, but a spiritual model, and guru, and is now an "ascended master." He did not rise physically, but "rose" into a higher spiritual realm.
- F. Islam: Jesus was a sinless prophet but not the Son of God. He was not crucified.
- G. Hinduism: Jesus is a teacher, a guru, or an avatar<sup>13</sup> (an incarnation of Vishnu). He is a son of God as are others. He did not rise from the dead.
- H. Buddhism: Jesus was only an enlightened teacher. Buddhists in Asia believe Jesus was an avatar, but not God.

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## VII. ANCIENT FALSE VIEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

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**A. Apollinarianism: Jesus had a human body but not a human mind or spirit.**

1. This heretical doctrine was taught by Apollinaris or Apollinarius (c.315-c.390), bishop of Laodicea, near Antioch, who taught that Jesus had a true body and soul but the human mind was replaced by His divine being.
2. He had a human body but not a human mind or spirit.

**B. Nestorianism: Jesus was a mere man, who enjoyed the indwelling of God.**

1. Followers of Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople (died c.451), who is alleged to have taught the doctrine, later declared heretical, of two persons (one human, one divine) as well as two natures in the incarnate Christ.
2. To them Jesus had two natures and was two persons instead of two natures in one person, he was a mere man, who enjoyed the indwelling of God just as any other human might, but to a much higher degree.

**C. Eutychianism (Monophysitism): Jesus had a human nature but it was unlike the rest of humanity.**

1. Eutychianism refers to a set of Christian theological doctrines derived from the ideas of Eutyches of Constantinople (c. 380—456), who taught that the human nature of Christ was overcome by the divine, or that Christ had a human nature but it was unlike the rest of humanity.

2. The Monophysitist took this view further by stating that Jesus' human nature was swallowed by his divine nature and resulted in a new third nature—a *tertium quid*.<sup>14</sup>

**D. Ebionism: denied Jesus' deity and his pre-existence.**

1. Ebionites were one of a sect of heretics, in the first centuries of the church, whose doctrine was a mixture of Judaism and Christianity.
2. They denied the divinity of Christ, regarding him as an inspired messenger, and rejected much of the New Testament.
3. They taught that Jesus was just a man who was so holy that God chose him, at the instant of his baptism, to be the Messiah.
4. They denied Jesus' deity and his pre-existence.

**E. Arianism: Jesus was created by the Father as the first and highest human being, but not as God.**

1. Arius (c. 256-336) was a Greek who was a Christian theologian active in Alexandria and who was declared a heretic for his doctrines about God, which came to be known as Arianism.
2. The doctrines of Arius, denied that Jesus was of the same substance as God and holding instead that he was only the highest of created beings, was viewed as heretical by most Christian churches.
3. Arians taught that Jesus was somehow created by the Father as the first and highest human being, but not as God.

**F. Docetism: Jesus had no human body and only seemed to have died on the cross.**

1. Docetism, taken from the Greek word *dokein*, means "to seem."
2. An opinion especially associated with the Gnostics that Jesus had no human body and only seemed to have died on the cross.
3. They would say that in reality Jesus cast no shadow and left no footprints; he was God but not man.
4. They implied that Jesus was never hungry, or thirsty, nor did he suffer and die.

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## VIII. THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

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**A. Jesus was born in Bethlehem.**

1. Prior to Jesus' birth.
  - a) Mary was engaged to Joseph prior to Jesus' birth. Gabriel told Mary, a virgin, she would give birth to the Son of God.
  - b) Gabriel told her God's power would make the conception possible.

- c) Gabriel said "Nothing will be impossible with God." He then told Mary that her elderly relative, Elizabeth, was six months pregnant.
  - d) Joseph considered calling off the marriage when he learned about Mary's pregnancy. But, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, and told him to marry her. Joseph then obediently took Mary as his wife, and kept her a virgin until Jesus was born.
2. The name Jesus means "God saves."
- a) Jesus.
    - (1) Grk: *Iēsous* for Joshua (Hebrew) meaning "The Lord (Yahweh) is salvation."<sup>15</sup> The name was given to Mary by Gabriel (Luke 1:31).
    - (2) Common name in first century.
  - b) Christ.
    - (1) Grk: *Christos* meaning Messiah, anointed one.
    - (2) Its root is the verb *chriō* which in Greek means "to smear, rub, spread."<sup>16</sup>
    - (3) "Anointed One" was a title given to kings and priests, and occasionally to prophets.
    - (4) Anointed One: First used in Ps. 2:2 to refer to the coming Messiah, then used in Daniel 9:25-26.
    - (5) King Herod spoke of Jesus as "the Messiah" in Matt. 2:4.
  - c) Immanuel.
    - (1) Heb. "God with us." Matt. 1:23 (Grk. *Emmanouel*)
    - (2) The symbolic name from the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14, 8:8.
    - (3) The name was demonstrated in Matt. 28:20, "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age," just before Jesus' ascension into heaven.
3. Bethlehem.
- a) He was born in a manger, and later moved to a house where he was visited by the Magi.
  - b) Joseph may have sold the gifts to make money for his stay in the house.
  - c) Jesus was born in Bethlehem; a town located about five miles south of Jerusalem. Bethlehem was also the ancestral home of King David (1 Sam. 17:12).
  - d) Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem (Judea) rather than in Nazareth, the home of Mary and Joseph? It was because Joseph was required by Emperor Caesar Augustus to return to his hometown Bethlehem to pay taxes and to register for the Roman census. In doing so, the prophecy of Micah 5:2 was fulfilled.
  - e) He was born in a manger.
    - (1) A manger is a trough or box of carved stone or wood construction used to hold food for animals (as in a stable).
    - (2) Mangers are mostly used in livestock raising.

(3) Mangers are also used to feed wild animals, e.g., in nature reserves. The word comes from the French *mangeure*, from Latin *manducare*, meaning "chew."<sup>17</sup>

4. Jesus' visitors.

a) Shepherds

(1) It was to the shepherds in Bethlehem that the angel of the Lord first announced the birth of Christ (Messiah) the Lord (Luke 2:8-11).

(2) They visited Jesus while he was still in a manger (Luke 2:16).

(3) Angels that appeared to the shepherds said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to men on whom his favor rests" (2:14).

(4) The KJV says, "peace on earth, good will toward men" but this was found to be in error when earlier manuscripts were found.<sup>18</sup> Most modern translations read differently: "on earth peace to men on whom his (God's) favor rests (NIV). The term "his favor" is genitive (*eũdokías*), not nominative (*eũdokía*). In other words, the peace that the angels sang that belonged to the earth as a result of the birth of Christ is not a generic worldwide peace for all mankind, but a peace limited to those who obtain favor with God by believing in his Son Jesus (see Romans 5:1).<sup>19</sup>

b) Magi (Matt. 2:1).

(1) They were not kings (cp. "We three kings..."). Historical sources believe they were a caste of educated Persian men who specialized in philosophy and astronomy/astrology, and who served as advisors to their kings. Magi, (Grk. *magos*, by impl. a *magician*) who traveled thousands of miles to see Jesus, held no position of political power whatever.<sup>20</sup>

(2) The Bible does not say there was three of them, only three gifts (Matt. 2:11).

(3) They did not visit Jesus when he was lying in a manger. They visited him some time later, when Mary & Joseph moved to a house (Matt. 2:11).<sup>21</sup>

(4) Why did the magi give Jesus gold, frankincense and myrrh? When the Magi presented gold, they were honoring Jesus with the very best that they possessed, and they were also recognizing that Jesus was King.

(5) Gold was the usual offering presented to kings by their subjects, or those wanting to pay respect. It seems that the metal we know as gold has always held extremely high value - as long ago as 2,500 BC, gold was especially prized, and used as a medium of exchange.

(6) Frankincense is highly fragrant when burned as incense, and was used in worship where it was burned as a pleasant offering to God. It was also used as medicine and as perfume. It is a very costly and fragrant gum distilled from a tree that is found in Persia, India and Arabia, as well as the East Indies.

(7) Myrrh is also a very expensive fragrant perfume-like substance, used as a medicine, and often used to make incense. It is a bitter tasting gum from a tree. Mary may have used it to aide in postpartum healing.<sup>22</sup>

5. His life was threatened by Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1-20).

- a) For 33 years Herod remained a strong friend and ally of Rome, and quickly moved from the position of governor of Galilee to king of Judea, where he held direct control of the Jewish people.
  - b) This required him to be a careful diplomat and negotiator because he was always under suspicion by the Jews who questioned his true interests.
  - c) Because of the threat of a new king, Jesus, Herod tried to eliminate all male children two years old and under. An angel appeared to Joseph and told him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt where they remained until Herod died in 4 B.C.
  - d) Herod was worse than a Gentile; he was a half Jewish Idumaean, a descendant of Esau, a wild desert dwelling type. The Jews considered them with no small amount of prejudice.<sup>23</sup>
6. Was there an actual star of Bethlehem?
- a) Tradition says that the star guided them from their home to the stable. The fact that such a dramatic and unusual celestial event is not mentioned by extra-biblical sources leads many to conclude that this is a legend/fable.
  - b) But this is not what the text says. It says that the magi saw this "star" (the word means virtually any light in the night sky) from their homeland "in its rising"—that is, when it rose.
  - c) They saw some kind of astronomical occurrence that communicated to them that a great ruler of the Jews had been born (probably two years earlier—see Matt. 2:7, 16). So they traveled to Jerusalem in order to get more information about this child.
  - d) Then, when they left for Bethlehem (about 5 miles SSE from Jerusalem), this same light reappeared and this time shone in the very direction of Bethlehem. DeLashmutt offers several suggestions as to what this star was.<sup>24</sup>
7. Jesus' birthdate.
- a) Jesus was most likely born about 4—6 B.C., toward the end of Herod the Great's reign as king of the Jews (37—4 B.C.).<sup>25</sup>
  - b) Matthew tells us that Herod killed Bethlehem's babies two years old and under, so the earliest Jesus could have been born, therefore, is 6 B.C.
  - c) Through a variety of other time indicators, we can be relatively confident that the one called Messiah was born in either late 5 or early 4 B.C.<sup>26</sup>
  - d) Was Jesus really born on December 25th? Virtually every month on the calendar has been proposed by biblical scholars. So why do we celebrate his birth in December?
  - e) The tradition for December 25th is actually quite ancient. Hippolytus (early Christian writer and antipope), in the second century A.D., argued that this was Christ's birthday.

- f) Meanwhile, in the Eastern Church, January 6th was the date followed. But in the fourth century, John Chrysostom (the archbishop of Constantinople ) argued that December 25th was the correct date and from that day till now, the Church in the *East*, as well as the West, has observed the 25th of December as the official date of Christ's birth.<sup>27</sup>
8. Jesus came at the perfect time.
- a) He came at a time of relative world peace.
- (1) Rome was tired of wars and under Caesar Augustus it became a time of peace (*Pax Romanus*).
  - (2) Because of this, it was a time when there was great emphasis on trade and commerce.
  - (3) People were free to travel throughout the Roman Empire.
- b) He came at a time when the gospel could be spread because of the many roads developed throughout the Roman Empire.
- (1) There was a fantastic system of roads and trade routes on the sea, all protected by the police and the Roman equivalent of the coast guard.
  - (2) Travel became abundant allowing the gospel to be spread.
- c) He came when there was a universal language.
- (1) Koine' Greek was the language of Alexander's conquest.
  - (2) Another form of Greek, Attic Greek, was difficult language to master.
  - (3) When Alexander expanded the Greek empire as far as Afghanistan and India, the people had to assimilate in order to be a part of that empire.
  - (4) Without Greek the foreigners could not trade or prosper. However, since Attic Greek was so difficult, the people of the empire commonized it, so that it could be easily used.
  - (5) Koine' Greek was the greatest language in history for written communication. Through it many complex and subtle concepts could be communicated with clarity.
  - (6) Koine' Greek was retained in the Roman Empire as the language of the common man. Nearly everyone knew it and used it throughout their lives.<sup>28</sup>
9. The genealogies of Jesus reveal that he is the legal heir to the throne of David.
- a) Matthew's Genealogy (Matt. 1:1-17).
- (1) Abraham→David→Joseph→Jesus (Fulfillment of Isa. 11:1-5, descendent of Jesse/David).
  - (2) Jesus is the legal heir to the throne of David since Joseph was his legal father.
  - (3) Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience and wanted to show how Jesus related to them through Abraham.
- b) Luke's Genealogy (Luke 3:23-37).
- (1) Jesus→Heli (father of Mary<sup>29</sup>)→David→Adam.

- (2) Luke wrote to a Greek audience and wanted to show how Christ related to all humans as a descendent of Adam.
- c) A comparison of the two genealogies:
- (1) Matthew traces of the line of Christ through Joseph, and thus back to Abraham.
  - (2) Luke takes Mary's line back to Adam. Though Joseph was not Christ's biological Father, our Lord traced his legal heritage through him. That is why Matthew's line stops at Abraham. His line had to do with Israel, and Israel began with Abraham.
  - (3) Matthew's genealogy emphasized Jesus' claim to the throne of David. Since Luke's readers (Gentiles) were less concerned about the fulfillment of Jewish prophecy, his genealogy focused on Jesus' descent from God. It placed no emphasis on Jesus being the descendant of King David.
  - (4) The genealogy of Luke culminated by showing Jesus was the "son of Adam, the son of God" (Luke 3:28). This emphasized the humanity of Jesus, and the equality of all Christians, regardless of ethnic backgrounds. Since the line of Mary is Christ's biological line, the line is traced clear back to Adam.
  - (5) Both of the genealogies skip generations. This was a common practice in the Jewish handling of these things.<sup>30</sup>
10. He was part of a family of at least nine people.
- a) Mary, mother of Jesus.
    - (1) Little is known of her, other than that she was a peasant and a resident of Nazareth, city in Galilee.
    - (2) She was most likely of the tribe of Judah, and thus in King David's lineage, although the genealogies in Matthew 1 and Luke 3 do not say so.
    - (3) We do know that Mary's cousin was Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. She is not to be confused with five others in the NT:
      - (a) Mary Magdalene: from whom Jesus cast out seven demons (Mark 16:9).
      - (b) Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus (Luke 10:38-42).
      - (c) Mary, mother of the disciple James and Joses (Matt. 27:55-61).
      - (d) Mary, the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12).
      - (e) Mary of Rome (Rom. 16:16).
  - b) Joseph, the husband of Mary, mother of Jesus (Matt. 1:16-24, 2:13; Luke 15:43)
    - (1) He was a carpenter (Matt. 13:55), living in Nazareth (Luke 2:4).
    - (2) He was a descendent of King David (Matt. 1:20; Luke 2:4); the son (in-law?) of Heli (Luke 3:23) or Jacob (Matt. 1:16) and the legal father of Jesus (Matt. 13:55; Luke 3:23, 4:22; John 1:45, 6:42).
    - (3) He undoubtedly taught Jesus the carpenter trade. Joseph was a carpenter, and taught Jesus the trade.



- (4) Scripture does not indicate what they built, but an early historian claimed they made wooden plows.<sup>31</sup>
  - (5) He was likely alive when Jesus was 12 years old (Luke 2:41-48) and possibly after the ministry of Jesus had well begun (Matt. 13:55) but since not is recorded of him after that it may be concluded that he died prior to the crucifixion of Christ.
  - (6) If Joseph died shortly after Jesus' 12<sup>th</sup> birthday, it is likely that Jesus became the head of the household, taking on the overall duties and responsibilities of his family.
- c) Jesus had four brothers and at least two sisters (Matt. 13:55-56; Mark 6:3). His four brothers were:
- (1) James: Author of the book of James, but not the Apostle James, listed first in the names oldest of Jesus' four younger brothers. He emerged as a leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 2:9), a position which he held for nearly 30 years, until his martyrdom, according to church tradition.
  - (2) Joseph (also called Joses, Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40, 47): Little is known of him.
  - (3) Simon: Little is known of him.
  - (4) Judas (also called Jude): Some scholars believe his is the author of the book of Jude. He is not to be confused with Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus.

**B. Jesus grew up in Nazareth.**

1. Mary, Joseph and Jesus returned to Nazareth afterward (Luke 2:39).
2. It was here that Jesus grew up.
3. Jesus most likely spoke three languages.
  - a) Aramaic.
    - (1) Though Jews had once spoken Hebrew as their primary language, this changed when Israel was overthrown, first by the Assyrians in the eight-century B.C. and then by the Babylonians in the sixth-century B.C.
    - (2) By the time of Jesus, Aramaic was so common among Jews that the reading of the Hebrew Scripture in the synagogue was accompanied by translation into Aramaic.
    - (3) Aramaic was originally the language of the Aramaeans (Syria). Aramaic survives today in Eastern and Western dialects, mostly as the language of Christians living in a few scattered communities in Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran.<sup>32</sup>
    - (4) The dialect daily spoken by Jesus and the disciples was Galilean Aramaic, which, as is noted in Matt. 26:73, was recognizably different from the southern dialect spoken in and around Jerusalem.
  - b) Hebrew.
    - (1) Jesus most likely spoke Hebrew as a second language, and taught in the Hebrew language.<sup>33</sup>

- (2) There is every indication that Jesus learned Torah at a very early age and that he was fluent in the language and literature of the Sages.
  - (3) He passed through the same educational passages as did other Jewish boys his age. He grew up in the synagogue environment.
  - (4) At the age of twelve, he was already dazzling the Sages with his knowledge of Torah<sup>34</sup>.
- c) Greek.
- (1) It is also likely that Jesus knew enough Greek to get by in Galilee as a carpenter.
  - (2) Galilee was a multi-lingual, multi-cultural area.
- d) Latin.
- (1) Jesus probably did not speak Latin which was the primary language of the Roman Empire at that time.
  - (2) However, Romans also spoke the lingua franca (Greek) of that time.<sup>35</sup>
4. Jesus' Boyhood (Birth to 12 Years)
- a) Jewish families went through several temple ceremonies soon after a baby's birth (Luke 2:21-24):<sup>36</sup>
  - b) Circumcision: Eighth day after birth (May have taken place in Bethlehem).
  - c) Redemption of firstborn. A firstborn son was presented to God one month after birth (Ex. 13:2, 11-16; Num. 18:15). The ceremony is much like our modern day "dedication of babies."
  - d) Purification of the mother. The law of Moses required mothers to present an offering 40 days after a son was born, when she was then considered ceremonially clean.
5. Jesus' Hidden Years (12 to late 20s)
- a) Place: Nazareth (Galilee).
  - b) Jesus was not *Bar-Mitzvahed* as some may think. In modern Judaism a boy passes from adolescence to manhood shortly after his twelfth birthday, at which time he became "a son of the law."<sup>37</sup> The term Bar Mitzvah means "Son of Commandment" and was a ceremony much like a confirmation. But the modern method of celebrating one's becoming a Bar Mitzvah did not exist in the time of the Bible.<sup>38</sup>
  - c) Significant events: unknown (Luke, 2:40-52; Mark 6:3; John 6:42; 7:15); he probably cared for his family since Joseph may have died in Jesus' younger days.
  - d) The public teaching of Jesus shows that he was a close observer of the sights and sounds of nature, and of the habits of all classes of men, for these are the usual sources of his illustrations.

**C. Jesus ministered in Galilee, Samaria, and Judea (Late 20's to early 30s).**

1. Begins with: Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11).
2. Why was Jesus baptized?
  - a) It was not for repentance for sin since Jesus did not sin.

- b) "To fulfill all righteousness" (Luke 3:21-23; and Matt. 3:13-15). Advancing God's work.
  - c) To show support of what John was doing.
  - d) He was inaugurating his ministry.
  - e) He was identifying with penitent people vs. Pharisees.
  - f) Jesus was baptized because He had to fulfill the legal requirements for entering into the priesthood. He was priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4; Heb. 5:8-10; 6:20).
  - g) Priests offered sacrifice to God on behalf of the people. Jesus became a sacrifice for our sin (1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21) in His role as priest.
- 3. Jesus' temptation by Satan (Luke 4:1-13).
  - 4. His first miracle turning water into wine in Cana, Galilee (John 2:1-11).
  - 5. Jesus ministered in three major geographical areas.
    - a) Galilee (Matt. 4:17—14:12; Mark 1:14b—6:30; Luke 4:14b—9:10a; John 4:46—5:47; Matt. 14—18; Mark. 6—9; Luke. 9; John 6—7).
    - b) Samaria & Perea (Matt. 19—20; Mark 10; Luke 14—19; John 11).
    - c) Judea/Jerusalem (Luke 10—13; John 7—10; Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19).
  - 6. Jesus' Passion Week and Crucifixion (Early 30s).
    - a) Begins with: The Last Supper (Matt. 26:17-35; Mark 14:12-31; Luke 22:1-38; John 13:1-30).
    - b) Ends with: Jesus' death on the cross (Matt. 27:45-61; Mark 15:33-47; Luke 23:44-46; John 19:28-37).
  - 7. Jesus' Post-Resurrection Ministry and Ascension (Early 30s).
    - a) Begins with: Jesus' resurrection (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18).
    - b) Ends with: Jesus' ascension to heaven (Mark 16:19-20; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11).

## IX. THE CULTURE OF JESUS' TIME

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### A. Culture of Galilee: Inhabited by Jews and Gentiles.

- 1. Generally open to Jesus' teachings (except for Nazareth).
- 2. Over 250 towns with many synagogues.
- 3. Pleasant rural area with mixed Jewish and Gentile cultures.

### B. Culture of Samaria: Inhabited by interbred Jews and Assyrians.

- 1. Inhabitants were primarily mixed breeds comprised of Jewish and Assyrian ancestry.
- 2. Held to syncretistic teachings of the Torah and pagan religions.
- 3. Opposed Nehemiah during the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem.

4. Samaritans were hated by the Jews.
5. Many Samaritans believed in Jesus because the testimony of the woman at the well.

**C. Culture of Judea: Israel's religious and political center.**

1. Jerusalem was both the religious and the political seat of Israel.
2. Location of the (2nd) Temple.
3. The center of Jewish religion and culture.
4. Even though Rome ruled during the times of Jesus, the Sanhedrin made many of the local decisions affecting daily life.
5. Jews from all over the world traveled to Jerusalem during key feasts.
6. The religious elite rejected Jesus as the Messiah.

## **X. THE CHARACTERS IN JESUS' LIFE**

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**A. Twelve Disciples/Apostles: The twelve ordinary men whom God used in an extraordinary manner.**

1. Simon Peter: fisherman, impulsive. Later became a bold preacher of the gospel.
2. James (son of Zebedee): fisherman, ambitious, short-tempered but deeply loyal to Jesus.
3. John: fisherman, brother to James, ambitious but later very loving, the "disciple whom Jesus loved."
4. Andrew: fisherman, Peter's brother, eager to bring others to Jesus.
5. Philip: fisherman, had a questioning attitude.
6. Bartholomew (Nathaneal): unknown occupation, very honest and straightforward.
7. Matthew (Levi): tax collector, was a despised outcast because of his occupation.
8. Thomas (the Twin): unknown occupation, courageous but doubtful.
9. James (son of Alphaeus): unknown occupation, not much else known about him.
10. Thaddaeus: unknown occupation, not much else known about him.
11. Simon the Zealot: unknown occupation, extremely patriotic.
12. Judas Iscariot: unknown occupation: treacherous and greedy.<sup>39</sup>

**B. Pharisees: A Jewish sect that accepted the written and oral law.**

1. Origin: 2nd Century B.C., possibly during the Hasmonean Dynasty.<sup>40</sup>
2. Accepted both the Torah and the oral tradition<sup>41</sup> as inspired and authoritative.
3. Oral law consisted of many "fence laws" (H. *seyagim*, "fences." Also called *gezerah* (g' ZAY ruh), which were developed to avoid breaking one of the Mosaic Laws.<sup>42</sup>

4. Codified separate body of 613 laws<sup>43</sup> regarding how to keep the Mosaic Law.
5. Emphasized the ethical rather than the theological in their teaching.

**C. Sadducees: A Jewish sect that accepted only the written law.**

1. Origin: Around 166-163 B.C.
2. A small but powerful wealthy group who stood to gain financially by cooperating with the Romans.
3. Controlled the high priesthood and the chief priests.
4. Accepted only the Torah as authoritative Scripture.
5. Attributed everything to free will rather than divine sovereignty.
6. Denied the resurrection and future life.
7. Thought the Temple could also be used as a place of business.

**D. Scribes: Interpreters of the Law.**

1. Origin: Unknown but they are believed to have come to prominence during the Jewish Exile.
2. They were the "lawyers" or professional interpreters of the Law.
3. They denied Jesus' authority to interpret the Law and rejected him because he did not keep all of their traditions.

**E. Herodians: Supporters of Herod the Great.**

1. Origin: ca. 37—4B.C., during the reign of Herod the Great.
2. Supporters of Herod who were men of standing and influence.
3. Joined with Sadducees (Roman supporters) in opposing Jesus because he introduced a kingdom that neither sect wanted.

**F. Essenes: A Jewish sect characterized by asceticism.**

1. Essenes were characterized by asceticism, celibacy, and joint holding of property.
2. They flourished from the 2nd century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D.
3. Origin: Same as Pharisees.
4. Essenes felt that the Pharisees were not strict enough.
5. Attributed all things to divine sovereignty.
6. Strictly observed purity laws of the Torah.

**G. Zealots: A warlike group that strongly opposed Roman rule.**

1. Zealots were a radical, warlike, ardently patriotic group of Jews in Judea, particularly prominent from 69 A.D. to 81 A.D.

2. They advocated the violent overthrow of Roman rule and vigorously resisting the efforts of the Romans and their supporters to heathenize the Jews.
3. Origin: ca. 6 B.C during the reign of Herod the Great.
4. Strongly loyal to Jewish traditions.
5. Opposed Roman rule and Roman taxation claiming allegiance to God alone.
6. Wiped out at Masada in A.D. 73.

## **XI. WHEN AND HOW WILL JESUS CHRIST RETURN?**

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### **A. There will be a sudden, personal, visible, bodily return of Christ.**

1. Believers are told by Jesus to be ready (faithfully obeying him) for his return—his return will be unexpected (Matt. 24:44).
2. Jesus himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God (1 Thess. 4:16).
3. Every eye will see him when he returns (Rev. 1:7).
4. Jesus will return in the same way that he ascended into heaven (Acts 11:1).
5. When Jesus appears we shall be like him (1 John 3:2).
6. Jesus will take believers to himself forever (John 14:3).

### **B. We should eagerly long for Jesus Christ's return.**

1. We are to await eagerly for Jesus' return (Titus 2:12-13; Rev. 22:20).
2. We are to be patient for Jesus' return (Jas. 5:7-8)
3. We are to live in continuous fellowship with Jesus so that when he returns we will not shrink back from him in shame (1 John 2:28).
4. The more we are caught up in the good things of this life, the less we may long for his return.

### **C. We do not know when Jesus Christ will return.**

1. Nowhere in the Scripture are believers commanded to figure out the date of Christ's return. In fact, there is a great deal of Scriptural warning against date setting (Matt. 24:36, 42, 44; 25:13; Mark 13:32-33; Acts 1:7).
2. Jesus will return when he is not expected (Matt. 24:44; Luke 12:40; 1 Thess. 5:1-2).
3. There has been over 50 known predictions about when Jesus will return, dates ranging from A.D. 365 to 2011.<sup>44</sup>

### **D. There is disagreement over the details of future events.**

1. The nature of the millennium.

2. The relationship of Christ's return to the millennium.
3. The sequence of Christ's return and the great tribulation period.
4. The salvation of the Jewish people—and the relationship between Jews who are saved and the church.

**E. But all evangelicals agree on the final results of Christ's return**

1. The judgment of unbelievers (Rev. 20:11-15; 2 Pet. 2:9; 3:7).
2. Final reward of believers (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12; Luke 6:23; 1 Cor. 3:12-15).
3. Believers will live with Christ in new heavens and a new earth for all eternity (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1; Isa. 65:17; 66:22; John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:17).
4. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit will reign and will be worshipped in a never-ending kingdom with no more sin, sorrow, or suffering (Rev. 21:1-4, 23; 22:3).

## XII. WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

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### ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> For more on this please see Paul E. Little, [Know Why You Believe: connecting Faith and Reason](#), (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Publishing, 1999) 32-33.
- <sup>2</sup> Josh McDowell, [More Than a Carpenter](#) (Wheaton: Tyndale Publishers, 1973) 10
- <sup>3</sup> Grudem, Wayne. [Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine](#) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1994, 2000) 534.
- <sup>4</sup> Theologians use the term "theanthropic" to describe this. The word is a Greek term meaning God-man. Hypostatic union, meaning "substance", "nature", essence" is another term used by Bible scholars.
- <sup>5</sup> Propitiation: something which appeased God's wrath.
- <sup>6</sup> Grudem, 581.
- <sup>7</sup> Paul. E. Little, [Know What you Believe: Connecting Faith and Truth](#) (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Publishing, 1999) 58.
- <sup>8</sup> For more on this, see Millard J. Erickson's, [Christian Theology](#), Chapters 39-40.
- <sup>9</sup> Josh McDowell, [The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999) 250
- <sup>10</sup> Josh McDowell, [More Than a Carpenter](#), 61.
- <sup>11</sup> Rose Publishing, [Christianity, Cults, and Religions](#) (Torrence: Rose Publishing, 2008).
- <sup>12</sup> Rose Publishing, [Christianity, Cults, and Religions](#) (Torrence: Rose Publishing, 2008).
- <sup>13</sup> Avatar: in Hindu mythology an avatar is the descent of a deity to the earth in an incarnate form or some manifest shape; the incarnation of a god.
- <sup>14</sup> *Tertium quid* is Latin meaning a third person or thing.
- <sup>15</sup> William Mounce, [Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words](#), 366.
- <sup>16</sup> Mounce, 109.
- <sup>17</sup> Wikipedia [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manger>].
- <sup>18</sup> The KJV (1611) was based on the *Textus Receptus* (1516).
- <sup>19</sup> William D. Mounce, [Basics of Biblical Greek](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993, 2003), 43.
- <sup>20</sup> Gary DeLashmutt, *The Birth of Christ: The Visit of the Magi* [<http://www.xenos.org/teachings/topical/birth/gary/birth-5.htm>].
- <sup>21</sup> DeLashmutt.
- <sup>22</sup> Wikipedia [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myrrh>].
- <sup>23</sup> Mark Perkins, *The Person and Work of Jesus Christ*, Grace Bible Notes [<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/loc/loc.html>].
- <sup>24</sup> DeLashmutt.
- <sup>25</sup> In the 6th century, Dionysius Exiguus proposed to make the birth of Jesus the basis of the calendar but he miscalculated the death of Herod.
- <sup>26</sup> It might sound strange to suggest that Jesus Christ was born *no later* than 4 B.C. since B.C. means 'before Christ.' But our modern calendar which splits time between B.C. and A.D. was not invented until A.D. 525. At that time, Pope John the First asked a monk named Dionysius to prepare a standardized calendar for the western Church. Unfortunately, poor Dionysius missed the *real* B.C./A.D. division by at least four years! Daniel B. Wallace, Th.M, Ph.D., [The Birth of Jesus Christ](#) [[http://www.bible.org/page.php?page\\_id=656](http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=656)].
- <sup>27</sup> Wallace.
- <sup>28</sup> Mark Perkins, [The Person and Work of Jesus Christ](#) [<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/homepage.html>].
- <sup>29</sup> The confusion over the name of Joseph's father in Matt. 1 and Luke 3 encouraged explanations to reconcile the two genealogies. One suggestion assigns Luke's genealogy to Jesus' mother Mary, and not to his father Joseph at all. So Jacob would be the father of Joseph, as listed in Matt. 1, and Heli the father of Mary. Therefore, no contradiction
- <sup>30</sup> Perkins.

- <sup>31</sup> Hidden Treasures [<http://www.lifeofchrist.com/life/birth/childhood.asp>].
- <sup>32</sup> [http://yadayahweh.net/jesus\\_speak.htm](http://yadayahweh.net/jesus_speak.htm)
- <sup>33</sup> Brian Knowles, What Language Did Jesus Speak? [<http://www.godward.org/Hebrew%20Roots/did%20jesus%20speak%20hebrew.htm>]
- <sup>34</sup> Brian Knowles, What Language Did Jesus Speak? [<http://www.godward.org/Hebrew%20Roots/did%20jesus%20speak%20hebrew.htm>]
- <sup>35</sup> Lingua Franca <<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/linguafranca/stories/2004/1066733.htm>>
- <sup>36</sup> Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishing House. Life Application Bible: New International Version. Wheaton, Grand Rapids: Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishing House, 1991) 1792.
- <sup>37</sup> Jesus at the Right Time, (Galatians 4:1-7), Dash House [<http://www.dashhouse.com/sermons/2002/AM/021208.htm>]
- <sup>38</sup> Wikipedia [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bar\\_mitzvah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bar_mitzvah)]
- <sup>39</sup> *Life Application Bible New International Version*, 1734-5.
- <sup>40</sup> The origin of the Pharisees is probably to be found in the "Hasidim" of the Maccabean period. These were the Jews who remained zealously faithful to their religion despite the pressures of hellenization and religious persecution. They were organized in small brotherhoods or fellowships, and for the most part kept aloof from the ruling powers in Jerusalem. They steadily gained authority among the majority of the Jewish people, however, as a result of their controlling interest in the establishment and development of synagogues throughout the Jewish world. According to one source, by the end of the period there were 400 synagogues in the city of Jerusalem alone, and the Pharisees had a powerful voice in the Sanhedrin. When Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed in 70CE, the Pharisees were the driving force in the Yavneh (Jamnia) community where Palestinian Judaism survived. According to contemporary Jewish literature there were 6000 Pharisees in Herod's reign (40-4 BCE), and 400 synagogues in Jerusalem alone. <<http://www.philtar.ac.uk/encyclopedia/judaism/pharis.html>>. Accessed October 2011.
- <sup>41</sup> The Oral Law is a legal commentary on the Torah, explaining how its commandments are to be carried out. It was based on the understanding that common sense suggests that some sort of oral tradition was always needed to accompany the Written Law, because the Torah alone, even with its 613 commandments, is an insufficient guide to Jewish life. The term "oral law" is used to denote the laws and statutes which, in addition to the Pentateuch, God gave to Moses. According to the rabbinical interpretation of Ex. 34:27, the words indicate that besides the written law—God gave orally to Moses other laws and maxims, as well as verbal explanations of the written law, telling him not to record these teachings, but to deliver them to the people by word of mouth <<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com>>.
- <sup>42</sup> R. Adin Steinsaltz, Essential Talmud (Jackson, TN: Persius Books, 1976) 111. See also <http://www.servantsnews.com/sn9712/s71211.htm>.
- <sup>43</sup> 613 Commandments (Mitzvot), including the Ten Commandments. They were most likely codified by Pharisees of which 60% are negative and 40% are positive <<http://www.jewfaq.org/halakhah.htm>>.
- <sup>44</sup> See The Date Setters Diary by Todd Strandberg <<http://www.raptureready.com/rr-date-setters.html>>. Accessed August 17, 2011.