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Philosophy & Religion Religious Personages & Scholars Jesus (born c. 6–4 bce, Bethlehem—died c. 30 ce, Jerusalem) was a religious leader revered in Christianity, one of the world’s major religions. He is regarded by most Christians as the Incarnation of God. The history of Christian reflection on the teachings and nature of Jesus is examined in the article Christology. Ancient Jews usually had only one name, and, when greater specificity was needed, it was customary to add the father’s name or the place of origin. Thus, in his lifetime Jesus was called Jesus son of Joseph (Luke 4:22; John 1:45, 6:42), Jesus of Nazareth (John 10:38), or Jesus the Nazarene (Mark 1:24; Luke 24:19). After his death he came to be known as Christ, a name that is not originally a name, but was derived from the Greek word christos, which translates Hebrew term messiah (Messiah), meaning “the anointed one.” Many Jews believed that Jesus’ fulfillment of the anointed son of King David, whom some Jews expected were the fortunes of Israel. Passages such as Acts of the Apostles 2:36 show that some early Christian writers knew that the Christ was properly a title, but in many passages of the New Testament, including those in the letters of the Apostle Paul, the name and title are combined and used together as Jesus’ name: Jesus Christ or Christ, Jesus (Romans 1:1; 3:24). Paul sometimes simply used Christ as Jesus’ name (e.g., Romans 5:6). Although born in Bethlehem, according to Matthew and Luke, Jesus was a Galilean from Nazareth, a village near Sepphoris, one of the two major cities of Galilee (Tiberias was the other). He was born to Joseph and Mary sometime between 6 bce and shortly before the death of Herod the Great (Matthew 2; Luke 1:5) in 4 bce. According to Matthew and Luke, however, Joseph was only legally his father. They report that Mary was a virgin when Jesus was conceived and that she “was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 1:18; cf. Luke 1:35). Joseph is said to have been a carpenter (Matthew 13:55)—that is, a craftsman who worked with his hands—and, according to Mark 6:3, Jesus also became a carpenter. Luke (2:41–52) states that Jesus as a youth was precociously learned, but there is no other evidence of his childhood or early life. As a young adult, he went to be baptized by the prophet John the Baptist and shortly thereafter became an itinerant preacher and healer (Mark 1:2–28). In his mid-30s Luke had a short public career, lasting perhaps less than one year, during which he attracted considerable attention. Sometime between 29 and 33 ce—possibly 30 ce—he went to escape Passover in Jerusalem, where his entrance, according to the Gospels, was triumphant and infused with eschatological significance. (While there was a Passover festival, the disciples became confused about the date of the appearance of the resurrected Jesus.) The converted and new religion, Christianity, started with Jesus Christ, mostly through mystery, but you’ll find that the Gospels are not as mysterious as you think. They are full of Bible study lessons! Please read Luke 2:21-40 before starting GraspingGod.com’s free Bible study lessons, #2.03.Pastor’s lesson: Mark’s Mother of Jesus, #2.02.Preliminary Bible Study Questions-1 What was Jesus’ Jew?2) In what town was Jesus raised?3) What language did Jesus speak?4) What was the early life of Jesus as a child mysterious because of the near silence of the Scriptures. A possible reason for this is that Christians are called to focus on the nature and word of Christ, and not on the details of his humanity. I’ll do my best to collect what little information is known to us about the childhood of Jesus and put it together in this Bible study. Was Jesus a Jew? We’ll start a study on the early life of Jesus by answering a question about his heritage. Was Jesus a Jew? The Christ child was a Jew, yes, both in blood and religion. I once had a news reporter ask, “Jesus wasn’t a Jew, was he?” I responded by saying, “Yes, and that Jew lived the greatest love story ever known to mankind.” It turned out that the reporter was a Jew. He found the information intriguing. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was in the line of King David of Israel. Jesus’ biological father, of course, was the Holy Spirit, therefore Jesus’ paternal genetics are unclear. I guess it’s possible that the Holy Spirit could have used Joseph’s seed, but only after supernaturally removing the sin nature. Let’s ponder that for a moment, but then move on to what we do know. The answer is that Jesus’ mother and step-father, Joseph were fully Jewish and they firmly educated him in the religion of Judaism, as well. Please keep in mind, though, that Jesus is the Savior of ALL mankind, not only the Messianic Jews. Jesus’ Hometown We do know some things about Jesus’ neighborhood that we can share.

Nazareth was a small town despised by mostly everyone during this time. For instance, “Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found him, we have found him!’” (John 1:45). The Nazarenes were a sect of Jews who were perfect God-fearing Jews. They performed God’s will and the same thing that the local synagogues were his teachers. Joseph and Mary could possibly have required a scroll work on the Scriptures, as well, giving Jesus extra teaching, as well. When Jesus reached age 12 he would have become a Son of the Law, meaning he was a responsible free moral agent. What Language Did Jesus Speak? What language did Jesus speak when he was young? That is such a great question and we have a solid answer for you. He didn’t only read and speak in Hebrew, which was his native tongue. Aramaic had been spoken since the Babylon captivity days, so many Jews spoke Aramaic and we know for a fact Jesus did, as well. Nazareth was in the land of Galilee, which had a huge Greek presence. Therefore, Jesus learned the Greek language, too. The early life of Jesus found him proficient in three major languages of his day - Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Learning so many languages also lends to the growth and development of a person’s mind. Jesus was a Carpenter Jesus learned carpentry from his step-father, Joseph. You may have seen the bumper-stickers, it’s true, Jesus was a carpenter! Records from Justin Martyr, who lived soon after Jesus Christ, revealed that Jesus was an outstanding craftsman of wooden farming tools. What would you expect from such a gifted and gracious young man? Many people came to him for yokes and plows. This physical trade would have formed the young Jesus into a strong man. He also acquired much of his wisdom and relational skills from his line of work. The plan of God had Jesus settle into this community with this occupation, in order to humble him. Because of all these things in the early life of Jesus, he was prepared for his future ministry. Don’t you enjoy learning about Jesus Christ? Studying his personal growth is just one way of knowing him better and loving him more. I hope you enjoy hearing about the early life of Jesus, as well. Grasp This! The early life of Jesus instilled many things into his life, which would be beneficial to a successful ministry. He grew up amongst common folks and could thereby relate to them. He had a strong religious education, which developed his understanding and wisdom. He learned three languages so he could personally communicate with many people. He was raised in a certain parenting style, with many experiences along the way. Our education and development led us to where we stand right now. God wants to meet us right where we are. Our lives are under his sovereign care and he wants us to join his family through faith. You can help God’s kingdom grow, too, just like Jesus Christ did. The early life of Jesus gives parents a wonderful model in which to raise their children. We need to offer our Christian children a strong education, with much Scripture learning. Memorization work is essential, so that a child’s mind is strengthened and expanded. Children need to be raised with firm discipline and strong morals. They need good exercise and physical strength-building activities. Jesus’ life is a great example for us to follow, even his early life for raising our kids. Join our next lesson: Jesus’ Family #2.04Bible Study Questions:1) Notice the care given to Jesus from both God and his family. Does the supernatural intervention in protecting the Messiah-King grow your faith in Jesus Christ? 2) I struggle with two prophecies that discuss the Messiah’s physical appearance, Psalm 45:2 and Isaiah 53:2. Read and discuss.) 3) In learning the Jewish teaching methods that were employed for children in Jesus’ era, how can we better educate the Christian children of today?Inspirational Bible Verses:When they couldn’t find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there. Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.His parents didn’t know what to think. “Son,” his mother said to him, “why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere.” “But why did you need to search?” he asked. “Didn’t you know that I must be in my Father’s house?” But they didn’t understand what he meant: Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart.Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and all the people.Luke 2:48-52John 1:14-18Edwards QuotesJesus was God seeking himself out in language humanity could understand. S.D. GordonPrayers of Thanksgiving:Dear Jesus,You came and lived like we livebut perfectly.You fought temptations like we fightbut prevailed.You were human in every waybut sinless.You grew and learned and lovedbut were despised.You have taken our sin upon youbut ignored by most.Father, forgive us. Please show us our error, and lead us to repentance.Amen.After sharing this Bible study lesson on Facebook or Twitter below download your FREE printable Bible Study Lessons (pdf version): The Early Life Of Jesus, Lesson 2.03. Please Donate to GG.com to help fund the early life of Jesus Christ page. Return to GraspingGod.com Homepage.Special Note: I’m grateful for Big Book Media & Free Bible Images for the use of their photos for The Early Life of Jesus Bible study lesson. Chart - The Life of Jesus in Chronological Order The Birth of John the Baptist October, 7 B.C. Jerusalem Gabriel Announces John’s Birth (Lk 1:5-25) The History of the Birth of Jesus The Genealogy of Jesus (Mat 1:1-17; Lk 3:23-38). Nazareth July, 6 B.C. Gabriel Announces to Mary (Lk 1:26-38). Mary’s Visits Elizabeth (Lk 1:39-56). An Angel Comes to Joseph (Mat 1:18-25). Bethlehem The Decree of Augustus Caesar and the Birth of Christ (Lk 2:1-7). The First Visitors - Shepherds (Lk 2:8-20). The Second Visitors - Magi (Mat 2:1-12). Jerusalem April, 5 B.C. Jesus is Circumcised and Presented in the Temple (Lk 2:21-38). Egypt March, 4 B.C. Out of Egypt (Mat 2:13-23). Herod the Great Dies Nazareth Jesus’ Early Years Jerusalem April, 8 A.D. The Boy Jesus at the Temple (Lk 2:41-52). The Beginning of His Ministry The Jordan September, 25 A.D. Jesus is Baptized in the Jordan (Mat 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-23). The Wilderness The Temptation in the Wilderness (Mat 4:1-11; Mk 1:12, 13; Lk 4:1-2). The First Disciples (Lk 9:1-10). Bethabara The Testimony of John (Jn 1:19-34). The Wine Jars (Jn 1:35-51). Cana Turning Water to Wine (Jn 2:1-12). Jesus Visits Jerusalem The First Passover Jerusalem April, 26 A.D. Jesus was 30 Years of Age, A House of Merchandise (Jn 2:19-25). Unleavened Bread (Mat 3:1-21). Jesus Baptized (Jn 3:22, with 4:2). Galilee He Departed Again to Galilee (Mat 4:12; Mk 1:14; Lk 4:14). Samaritan The Woman at the Well (Jn 4:4-24). Jesus’ Ministry in Galilee Galilee He Taught in Their Synagogues (Mk 4:7; Mk 1:14, 15; Lk 4:14, 15; Jn 4:43-45). Nazareth A Certain Nobleman (Jn 4:46-54) Physician, Heal Yourself! (Mat 4:13-16; Lk 4:16-31). Sea of Galilee Peter, Andrew, James, and John (Mat 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:1-11). Galilee And Jesus Went About All Galilee - Teaching (Mat 4:23-25; Mk 1:35-39; Lk 4:42-44). A Man With an Unclean Spirit (Mk 1:21-28; Lk 4:31-37). Capernaum Simon’s Wife’s Mother Lay Sick (Mat 8:14-17; Mk 1:29-34; Lk 4:38-41). Then a Leper Came to Him (Mat 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-45; Lk 5:12-16). They Brought to Him a Paralytic (Mat 9:2-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26). Capernaum Matthew the Tax Collector (Mat 9:9; Mk 2:13, 14; Lk 5:27-28). The Second Passover April, 27 A.D. Jerusalem Healing at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath Day (Jn 5:1-47). Healing in the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day (Mat 12:9-14; Lk 6:6-11). And in His Name Gentiles Will Trust (Mat 12:15-21; Mk 3:7-12; Lk 11:20). And He Appointed Twelve (Mat 10:2-4; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6: 12-19). The Sermon on the Mount (Mat 5; Lk 6:20-49). A Certain Centurion’s Servant (Mat 8:5-13; Lk 7:1-10). Nain Raises the Dead Son at Nain (Lk 7:11-17). Who Are You Coming One? (Mat 11:2-19; Lk 7:18-35). My Yoke is Easy and My Burden is Light (Mat 11:20-30). Capernaum The Woman With the Alabaster Flask (Lk 7:36-50). Mary Called Magdalene (Lk 8:1-3). The Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (Mat 12:22-37; Mk 3: 19-30; Lk 11:14-20). Teacher, We Want to See a Sign From You (Mat 12:38-45; Lk 11:16-36). Aroue to You, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites (Lk 11:37-54). He Began to Say to His Disciples (Lk 12:1-59). Parable of the Fig Tree (Lk 13:6-9). Parable of the Sower (Lk 13:1-23). The Parables of the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, the Vineyard, the Tares, the Wheat, and the Net (Lk 13:18-30). The Parable of the Wineskins (Mat 9:10-17; Mk 2:15-22; Lk 5:27-39). Jesus’ Daughter and the Woman With the Issue of Blood (Mat 9:19-26; Mk 5:23-43; Lk 8:41-56). The Blind and the Mute (Lk 9:27-34). A Prophet is Not Without Honor Except . . . (Mat 13:53-58; Mk 6:1-6). He Was Moved With Compassion For Them (Mat 9:35-38) Sent His Disciples Out With Power and Authority (Mat 10; Lk 6:6-13; Lk 9:1-6). Mark the Evangelist (Mat 14:1, 2, 6-12; Mk 6:14-16, 21-29; Lk 9:7-9). 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crowd. The Roman soldiers whipped and beat Jesus, placed a crown of thorns on his head, and led him off to Mount Calvary.Jesus was crucified alongside two thieves, one at his left and the other at his right. Above his head was the charge against him, “King of the Jews.” At his feet were his mother, Mary, and disciple, Mary Magdalene. The Gospels describe various events that occurred during the last three hours of his life, including the taunting by the soldiers and the crowd, Jesus’ agony and outbursts, and his final words. While Jesus was on the cross, the sky darkened. Immediately upon his death, an earthquake erupted, tearing the temple’s curtain from top to bottom. A soldier confirmed his death by sticking a spear into his side, which produced only water. He was taken down from the cross and buried in a nearby tomb.Many scholars argue Jesus died in 30 CE, though some religious experts and believers say his death happened in the year 33. Given this, Jesus was likely in his 30s or perhaps 40 years old when he died. His crucifixion is commemorated on the Christian holiday of Good Friday.Three days after his death, Jesus’ tomb was found empty. He had risen from the dead and appeared first to Mary Magdalene, per the Gospels of Mark and John, then to his mother, Mary. They both informed the disciples, who were in hiding, and later, Jesus appeared to them and told them not to be afraid. During this brief time, he beseeched his disciples to go into the world and preach the gospel to all humanity. Today, Christians celebrate Jesus’ resurrection on the Easter holiday.After 40 days, Jesus led his disciples to Mount Olivet and spoke his final words to them, saying they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit, before he ascended into heaven. While there is no physical or archeological evidence that Jesus existed, he has been written about in non-Christian texts dating back 50 to 70 years after his death. Jewish historian Flavius Josephus made two references to Jesus in his history of Judaism, The Antiquities of the Jews, circa 93 CE, calling him the “so-called Christ.” Nearly 20 years later, Roman historian and politician Publius Cornelius Tacitus mentioned the crucifixion of “Christus” in Annals of Imperial Rome, while Roman Governor Pliny the Younger also made references to early Christians worshipping Jesus in a letter to the Emperor Trajan. Put your sword back into its place; for those who live by the sword, die by the sword. [Matthew 26:52]“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth... Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy... Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. [Matthew 5:5-9]But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. [Luke 6:27-32]Blessed are you who are poor for yours is the kingdom of God. [Luke 6:20-21]Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. [Matthew 25:34-36]You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and His rule. [Matthew 5:3]There’s no “ifs” among believers. Anything can happen. [Mark 9:23]Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me— watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly. [Matthew 11:28-30]Embrace this God-life. Embrace it and nothing will be too much for you. [Mark 11:22]Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. [Matthew 4:17]Do not think that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. [Matthew 5:17]And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. [Mark 3:24]Fact Check: We strive for accuracy and fairness. If you see something that doesn’t look right, contact us!Biography.com EditorsStaff Editorial Team and ContributorsThe Biography.com staff is a team of people-obsessed and news-hungry editors with decades of collective experience. We have worked as daily newspaper reporters, major national magazine editors, and as editors-in-chief of regional media publications. Among our ranks are book authors and award-winning journalists. 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