

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

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BIBLICAL STUDIES

Abstract

Jesus the Christ is perhaps is the most influential person to ever have been born. The fact that a man would claim to be God in the flesh has inspired, mystified and confused people for thousands of years. The fact that God himself came in the form of a man to save people from their sin begs the question why? As humans we are continually struggling with our existence and our purpose for life. To have the Gospel message explained to us, is that God has laws that everyone has broken and the penalty is death; but God sent Jesus to die in our place and keep those laws so that through him we might be perfect in God's sight.

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CHAPTER I

”WHY WAS JESUS BORN?”

In the first book of the Bible Genesis, Moses writes about the first humans that were created, Adam and Eve. They were given dominion in the garden and are told by God they can eat of every tree except for the “Tree of the knowledge and of good and evil”. Through their act of disobedience they eat from the tree as they are tricked by Satan and sin has entered in the world.

Through that act of disobedience they are both expelled from the garden and their spirit is separated from God. They were warned that the soul that sins shall surely die. Although they didn't suffer immediate punishment other than expulsion from the garden, their physical bodies would eventually die. The fellowship that Adam and Eve had once enjoyed with God the Father was now cut off.

God the Father immediately sets into motion a plan to redeem lost souls that have been disobedient to His laws. The best way that I can describe it; is that God made the laws which He knew no one could keep but the law is there to show us that we need Him.

In order to have fellowship with the Father we must be totally perfect and sinless to be in His presence. In God's mercy and kindness total perfection is required to keep the law while He knew we were unable to keep the laws; He Himself came in the form of a man as Jesus. He not only made the law but as the first Adam sinned; Jesus became the second Adam; being without sin and was able to fulfill the whole law thereby keeping the covenant between God and man.

God created the law, man broke the law God came in the form of a man to fulfill the law and make us perfect and righteous through Jesus so that we may enjoy the fellowship that Adam and Eve had once enjoyed.

It is through that spiritual death that our relationship was cut off with God but when we put our faith in Jesus Christ and accept Him as paying our full penalty for the law; we are righteous as He is righteous and we can once again fellowship with the Father.

The reason I believe the Bible teaches that Jesus was born so that He could take our place and restore the fellowship that mankind had once enjoyed with the Father through the Spirit of grace.

Jesus was born to take our place and from the foundation of the world. God had His perfect plan; Jesus was born to die as a penalty for our sin.

The plan of redemption is that Adam forfeited his relationship with God and through the shed blood of Jesus, God restores fellowship with us.

CHAPTER II
“JESUS’ EARLY LIFE”

In the book of *Matthew chapter 1:18-24* we read the announcement of Christ’s birth to His mother Mary who was betrothed to Joseph. The Angel Gabriel appears and makes an announcement to Mary and tells her she will give birth to a son and his name will be Jesus or translated Immanuel which means “God with us”.

In Chapter 2 of *Matthew versus 16 through 23* we read that King Herrod orders all male children to be killed. The King fears that his throne is in danger but he is unaware that he is fulfilling an ancient prophecy from the book of *Jeremiah chapter 31:15*. The Angel of the Lord appears to Joseph and warns him to take Jesus and his mother to Egypt once again fulfilling an Old Testament prophecy in *Hosea 11:1*.

Not much is written in the New Testament about Jesus’s early life. The only other reference we see is when he was 12 years old in the book of *Luke chapter 2:41-50*. An instance is given here when Jesus and his family were separated as they returned from the Passover festivities in Jerusalem and Jesus is found in the synagogue.

The next milestone in Jesus’s life is when he is baptized by John the Baptist reference in the book of *Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-23 and Matthew 3:13-17*.

CHAPTER III

“JESUS’ MINISTRY AND MIRACLES”

Jesus’ ministry is based on the miracles that He performed. In *Luke 19:10* we read “*for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.*” NKJV and in Isaiah Chapter 61:1-4 I believe is the summation of why Jesus came. Primarily to minister to the brokenhearted, bind their wounds and heal them. He could do that because He is God and He saw past People’s sin into their soul.

There are several hundred passages in the Old Testament that speak about the first and second coming of the Messiah. Performing miracles would have been one of the identifying factors of the Messiah and His mission.

In the Gospel of *John 2:1-12* we are given insight into the very first miracle performed by Jesus as an adult. In Ralph Riggs book “The life of Christ”, (pages 49 – 50) the author alludes to the fact that the Mary had great faith to ask her son to turn water into wine and it was an exercise of faith on her part in believing that Jesus was the Messiah.

However, I do not want to dismiss the fact that maybe Jesus was somehow giving us insight of his supernatural power in a way possibly expressed when we partake of communion. In fact the wine or grape juice traditionally used in a communion ceremony is somehow related to Him being the bridegroom and the church being the bride.

During Jesus’ ministry He performed such miracles that transcend our minds and our dimension in such a supernatural fashion in our humanness we try to comprehend those miracles but sometimes we dismiss them all together because we cannot explain them.

As I read of the miracles Jesus performed; He never did the same miracle twice in the same way. He had true power and authority with all of heaven behind Him. He never doubted and always accomplished what He set out to accomplish and yet many still try to explain the miracles away with human understanding and terms.

Jesus likens the people of Israel as lost sheep and He is the good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (*John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. NKJV)*

The fact that Jesus had to perform miracles acknowledges the fact that there is a real oppressive devil that wants to keep people sick and in bondage. John 8:32 says that we are set free by the truth, truth is a person, love is a person and that person is Jesus Christ.

As I read the Gospel of John I read that Jesus feeds thousands, walks on water, heals people from leprosy, palsy, reads people minds , heals the blind, those who are deaf and mute, raised Lazarus from the dead and forgave people of their sins, amazing!

The Gospel's also show us that the disciples performed miracles as well. Jesus said that if we only *believed*, He would do greater things and we would marvel. *John 5:20 20 For the Father loves the Son, and tells him everything he is doing; and the Son will do far more awesome miracles than this man's healing. TLB*

We are joint heirs with Christ, (*Romans 8:17)* his ambassadors (*2 Cor 5:20)* and we too can do miracles in His name. (*Acts 3:6, Matthew 10:1, Matthew 28:18, Luke 9: 1-2, John 20:21)*

Jesus was unable to perform miracles in his hometown because he was an accepted due to their unbelief. (*Matthew 13:57)*

CHAPTER IV

“JESUS – THE MAN OF CONTROVERSY”

From the day of his birth to the day of his death Jesus caused a controversy (debate, argument, dispute arising from a conflict. (Webster Illustrated Contemporary, 1988) where ever He seemed to go.

The people in His own town called him “The carpenter's son”. Their inference was that Jesus was the illegitimate son of Joseph and Mary.

Jesus caused a controversy when He healed people on the Sabbath. He caused even more controversy when the Pharisees tried to trap Him when they asked Him to whom should they pay their taxes to. The Rulers of the synagogue also called into question His allegiance to the Jews when Jesus healed the centurion’s servant.

Jesus was criticized for hanging out with sinners, tax collectors, and women who were known adulterers and prostitutes. He really sent the religious people over the edge when He told people their sins were forgiven. The religious leaders told Him that only God can forgive sins. (*Mark 2:7*)

At some point during Jesus’ ministry I believe He was trying to drive home the point that the Pharisees had taken the law and added so many other things on to it, to keep the religious leaders happy, that they forgot to serve God in the process. Their hearts had become hard and when the true and living Messiah had come to earth. The nation of Israel witnessed these miraculous signs that the Old Testament had spoken about, many missed it.

One thing that I have learned is that the religious spirit has so much pride it cannot be taught, it will not seek truth it only seeks to control and to devour those that do not fall into line.

With that said, an elaborate plot was forged to kill Jesus. Not all of the Sanhedrin agreed to this illegal trial but it went forward. Jesus was arrested, tortured and submitted to an illegal trial that in the end he would be crucified. However, he said no one takes my life I laid down and he has the power to raise it up on the last day! (*John 10:18*)

Through Jesus' ministry, death, burial and resurrection from the dead this shows us that God loves us. Since Jesus was our substitute and took the punishment for our sins and crimes through His shed blood we can now enjoy fellowship with the Father that was cut off by the act of disobedience in the Garden of Eden.

Jesus tells us that when we put our faith and trust in Him, He will give us eternal life.

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