

New Testament Books



Chapter 31

Matthew 1-3

The Story so Far

See chapter 30

Objectives

- To introduce the Gospels and Jesus
- To teach the significance of His birth and names
- To explain His baptism

Connections

- Prophets predicted His birth
- Jesus is the promised Rescuer-Ruler
- Through King Jesus, God's Kingdom will come

Summary

Jesus is the promised Rescuer-Ruler.

The King is Here!

Introduction to Jesus

No one has had a bigger influence on world history than the person of Jesus. The Bible is still the best selling book in the world. Jesus has influenced both western and eastern cultures. The western calendar is set to the date of His birth. His life is the most interesting life of any religious leader. His death is the most strange and amazing death, and no other religious or philosophical leader has equalled His resurrection from the dead.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

These are the first four books of the New Testament and they record the life of Jesus Christ. Matthew and John were both followers of Jesus and wrote about His life after He went back to heaven. Mark and Luke were friends with eyewitnesses of Jesus and they recorded the life of Jesus from speaking with those who lived with Jesus. These four books are accurate, reliable and truthful records of the life of the historical Jesus.

Jesus' life - birth to 30 years old

Jesus was born in a town called Bethlehem, but was brought up in a place called Nazareth. The Bible records very little about Jesus after His birth until the age of 30 years old. We are only told one story about His life as a boy. The only other thing we know is that Jesus worked as a carpenter for many years. Then at the age of 30 years old, Jesus went round the country of Israel telling people that the Kingdom of God was near. He explained who He was, why He came, and what it meant to follow Him.

A royal birth (Matthew 1:1-17)

Jesus is from the family line of Abraham and David, which means that He is a King. God's Kingdom was promised to Abraham; it reached its highest point with David, and then its lowest point with the exile. But after the exile comes the promised King – Jesus Christ (Christ = Messiah = Anointed One). God's Kingdom has come because the King is here.

A unique birth (Matthew 1:18-25)

1. A virgin becomes pregnant by the Holy Spirit v18

Before Mary has sex with her husband-to-be she becomes pregnant with a child. This is a miraculous act of God. God does this by the power of His Holy Spirit (The Holy Spirit is the third person of God). The reason Jesus does not have a human father is because He must be a perfect human being. If He were descended from Adam, then He would have Adam's rebellious nature. But as we'll see later in the Bible, Jesus is a perfect human being, and that's why the Holy Spirit made Mary pregnant.

2. Jesus' birth is predicted before it happens v22-23

Through a prophet called Isaiah God predicted that Jesus would be born through a virgin. This prediction was made 700 years before it happens. No other religious leader has had such predictions made about His birth.

Naming the King (Matthew 1:21, 23)

The name "Jesus" really means, "Yahweh saves" or "Yahweh rescues". Yahweh is God's name in the Old Testament. This shows us that Jesus is the Rescuer that God promised from the very beginning of the Bible. But more importantly, Jesus' name tells us that the Rescuer is God Himself.

Jesus is God. The Son of God (second person of God) becomes a human being and lives on earth with people. This is why one of Jesus' names is "Immanuel – God with us".

Substitution (Matthew 3:13-17)

Baptism is a symbolic event for people who want to repent of their sins. The word "repent" means "to change direction – 180 degrees". It means a change of mind and heart. To "repent" means to stop living life your way and turn to live life God's way. Those who repent get baptised. Baptism is a symbol of what has happened in your heart. So the question is, why does Jesus get baptised?

Jesus does not need to be baptised because He lives a perfect life in obedience to His Father in heaven. But Jesus gets baptised to show that He is taking the place of people who do need to repent. This is the first sign we see that Jesus is a substitute for rebels.

Jesus is the promised Rescuer-Ruler.



Think it through & discuss

1. How do we know Jesus is a King?
2. What is unique about His birth and names?
3. What does Jesus' baptism symbolise?