

An Introduction of Jesus

Establishing the identity of Jesus

- John began his gospel by identifying Jesus as God and being with God in the beginning. He is identified as the life giving creator that became flesh and dwelt among us. John testified that he saw the glory of Jesus, God's Son ([John 1:1-5, 14-18](#)).
- Both Matthew and Luke provide the genealogy of Jesus identifying Him a direct descendent of David and the rightful heir to the throne of Israel ([Matt 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-37](#)).
- An angel of the Lord appeared to both Joseph and the virgin Mary revealing that a son would be born to her that would be conceived by the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of prophecy. This Son would be named, Jesus, and would be called the Son of God ([Matt 1:18-24; Luke 1:26-38](#)).
- Magi from the east worshipped Jesus as the King of the Jews and the shepherds were informed by an angel of the birth of the Messiah ([Matt 2:1-12; Luke 2:8-14](#)).
- Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and God audibly identifying Jesus as His Son ([Matt 3:17; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:21-22](#)).
- John the Baptist clearly testified that Jesus was the Son of God who had come to take away the sin of the world ([John 1:15; 19-34](#)).
- At the early age of twelve Jesus already understood that He was God's Son ([Luke 2:41-52](#)).

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| • Read Luke 2:22-38 | What was the significance of Jesus being presented to the Lord? |
| • Read Matt 1:1-17 | Why was the genealogy of Jesus presented at the beginning and why did it originate with Abraham? |

Identifying the role of John the Baptist

- The birth of John the Baptist was foretold by the angel Gabriel ([Luke 1:5-25](#))
- Zacharias, the father of John, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied ([Luke 1:67-79](#))
- The apostle John calls John the Baptist a witness to testify about the Light ([John 1:6-8](#)). John himself testified that he was not the light.
- John the Baptist began preaching repentance at the Jordan and baptized all who responded. People came from all over the hear him ([Matt 3:1-12; Mk 1:1-8; Lk 3:1-20](#))

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| • Read Luke 1:11-17 | What was to be the role of John? |
| • Read Luke 1:67-79 | Was this prophecy to be fulfilled during the life of John or in the future? |
| • Read John 1:14-34 | What was John's testimony about Jesus? |

The situations that threatened to destroy Jesus

The early life of Jesus was hazardous indeed as various situations threatened His life.

- Dangerous journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem for a pregnant woman due to the census ordered by Caesar Augustus ([Lk 2:1-6](#))
- Birth of Jesus in a stable rather than a home or inn ([Lk 2:7](#))
- The wrath of Herod to destroy Jesus after hearing about His birth ([Matt 2:13-18](#))
- Settled in Nazareth after a warning by God to avoid Archelaus ([Matt 2:19-23](#))

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read Rev 12:1-5 | Explain what was attempted by the dragon? |
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The temptation of Jesus ([Matt 4:1-11](#); [Mk 1:12-13](#); [Lk 4:1-13](#))

- Jesus was led to the wilderness and temptation by the Spirit
- The adversary of Jesus was Satan

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why was Satan tempting Jesus? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read Luke 4:13 | What does this statement imply? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read Heb 4:14-16 | What does the temptation of Jesus mean for us? |

Fulfillment of scripture

Matthew's gospel mentions scripture being fulfilled at least twelve times. This is more times than the other gospels combined. There is even more fulfillment of scripture not mentioned. Why did Matthew make the effort to point out the fulfillment of scripture? It was probably due to the fact that Matthew was writing his gospel for a predominantly Jewish audience and that fulfilled prophecy would add credibility to his message.

APPENDIX

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Read Luke 2:22-38 What was the significance of Jesus being presented to the Lord?

There were several things associated with the presentation of Jesus.

- It was in fulfillment of the Law. According to Lev. 12:1-4, after giving birth to a son, the woman was considered ceremonially unclean and not permitted to enter the sanctuary. After forty days her purification was complete and offerings made for her restoration to full communion. Also, since Jesus was Mary's firstborn son and not belonging to the tribe of Levi but of Judah, Jesus had to be redeemed by payment of five shekels of silver ([Ex 13:1-2](#); [Num 3:11-13](#); [18:16](#)).
- The identification of Jesus as the promised Messiah. The testimony of Simeon and Anna was clear and Spirit-led. It impacted Mary and Joseph and spread "to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem."

Read Matt 1:1-17 Why was the genealogy of Jesus presented at the beginning and why did it originate with Abraham?

The gospel of Matthew was written from the Jewish perspective for a Jewish audience to present Jesus as the promised Messiah. To give Jesus credibility Matthew began by identifying Jesus as a son of Abraham, a member of the Jewish race. It also identified Jesus as being in the line of David through His step-father, Joseph. He was one of their own. This genealogy was a powerful statement that validated what would follow about the life and ministry of Jesus.

Read Luke 1:11-17 What was to be the role of John?

The angel of the Lord proclaimed that John was to precede the Messiah to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord" by turning the people "back to the Lord their God." His message was to "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" and he baptized those that were confessing their sins ([Matt 3:1-6](#)). He is recorded in John 1:23 as describing himself as "voice of one crying in the wilderness" according to prophecy to prepare the way for the Lord ([Isa 40:3](#)).

Read Luke 1:67-79 Was this prophecy to be fulfilled during the life of John or in the future?

Both. Often we find prophecies that that apply to multiple time periods.

- Verses 67-70 speak of redemption and salvation which would come through Jesus as prophesied. Verses 76-79 speak specifically of the child, John, who would prepare the way for Jesus.
- Verses 71-75 refer to the Abrahamic covenant and ultimate freedom of Israel from her enemies.

Read John 1:14-34 What was John's testimony about Jesus?

- Jesus is of a higher rank than himself ([John 1:15,27,30](#)). The infinite as opposed to the finite. How could John possibly compare himself to the Lord? John even considered himself unworthy to even perform the humblest service of kneeling before Him to unloose His sandals to wash His feet.
- John testified that Jesus existed before him ([John 1:15, 30](#)). Although the ministry of Jesus followed that of John the claim is made that Jesus existed before him. If we consider what John knew of Jesus we can understand that John meant that Jesus had existed from eternity.
- Jesus is "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" ([John 1:29, 36](#)). John may have been referring to the lamb for the daily offering but was probably thinking of the lamb in Isaiah 53.

- Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit ([John 1:33](#)). This is an obvious reference to Pentecost which was less than two months away.
- John clearly testified that Jesus is the Son of God ([John 1:32-34](#)). He arrived at this conclusion upon seeing the Spirit descending and remaining on Jesus as instructions to him made it clear.

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Read Rev 12:1-5 Explain what was attempted by the dragon?

Three prominent entities are identified in this passage including, 1) the woman, 2) the dragon, and 3) the male child. The male child, identified in verse 5, is clearly the Christ who will eventually “rule all the nations with a rod of iron” ([Rev 19:15](#)). The woman probably refers to Israel as the source from which Christ came and is described as being in the pains of labor prior to His birth. The dragon is understood as being Satan who was intent on the destruction of Jesus, expressed in verse 4 as his plan to “devour her child.” As presented in item 3 above, there were factors which threatened the life of Jesus, primarily the action of Herod killing all the male children two years old and under in the vicinity of Bethlehem ([Matt 2:13-18](#)). Satan’s desire was to destroy Jesus!

Why was Satan tempting Jesus?

Satan attempted to discredit Jesus since he was unable to destroy Him. His effort was to present temptations to Jesus that would cause Him to sin. Surrendering to the seduction of Satan would disqualify Jesus to fulfill His purpose and leave mankind without hope. The first Adam fell to Satan’s deception but the second Adam would not!

Read Luke 4:13 What does this statement imply?

We learn by this statement that Satan hadn’t given up. Instead, he would monitor the situation looking for a foothold that would bring him victory. On several occasions the people reacted to statements of Jesus and sought to kill Him ([Lk 4:25-30](#); [John 8:59](#); [10:29-31](#)). Was Satan urging them on? Who was inciting the Jewish leadership to arrest Jesus and put Him to death? Satan intervened directly by entering into Judas ([Lk 22:3](#); [John 13:27](#)) to betray Jesus leading to the cross. Satan probably thought he had finally won.

Read Heb 4:14-16 What does the temptation of Jesus mean for us?

Jesus understands what we go through having been tempted Himself. He dealt with hunger, lack of sleep, not to mention direct attacks by Satan. He is sympathetic and compassionate toward us since He understands our weaknesses. Consequently, we can have confidence when approaching God for strength and encouragement or grace and mercy when we fail. We should never give up in the face of temptation!