



The Life of Jesus

READING FOR THIS LESSON:– Luke 2.

Jesus' early life

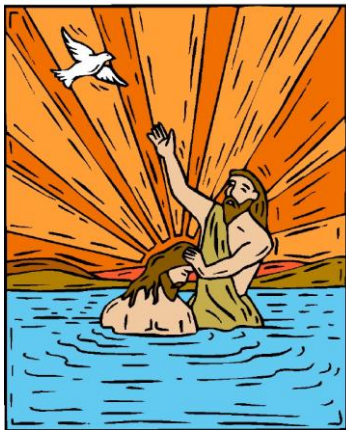
We read the story of the birth of Jesus in Matthew 1, 2 and Luke 2. As he grew up, the Bible records that Jesus,

"grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men"
(Luke 2:52).

Jesus grew up as any other normal boy, but with a much greater interest in the things of God – his Father. Some people believe that Jesus was actually God, but if that was true, then he would have to forget everything he ever knew and learn it all over again!



The Baptism of Jesus



When he was about 30 years old, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. This baptism was **not** a sprinkling with water - known today as "christening". The Bible clearly states in Mark 1:10, 11 that,

"As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

By being baptized himself, Jesus clearly showed just how important baptism is – and God also spoke in approval of His Son.

After his baptism, Jesus went,

"...into the desert to be tempted by the devil" (Matthew 4:1).

Jesus had been given the holy spirit at his baptism. He had great power and it would be a big temptation to try out this power – even if only to make bread out of stones to satisfy his hunger.

But Jesus knew that God's power must be used properly. By using the word "devil", the Bible is simply showing in a powerful way, the force of human nature in the temptations that come into our minds to do wrong.

Such temptations can come from our own thoughts or through suggestions from someone else. Jesus felt these temptations also – but he never gave in to them. We will look at the subject of the devil and satan in a later lesson.

The Ministry of Jesus

After his baptism in Jordan and temptation in the wilderness, we read that Jesus travelled








"..about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him." (Luke 8:1).

Because Jesus taught about the "kingdom of heaven ", people sometimes think that God's Kingdom is in heaven. But carefully read Matthew 5:5 where we read



*"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit **the earth.**"*

The Kingdom will be a heavenly Kingdom on earth because it is God's Kingdom.

Here are some of the things recorded in Matthew Chapters. 5-7 that Jesus taught the people they should do:-

-  love their enemies
-  not judge others
-  not look on a woman with lust as this was as bad as committing adultery
-  let their faith, like a light, shine out for others to see and follow
-  give to others in secret
-  not to worry about the things of this life, but trust in their heavenly Father to provide their necessary needs
-  seek **first** the Kingdom of God

In Matthew 7:13-23, Jesus warned

-  that few would find the way that leads to eternal life
-  that many would be disappointed when they found they had no place in God's Kingdom - even though they claimed to have done wonderful things in God's Name.

Matthew 13 is full of parables and you will notice that many of these are about the Kingdom. The parables in Luke 15 show us how much God wants us to give up this ungodly world and find His truth in the Bible.

The miracles of Jesus

Miracles of healing :- The gospel records are full of wonderful works of healing done by Jesus. He had pity on the people and wanted to help them. His power was so great that he could even raise the dead.

Other miracles :- Jesus turned water into wine, walked on the sea and fed thousands of people. He always used the power God had given him to help others - never to impress people or "show off ". The miracles were signs of his power and authority and gave opportunity for teaching and showing his kindness and compassion. They also clearly showed that Jesus truly was the Son of God as we read in John 3:2 and 20:30, 31.

Jesus' way of life

The Son of God was born in a stable - often he had nowhere to live. He said at one time,

"Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Luke 9:58).

The night before his death, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples - a servant usually did this job! But, although he was the Son of the great Creator of the whole world, Jesus did not live a life of ease and luxury. He taught us by his example to be humble and serve others.

Jesus spent much time in prayer to his heavenly Father. Even before he chose his twelve disciples, he spent all night in prayer! He did not pray openly to show people how good he was - he condemned the way the religious leaders did this. He also condemned their deceitful and false way of life - and told them so. He was never afraid to be unpopular.

Jesus' preparation for death

On one occasion Jesus took three of his disciples with him up into a mountain. We read about this in Luke 9:27-36. As he prayed there, he was "transfigured", or changed and his clothes shone brightly. Moses and Elijah appeared there with him and spoke about Jesus' coming death in Jerusalem. This vision of Jesus in glory was a foretaste of him in the Kingdom of God - and it really encouraged him as he faced his crucifixion in Jerusalem. Read the words of Hebrews 12:1, 2 for our encouragement in following the example of Jesus Christ.

Jesus knew from such Old Testament prophecies as Psalms 22, 69 and Isaiah 53 that he would die a painful death. He warned his disciples that he would have to suffer and die - but he told them also that he would later rise from the dead as we read in Luke 9:22.

The religious leaders were always trying to catch him out and Jesus knew they hated him. They tried twice to stone him, but

"his hour was not yet come" (John 7:30).

It was not yet time for him to be put to death, but

"When the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51).

Jesus was prepared to die. He knew that it was the only way he could save sinful people. But he could only help them in this way if he were sinless himself. He fought every day against temptation and sin - and he overcame! He has left us a wonderful example and he told his disciples that they should follow him. Read carefully Luke 9:23,

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."



Summary

1. Jesus was baptized by full immersion in the River Jordan.
2. He received God's holy spirit for strength and to do miracles.
3. Jesus went throughout the land of Israel teaching the things of the Kingdom of God.
4. Jesus taught the way we should live to be pleasing to God, and the need to overcome temptation and sin.
5. He died on the cross for our salvation.