

Who Was Jesus

Jesus

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Jesus (c. 6 to 4 BC – AD 30 or 33), also referred to as Jesus Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, and many other names and titles, was a 1st-century Jewish preacher and religious leader. He is the central figure of Christianity, the world's largest religion. Most Christians consider Jesus to be the incarnation of God the Son and awaited messiah, or Christ, a descendant from the Davidic line that is prophesied in the Old Testament. Virtually all modern scholars of antiquity agree that Jesus existed historically. Accounts of Jesus's life are contained in the Gospels, especially the four canonical Gospels in the New Testament. Since the Enlightenment, academic research has yielded various views on the historical reliability of the Gospels and how closely they reflect the historical Jesus.

According to Christian tradition, as preserved in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, Jesus was circumcised at eight days old, was baptized by John the Baptist as a young adult, and after 40 days and nights of fasting in the wilderness, began his own ministry. He was an itinerant teacher who interpreted the law of God with divine authority and was often referred to as "rabbi". Jesus often debated with his fellow Jews on how to best follow God, engaged in healings, taught in parables, and gathered followers, among whom 12 were appointed as his apostles. He was arrested in Jerusalem and tried by the Jewish authorities, handed over to the Roman government, and crucified on the order of Pontius Pilate, the Roman prefect of Judaea. After his death, his followers became convinced that he rose from the dead, and following his ascension, the community they formed eventually became the early Christian Church that expanded as a worldwide movement.

Christian theology includes the beliefs that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born of a virgin named Mary, performed miracles, founded the Christian Church, died by crucifixion as a sacrifice to achieve atonement for sin, rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven from where he will return. Commonly, Christians believe Jesus enables people to be reconciled to God. The Nicene Creed asserts that Jesus will judge the living and the dead, either before or after their bodily resurrection, an event tied to the Second Coming of Jesus in Christian eschatology. The great majority of Christians worship Jesus as the incarnation of God the Son, the second of three persons of the Trinity. The birth of Jesus is celebrated annually, generally on 25 December, as Christmas. His crucifixion is honoured on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter Sunday. The world's most widely used calendar era—in which the current year is AD 2025 (or 2025 CE)—is based on the approximate date of the birth of Jesus.

Judaism rejects the belief that Jesus was the awaited messiah, arguing that he did not fulfill messianic prophecies, was not lawfully anointed and was neither divine nor resurrected. In contrast, Jesus in Islam is considered the messiah and a prophet of God, who was sent to the Israelites and will return to Earth before the Day of Judgement. Muslims believe Jesus was born of the virgin Mary but was neither God nor a son of God. Most Muslims do not believe that he was killed or crucified but that God raised him into Heaven while he was still alive. Jesus is also revered in the Bahá'í and the Druze faiths, as well as in the Rastafari.

Disciple whom Jesus loved

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The phrase "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (Ancient Greek: ὁ μαθητὴς ὃν ἠγάπησεν, romanized: ho mathētēs hon agapēsen) or, in John 20:2; "the other disciple whom Jesus loved" (ὁ ἄλλος μαθητὴς ὃν ἠγάπησεν, romanized: ho allos mathētēs hon ephilei), is used six times in the Gospel of John, but in no other New Testament accounts of Jesus. John 21:24 states that the Gospel of John is based on the written testimony of this disciple.

Since the end of the first century, the beloved disciple has often (but not unanimously) been identified with John the Evangelist. Scholars have debated the authorship of Johannine literature (the Gospel of John, Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation) since at least the third century, but especially since the Enlightenment. The authorship of the Epistles by John the Apostle is rejected by many modern scholars, but not entirely. There is a consensus among Johannine scholars that the beloved disciple was a real historical person, but there is no consensus on who the beloved disciple was.

Jesus is Lord

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"Jesus is Lord" (Greek: Ἰησοῦς Κύριος, romanized: Iēsoûs Kýrios) is the shortest credal affirmation found in the New Testament, one of several slightly more elaborate variations. It serves as a statement of faith for the majority of Christians who regard Jesus as both truly man and God. It is the motto of the World Council of Churches.

List of people claimed to be Jesus

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This is a partial list of notable people who have been claimed, either by themselves or by their followers, to be the reincarnation or incarnation of Jesus, or the Second Coming of Christ.

Anointing of Jesus

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The anointings of Jesus's head or feet are events recorded in the four gospels. The account in Matthew 26, Mark 14, takes place on Holy Wednesday, while the account in John 12 takes place 6 days before Passover in Bethany, a village in Judaea on the southeastern slope of the Mount of Olives, where Lazarus lived. In Matthew and Mark, he is anointed by an unnamed woman. In John, the woman is identified as Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany. The event in Luke features an unnamed sinful woman, and is in the northern region, as Luke 7 indicates Jesus was ministering in the northern regions of Nain and Capernaum. The honorific anointing with perfume is an action frequently mentioned in other literature from the time; however, using long hair to dry Jesus's feet, as in John and Luke, is not recorded elsewhere, and should be regarded as an exceptional gesture. Considerable debate has discussed the identity of the woman, the location, timing, and the message.

Tomb of Jesus

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According to the gospel accounts, Jesus was buried in a tomb which originally belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy man who, believing Jesus was the Messiah, offered his own sepulcher for the burial of

Jesus. According to Christian tradition, the tomb of Jesus is located in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Tacitus on Jesus

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Roman historian and politician Tacitus referred to Jesus, his execution by Pontius Pilate, and the existence of early Christians in Rome in his final work, *Annals* (written c. AD 116), book 15, chapter 44. The context of the passage is the six-day Great Fire of Rome that burned much of the city in AD 64 during the reign of Roman Emperor Nero. The passage is one of the earliest non-Christian references to the origins of Christianity, the execution of Christ described in the canonical gospels, and the presence and persecution of Christians in 1st-century Rome.

There are two points of vocabulary in the passage. First, Tacitus may have used the word "Chrestians" (Chrestianos) for Christians, but then speaks of "Christ" (Christus) as the origin of that name. Second, he calls Pilate a "procurator", even though other sources indicate that he had the title "prefect". Scholars have proposed various hypotheses to explain these peculiarities. The scholarly consensus is that Tacitus's reference to the execution of Jesus by Pontius Pilate is both authentic, and of historical value as an independent Roman source. However, Tacitus does not reveal the source of his information. There are several hypotheses as to what sources he may have used.

Tacitus provides non-Christian confirmation of the crucifixion of Jesus. Scholars view it as establishing three separate facts about Rome around AD 60: (i) that there were a sizable number of Christians in Rome at the time, (ii) that it was possible to distinguish between Christians and Jews in Rome, and (iii) that at the time pagans made a connection between Christianity in Rome and its origin in Roman Judaea. Tacitus is one of the non-Christian writers of the time who mentioned Jesus and early Christianity along with Flavius Josephus, Pliny the Younger, and Suetonius.

Mary Magdalene

Magdalene or the Madeleine) was a woman who, according to the four canonical gospels, traveled with Jesus as one of his followers and was a witness to his crucifixion

Mary Magdalene (sometimes called Mary of Magdala, or simply the Magdalene or the Madeleine) was a woman who, according to the four canonical gospels, traveled with Jesus as one of his followers and was a witness to his crucifixion and resurrection. In Gnostic writings, Mary Magdalene is depicted as Jesus's closest disciple who uniquely understood his teachings, causing tension with Peter, and is honored as the "apostle to the apostles".

Mary Magdalene was a historical figure, possibly from Magdala. She was a prominent follower of Jesus who was believed to have been healed by him, supported his ministry financially, and was present at his crucifixion and burial. She played a key role among his female disciples. Overall, there is limited information about her life.

Apocryphal early Christian writings often portray Mary Magdalene as a prominent, spiritually insightful figure favored by Jesus, challenging traditional patriarchal norms. These texts have inspired modern reinterpretations of her role. During the Patristic era, Mary Magdalene was mentioned only briefly by early Church Fathers, with her image evolving from a minor gospel figure to being conflated with other women in the Bible. Eventually she became viewed in Western Christianity, largely due to Pope Gregory I's influential 591 sermon, as a repentant prostitute, despite there being no biblical basis for this portrayal.

The Eastern Orthodox Church has always viewed Mary Magdalene as a virtuous Myrrhbearer and "Equal to the Apostles", distinct from other biblical women. The Roman Catholic Church historically conflated her

with the repentant sinner in Luke 7 but later emphasized her role as the first witness to the resurrection and honored her as the "Apostle to the Apostles". Many alleged relics of Mary Magdalene, including her skull, a piece of forehead flesh, a tibia, and her left hand, are preserved in Catholic sites in France and Mount Athos, with notable displays and annual processions honoring them.

Christ myth theory

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The Christ myth theory, also known as the Jesus myth theory, Jesus mythicism, or the Jesus ahistoricity theory, is the fringe view that the story of Jesus is a work of mythology with no historical substance. Alternatively, in terms given by Bart Ehrman paraphrasing Earl Doherty, it is the view that "the historical Jesus did not exist. Or if he did, he had virtually nothing to do with the founding of Christianity."

The mainstream scholarly consensus, developed in the three quests for the historical Jesus, holds that there was a historical Jesus of Nazareth who lived in first-century AD Roman Judea, but his baptism and crucifixion are the only facts of his life about which a broad consensus exists. Beyond that, mainstream scholars have no consensus about the historicity of other major aspects of the gospel stories, nor the extent to which they and the Pauline epistles may have replaced the historical Jesus with a supernatural Christ of faith.

Proponents of Mythicism, in contrast, argue that a historical Jesus never existed, and that the gospels historicized a mythological character. This view can be traced back to the Age of Enlightenment, when history began to be critically analyzed; it was revived in the 1970s. Most mythicists employ a threefold argument: they question the reliability of the Pauline epistles and the gospels to establish Jesus's historicity; they argue that information is lacking on Jesus in secular sources from the first and early second centuries; and they argue that early Christianity had syncretistic and mythological origins as reflected in both the Pauline epistles and the gospels, with Jesus being a deity who was concretized in the gospels.

The non-historicity of Jesus has never garnered significant support among scholars. Mythicism is rejected by virtually all mainstream scholars of antiquity, and has been considered a fringe theory for more than two centuries. Mythicism is criticized on numerous grounds such as for commonly being advocated by non-experts or poor scholarship, being ideologically driven, its reliance on arguments from silence, lacking positive evidence, the dismissal or distortion of sources, questionable or outdated methodologies, either no explanation or wild explanations of origins of Christian belief and early churches, and outdated comparisons with mythology. While rejected by mainstream scholarship, with the rise of the Internet the Christ myth theory has attracted more attention in popular culture, and some of its proponents are associated with atheist activism.

Historicity of Jesus

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The historicity of Jesus is the debate "on the fringes of scholarship" and in popular culture whether Jesus historically existed or was a purely mythological figure. Mainstream New Testament scholarship ignores the non-existence hypothesis and its arguments, as the question of historicity was generally settled in scholarship in the early 20th century, and the general consensus among modern scholars is that a Jewish man named Jesus of Nazareth existed in the Herodian Kingdom of Judea and the subsequent Herodian tetrarchy in the 1st century AD, upon whose life and teachings Christianity was later constructed. However, scholars distinguish between the 'Christ of faith' as presented in the New Testament and the subsequent Christian theology, and a minimal 'Jesus of history', of whom almost nothing can be known.

There is no scholarly consensus concerning the historicity of most elements of Jesus's life as described in the Bible, and only two key events of the biblical story of Jesus's life are widely accepted as historical, based on the criterion of embarrassment, namely his baptism by John the Baptist and his crucifixion by the order of Pontius Pilate. Furthermore, the historicity of supernatural elements like his purported miracles and resurrection are deemed to be solely a matter of 'faith' or of 'theology', or lack thereof.

The Christ myth theory, developed in 19th century scholarship and gaining popular attraction since the turn of the 20th century, is the view that Jesus is purely a mythological figure and that Christianity began with belief in such a figure. Proponents use a three-fold argument developed in the 19th century: that the New Testament has no historical value with respect to Jesus's existence, that there are no non-Christian references to Jesus from the first century, and that Christianity had pagan or mythical roots. The idea that Jesus was a purely mythical figure has a fringe status in scholarly circles and has no support in critical studies, with most such theories going without recognition or serious engagement.

Academic efforts in biblical studies to determine facts of Jesus's life are part of the "quest for the historical Jesus", and several criteria of authenticity are used in evaluating the authenticity of elements of the Gospel-story. The criterion of multiple attestation is used to argue that attestation by multiple independent sources confirms his existence. There are at least fourteen independent sources for the historicity of Jesus from multiple authors within a century of the crucifixion of Jesus such as the letters of Paul (contemporary of Jesus who personally knew eyewitnesses since the mid 30s AD), the gospels (as biographies on historical people similar Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates), and non-Christian sources such as Josephus (Jewish historian and commander in Galilee) and Tacitus (Roman historian and Senator). Multiple independent sources affirm that Jesus actually had family.

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