

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS
An outline to accompany the lectures of
Dr. Derek Morris

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LECTURE 1: THE STUDY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS

Introduction

We are about to embark on a journey together, studying the life and teachings of the most significant individual of human history. Some believe he was God in the flesh. Others believe he was another holy prophet, like Mohammed or the Buddha. Some say he was a deluded visionary. But none can ignore him.

Question: Why is Gospel history so important for the Christian?

I. Biblical Sources

A. The Gospels

B. The Writings of the Apostle Paul

C. Agrapha

Definition:

D. Old Testament Prophecies

II. Sources Outside the Bible

A. Christian Authors

1. Church Fathers

2. Apocryphal Gospels

Definition:

B. Classical Authors

1. Tacitus (61-117 A.D.)

"Therefore, to squelch the rumor, Nero created scapegoats and subjected to the most refined tortures those whom the common people called "Christians," [a group] hated for their abominable crimes. Their name comes from Christ, who, during the reign of Tiberius, had been executed by the procurator Pontius Pilate. Suppressed for the moment, the deadly superstition broke out again, not only in Judea, the land which originated this evil, but also in the city of Rome, where all sorts of horrendous and shameful practices from every part of the world converge and are fervently cultivated." *Annals 15. 44*¹

C. Jewish Authors

1. Josephus

"Now about this time lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed it be lawful to call him a man. For he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of men who receive the truth with pleasure; and he drew to him many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ. And when Pilate, at the information of the leading men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those who had loved him at first did not cease to do so. For he appeared to them alive again the third day as the divine prophets had foretold this and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him, and the tribe of Christians so named from him are not extinct to this day." *Jewish Antiquities 18.3.3*²

¹ The Roman historian Tacitus wrote the *Annals* as the last great work of his life. It was intended to cover the history of Rome from A.D. 14-68. Unfortunately, some books of the *Annals* have been lost, including the period between A.D. 29-32. Unless these lost portions of the *Annals* are discovered, we will never know whether or not Tacitus provided more detailed account of the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

2. Talmuds

III. The Trustworthiness of the Gospels

A. The Palestinian background

B. The Picture of Christ

C. The Independence of the Accounts

D. The Number of Manuscripts

E. The Personal Experience of the Founders of the Church

² Flavius Josephus was the Roman name for a Jewish aristocrat, politician, soldier and historian, Joseph ben Matthias. For a recent translation of Josephus' works, see Flavius Josephus, *Judean Antiquities* 1-4. Translation and commentary by Louis H Feldman. (Boston: Brill, 2000)

LECTURE 2: THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

I. The Meaning of Synoptic

A. Definition

B. Similarities of the Synoptic accounts

1.

2.

3.

II. Factors Influencing the Shaping of the Synoptic Material

A.

B.

C.

III. The Writing of the Synoptic Gospels

A. Testimony of the Church Fathers

1. Ireneus

2. Papias

B. The Time of Writing for the Synoptics

C. The Gospel of Matthew

1. Authorship
2. Sources
3. Characteristics

D. The Gospel of Mark

1. Authorship
2. Sources
3. Characteristics

E. The Gospel of Luke

1. Authorship
2. Sources
3. Characteristics

LECTURE 3: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

I. The Independence of John's Gospel

A. Contents in general

B. Sayings of Jesus

II. Authorship

A. Internal testimony

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. Testimony of Early Church Fathers

1. Clement of Alexandria

2. Ireneus

C. The Life of the Apostle John

III. Date for the Writing of the Fourth Gospel

A. Early Christian view

B. Critical 19th Century view

C. 20th Century Validation of 1st Century date

1. Rylands Papyrus

2. Dead Sea Scrolls

IV. The Unique Contributions of John's Gospel

A. An accurate chronology of the Ministry of Jesus

B. A Theological Perspective of the Life of Jesus

C. An Explanation of why the Jews rejected Jesus

LECTURE 4: PALESTINE DURING INTER-TESTAMENT TIMES

I. The Coming of Greece

A. Alexander the Great

B. The Struggle for Palestine

1. Ptolemy

2. Seleucus

II. Jewish Independence

A. Antiochus Epihanes

B. The Modin Incident (167 BC)

1. Mattathias

2. Hasidim

3. Judas Maccabees

III. Herod's Rule

A. Herod's rise to power

1. Antipater, father of Herod

2. King of Judea

B. Herod's Sons

1. Philip

2. Herod Antipas

3. Archelaus

IV. The Rule of Rome

A. Roman Procurator

B. Pontius Pilate

LECTURE 5: THE CULTURE AND RELIGION OF JUDAISM

I. Daily Life in Palestine

A. Home Life

1. Houses

2. Clothing
 - a. Chiton

 - b. Himation

B. Economic Life

1. Agriculture

2. Handicrafts

3. Monetary system
 - a. Greek system
 - (1) drachma
 - (2) stater (tetradrachma)
 - (3) mina
 - (4) talanton

 - b. Roman system
 - (1) lepton
 - (2) kodrantes
 - (3) assarion
 - (4) denarius

II. Religious Life

A. The common people

B. The Scribes

C. The Synagogue

III. The Sects of Judaism

A. The Pharisees

B. The Sadducees

C. The Essenes

D. The Zealots

LECTURE 6: THE MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

I. The Testimony of Josephus

"He was a good man who commanded the Jews to exercise virtue both as justice toward one another and piety toward God and so to come to baptism; for baptism would be acceptable to God, if they made use of it not in order to expiate some sin, but for the purification of the body provided that the soul was thoroughly purified before-hand by righteousness...."He (Herod) feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put in his power and inclination to raise a rebellion for they seemed to do anything that he advised." *Jewish Antiquities* 18. 5. 2.

II. The Testimony of Scripture

A. Birth

B. Childhood

C. His way of life

1. Diet

2. Clothing

D. His ministry

1. Its beginning

2. The Call to Repentance

3. The Baptism of John
 - a. Baptism of repentance

 - b. Proselyte baptism

4. The Witness of John

E. Imprisonment and Death

LECTURE 7: THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

I. The Date of the Birth

A. Problems with Chronology

1. Solar calendar
2. Lunar calendar

B. Attempts to Date the Birth

1. Dionysius Exiguus
2. Realistic date

C. What about December 25?

1. Purely Tradition
2. Pagan Origin
3. Celebration of Christmas

II. The Accounts of the Birth

A. Differences

1. Genealogy in Matthew
2. Genealogy in Luke

B. Flow of events

MATTHEW

Announcement to Joseph 1:18-24
Birth of Jesus 1:25
Visit of Magi 2:1-12
Flight to Egypt 2:13-18
Return to Nazareth 2:19-23

LUKE

Announcement to Mary 1:26-38
Birth of Jesus 2:1-7
Visit of shepherds 2:8-20
Circumcision 2:21
Presentation at Temple 2:22-38
Return to Nazareth 2:39-40

C. Key Proclamations

Certain key passages related to the birth of Christ has played a significant role in Christian worship throughout the Christian era:

1. The words of the angel to Mary - Luke 1: 26-38
2. The words of Mary when she visited Elizabeth - Luke 1:46-56
3. The words of Zechariah at the birth of his son - Luke 1:68-79
4. The words of the angels to the shepherds - Luke 2:10-14
5. The words of Simeon at the Dedication - Luke 2:29-36

III. The Theological Significance of the Birth of Christ

A. The Incarnation

B. The Virgin Birth

1. Prophecy of Isaiah
2. Parthenogenesis

LECTURE 8: YOUTH AND BAPTISM

The Gospels do not give us much information concerning the youth of Christ, which may be one reason why the apocryphal gospels include so many tales concerning that period. But we can discover how Christ became aware of his mission and how He remained sinless. The most important events that precede His public ministry are the visit to the Temple at age 12, His baptism and the temptations.

I. The Family Life of Jesus

A. Mary, the mother of Jesus

1. Background

2. Vow of perpetual virginity?

3. Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception

B. Joseph, the husband of Mary

C. The brothers of Jesus

1. Their names
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

2. Their relationship to Jesus
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

II. The Early Years

A. Nazareth

B. The Education of Jesus

1. Home school

“With deep earnestness the mother of Jesus watched the unfolding of His powers, and beheld the impress of perfection upon His character. With delight she sought to encourage that bright, receptive mind. Through the Holy Spirit, she received wisdom to co-operate with the heavenly agencies in the development of this child, who could claim only God as His Father.”³ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 69

2. Rejection of the education system of His day

C. Visit to the Temple

III. The Baptism of Jesus

A. The time of His baptism

B. The meaning of His baptism

1.

2.

3.

³ Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898.

LECTURE 9: THE TEMPTATIONS

I. The Setting of the Temptations

A. Fasting in the Scripture

1. Definition

2. Types of fast
 - a. Normal fast

 - b. Partial fast

 - c. Absolute fast

 - d. Supernatural fast

B. The Baptism and the Temptations

1. At the baptism

2. In the temptations

C. Various Views Regarding the Temptations

D. The Nature of the Adversary

1. Diabolos

2. Satanas

II. The Nature of the Temptations for Jesus

A. The Second Adam

B. The three tests

1. Stones into bread

2. Pinnacle of the Temple

3. On the Mountaintop

III. The Results of the Temptations

A. The way of the Cross

B. The promise of ultimate victory

LECTURE 10: THE MINISTRY OF JESUS IN GALILEE

I. The Chronology of the Ministry of Jesus

A. Starting point

B. Duration of Ministry

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John

C. Sequence of events

Baptism, Fall 27 AD
Early ministry, Fall 27-Spring 28 (Jn 1:19-2:12; first disciples, Wedding at Cana)
Ministry in Judea, 1st Pass, AD 28-2nd Pass, AD 29 Jn 2:13-5:47
Ministry in Galilee, 2nd Pass, AD 29-3rd Passover, AD 30
Retirement from Public ministry, 3rd Passover, AD 30 to Fall AD 30
Ministry in Samaria and Perea, Fall 30-Passover AD 31
Passion Week, Passover, Passover, AD 31
Resurrection and Ascension, Spring AD 31

II. Jesus in Galilee

A. Fulfillment of prophecy

B. The Region of Galilee

III. The Teaching of Jesus in Galilee

A. The Startling Announcement

B. The Visit to Nazareth

C. Speaking with authority

1. Definition

a.

b.

c.

2. Speaking with authority versus speaking from authority

LECTURE 11: MIGHTY WORKS IN GALILEE

I. The Nature and Purpose of Miracles

A. Definition

dunamis

semeion

B. Why did Jesus perform miracles?

II. Miracles in Jesus' Ministry

A. Healing of disease and deformity

1.

2.

B. Exorcisms

C. Raising the Dead

1.

2.

3.

D. Power over Nature

LECTURE 12: JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES

I. The Master

A. The Appearance of the Master

1. The Early Church and Jesus
 - a.
 - b.

Letter of Lentulus

There has appeared here in our time, and still lives here, a man of great power named Jesus Christ. The people call him a prophet of truth, and his disciples, the Son of God. He raises the dead and cures the sick. His is, in stature, a man of middle height and well proportioned. He has a venerable face, of a sort to arouse both fear and love in those who see him. His hair is the color of ripe chestnuts, smooth almost to the ears but above them waving and curling, with a slight bluish radiance, and it flows over his shoulders. It is parted in the middle on the top of his head, after the fashion of the people of Nazareth. His brow is smooth and very calm, with a face without wrinkle or blemish, slightly tinged with red. His nose and mouth are faultless. His beard is luxuriant ...of the same color as his hair, not long but parted at the chin. His eyes are expressive and brilliant..."⁴

2. The Middle Ages and Jesus
3. The Modern Concept of Christ

B. The Character of the Master

⁴ Charles Guignebert, *Jesus*. Translated from the French by S. H. Hooke. (New York: Knopf, 1935), pp. 166-167.

II. THE DISCIPLES

A. The Group of the Twelve

MATTHEW 10

1. Simon Peter
2. Andrew
3. James
4. John
5. Philip
6. Bartholomew
7. Thomas
8. Matthew
9. James of Alphaeus
10. Thaddaeus, Lebbaeus
11. Simon, Canaanite
12. Judas Iscariot

MARK 3

1. Simon (Peter)
2. James
3. John
4. Andrew
5. Philip
6. Bartholomew
7. Matthew
8. Thomas
9. James of Alphaeus
10. Thaddaeus
11. Simon, Zealot
12. Judas Iscariot

LUKE 6

1. Simon (Peter)
2. Andrew
3. James
4. John
5. Philip
6. Bartholomew
7. Matthew
8. Thomas
9. James of Alphaeus
10. Simon, Zealot
11. Judas, son James
12. Judas Iscariot

B. The Personalities of some of the Disciples

1. Simon Peter
2. Andrew
3. James and John
4. Philip
5. Thomas
6. Judas

LECTURE 13: THE CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

I. The Titles

A. Disciple

mathetes

B. Apostle

apostolos

Jewish shaliah

C. The Twelve

II. The Call

A. To break with the past

1.

2.

B. To follow Him

1. Lessons from the miraculous catch

a.

b.

2. ιχθυς - a Christian symbol

Ιησους	Jesus
Χριστος	Christ
θεου_	of God
υιος	Son
σωτηρ	Savior

III. The Commission

A. Commission of the Twelve

B. Commission of the Seventy

IV. The Ordination

A. To Be With Him

1.

2.

3.

B. Apostolic Succession

LECTURE 14: THE TURNING POINT IN GALILEE

I. The Background

A. The strain of the first missionary tour

B. Mourning the death of John the Baptist

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

II. Feeding of the 5000

A. Setting

B. The Miracle

C. Reactions

1. The crowd
2. The disciples of Jesus
3. Jesus

D. The Night on the Lake

E. General Defection

III. The Announcement of His Passion

A. Preparing the disciples

B. Jesus announces his death

IV. The Transfiguration

A. The setting

B. The significance

1. Revelation of the glory of the Son
2. A foretaste of the Second Coming

LECTURE 15: PRIESTLY OPPOSITION

So far we have depended solely on the Synoptics for our study of the life of Jesus. However the fourth Gospel records some very important events at Jerusalem which help us to better understand the early ministry of Jesus and why many of the Jewish leaders rejected Him.

I. Early Encounters at Jerusalem

A. The Cleansing of the Temple

B. The Prophecy of Jesus

II. The Feast of Tabernacles

A. Background

B. Claim of Jesus

III. The Final Break

A. Jesus claims to be Yahweh

B. Reaction of the Jews

IV. The Resurrection of Lazarus

A. The miracle

B. The reactions

LECTURE 16: THE LAST MOMENTS WITH HIS PEOPLE

I. The Last Trip to Jerusalem

A. Setting

B. The Triumphal Entry

1. Prophetic Fulfillment

2. The reactions of those present
 - a. The crowd

 - b. The Pharisees

"Many Pharisees witnessed the scene, and burning with envy and malice sought to turn the current of popular feeling. With all their authority, they tried to silence the people; but their appeals and threats only increased the enthusiasm." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 572

 - c. Jesus

C. The Cleansing of the Temple

II. Preparation for the Passover

A. Background

B. Preparations made

III. The Lord's Supper

A. Replacement for Jewish Passover

B. The meaning of the Lord's Supper

1. Memorial

2. Fellowship

3. Promise

C. The interpretations of "This is my body."

1. Transubstantiation

2. Consubstantiation

3. Elements as symbols

LECTURE 17: THE CONDEMNATION OF JESUS

I. The Agony and Arrest

A. The setting

B. The sweat of blood

diapedesis

C. The Arrest

II. Trial by the Priests

A. The setting

B. Sequence of events

1. At the house of Annas
2. Before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin
3. Peter's denial of Jesus

III. The Roman Trial

A. First examination by Pilate

B. Examination by Herod

C. Second Examination by Pilate - Luke 23:13-25

1. Jesus is flogged
2. Message from Pilate's wife
3. The release of Barabbas
4. Pilate washes his hands

LECTURE 18: THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF JESUS

I. The Crucifixion

A. The Method

B. The Place

1. Ancient Site
2. Gordon's Calvary

C. The Inscription

II. The Last Words of Jesus

A. Concern for Others

1. Luke 23:34
2. Luke 23:43
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. John 19:26,27

B. Words concerning Himself

1. Mark 15:34
2. John 19:28

3. John 19:30

a.

b.

c.

4. Luke 23:46

III. Phenomena Accompanying Christ's death

A. Darkness at the sixth hour

B. Tearing of the Temple Veil

C. Special Resurrection

IV. The Burial of Jesus

A. The Tomb of a Rich Man

B. Rested on the Sabbath

LECTURE 19: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

The most significant characteristic that sets Jesus apart from the leaders of other great world religions is His resurrection from the dead. At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus made this startling prophesy: "Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it again in three days." John 2:19 During His ministry, Jesus made these bold declarations: "I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25 And "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man comes to the Father except by Me." John 14:6 And in the Revelation of Jesus Christ to the apostle John, the last document of the New Testament, the Risen Christ declares: "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! Revelation 1:18

I. The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection

A. The Empty Tomb

B. The Appearances of Jesus Following His Death and Burial

1. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene in the Garden
2. Jesus appears to the women leaving the tomb
3. Jesus appears to Simon Peter
4. Jesus appears to two disciples on the road to Emmaus.
5. Jesus appears on the evening of the Resurrection day to the Eleven
6. Jesus appears to the Eleven a week later when Thomas is present.
7. Jesus appears to His disciples by the sea of Galilee.
8. Jesus appears to the disciples on a mountain in Galilee

C. The testimony of the Apostle Paul

II. Alternate Explanations for the Empty Tomb

A. The Theft Theory

B. The Survival Theory

C. The Wrong-Tomb Theory

D. The Hallucination Theory

E. The Objective-Vision Theory

III. The Impact of the Resurrection on the Christian Church

A. The initial response of the disciples to the crucifixion of Jesus

B. The resurrection brings a renewed faith, hope and courage

LECTURE 20: THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF JESUS

I. The Master Teacher

A. Jesus as Teacher

Didaskalos

B. Rhetorical devices

1. epigram

2. paradox

3. hyperbole

II. Jesus' Use of Parables

A. Definition

B. Hebrew background

mashal

C. Why did Jesus teach in parables?

- 1.
- 2.

D. Principles for interpreting parables

III. Difficult Parables

A. The Parable of the Persistent Widow

1. Who does the widow represent?
2. Who does the judge represent?
3. What is the key lesson of the parable?

B. The Parable of the Unfaithful Manager

1. Who does the unfaithful manager represent?
2. Who does the rich man represent?
3. What is the key lesson of the parable?

LECTURE 21: THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

I. The Old Testament Description of God's Rule

A. Theocracy in the OT

B. The Covenant Relationship

II. The Kingdom of Grace

A. Present reality

B. Growth of the Kingdom of Grace

1.

2.

C. The Cost of the Kingdom of Grace

1.

2.

D. Evidences of the Kingdom of Grace

1.

2.

3.

III. The Kingdom of Glory

A. A future reality

B. Judgment precedes Kingdom of Glory

C. Dramatic end of earth's history

IV. The Relationship between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Church

A. The Kingdom creates the church

B. The Church witnesses to the Kingdom of Grace

C. The Church announces the coming Kingdom of Glory

LECTURE 22: THE RETURN OF CHRIST

I. The Promise of His Coming

A. The certainty of His coming

B. The nature of His coming
parousia

II. The Nearness of His Coming

A. Parable of the Fig Tree

Key lesson:

B. The thief in the night

Key lesson:

III. The Apparent Delay in His Coming

A. The Attitude of the Disciples

B. The Parable of the Ten Virgins

Key lesson:

C. The Parable of the Servant

Key lesson:

D. The Parable of the Talents

Key lesson:

LECTURE 23: THE CHARACTER OF GOD

I. The Seeking God

A. Jesus' attitude toward sinners

B. The Trilogy of "lost" parables

1. The Lost Sheep

God's love for those who are lost...

2. The Lost Coin

God's love for those who are lost...

3. The Lost Sons

God's love for those who are lost...

II. The Forgiving God

A. The question

B. A parable of forgiveness

LECTURE 24: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, PART 1

I. Setting

A. Time

B. Location

II. Content

A. Key sermon of Jesus

B. Differences

1. Matthew

2. Luke

3. Mark

C. The Beatitudes

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit
makarios

2. Blessed are those who mourn

3. Blessed are the meek

4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

5. Blessed are the merciful

6. Blessed are the pure in heart

7. Blessed are the peacemakers

8. Blessed are those who are persecuted

LECTURE 25: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, PART 2

I. Christ and the Law

A. Misunderstanding of Jesus' teaching

B. The Letter and the Spirit

1. Murder

2. Adultery

C. The Call to Perfection

II. How to Worship

A. Giving to the Needy

B. Prayer

1. Negative

a.

b.

2. Positive - The Lord's Prayer

a. God and His Kingdom

(1)

(2)

(3)

b. Our needs

(1)

(2)

(3)

III. The Golden Rule

A. Other Rules

B. The Golden Rule of Jesus

IV. Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders

LECTURE 26: THE FAREWELL DISCOURSES, PART 1

I. A Command to Love

A. A "New" Commandment

B. Agape love

1. erao
2. phileo
3. phileo
4. agapao, agape

C. The Sign of Discipleship

II. The Promise of Christ's Return

A. The Uncertainty of the Disciples

1. Thomas
2. Philip

B. The Certainty of Jesus

1. In His Revelation

2. In His Return

III. The Gift of the Holy Spirit

A. The Divine Person

1. Associated with the Father and the Son

2. Another Advocate

paracletos

B. Condition for receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit

C. Results of Receiving the Gift of the Holy Spirit

1.

2.

LECTURE 27: THE FAREWELL DISCOURSES, PART 2

I. The Unity of Jesus with His Disciples

A. The Vine and the Branches

1. In the Old Testament
2. In the time of Jesus
3. The Claim of Jesus
alethinos
4. Abiding in Christ

B. No longer servants, but friends

II. Strength for the Conflict

A. Conflict Foretold

B. Peace in the Midst of Conflict

III. The Prayer of the Great High Priest

A. The Significance of the Prayer

B. The Structure of the Prayer

1. Prayer for Himself

a.

b.

2. Prayer for His Disciples

a.

b.

3. Prayer for the Church

a.

b.