

50 AMAZING FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT JESUS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

There are 4 Gospels in the New Testament. They are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

TESTAMENT

Mark's Gospel has 661 verses

Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the 'Synoptic' Gospels because they are similar

The earliest Gospel was probably Mark's. He emphasises that Jesus was the Son of God.

Matthew emphasises that Jesus fulfils Old Testament scripture. He is the Messiah that the Jews expected

Matthew includes 606 of Mark's verses and Luke includes 320 of Mark's verses

Mark's Gospel contains the Messianic secret. Jesus is always telling people not to talk about the miracles he has done

Luke's Gospel is the Gospel of the poor. It has lots of teachings about the poor and emphasises Jesus' humble birth

William Wrede was the scholar who came up with the idea of the Messianic secret

Jesus was Jewish and lived in Israel

Mark's Gospel is the shortest and misses out important things like the Lord's Prayer

Jesus was born in Bethlehem

Common jobs at the time of Jesus were farmers, fishermen and shepherds

Some Jews worked for the Romans as tax collectors. This made them very unpopular.

The Jews believed they were descended from Abraham and that they were God's chosen people

The holy day for Jews was Saturday and no work could be done on the Sabbath

The synoptic problem refers to the fact that Matthew, Mark and Luke have lots of similarities but they also have differences. Why is this?

King David was a great king in the Old Testament. Some people thought the Messiah would be a descent of his.

Jews worshipped in the local synagogue but went to the Temple in Jerusalem for special occasions

In the Temple in Jerusalem it was believed that God dwelled in the Holy of Holies

In the Old Testament the Jews were taken as slaves to Egypt. They were led out of slavery by Moses who gave them God's laws

Jesus' cousin was John the Baptist

Jesus often calls himself 'Son of Man'

Matthew's Gospel has the Sermon on the Mount but Luke's has the Sermon on the Plain

The earliest Gospel was probably written about 30 years after Jesus died

Matthew and Luke both have 'birth narratives' stories about Jesus' birth

Jesus did not invent parables. Other Jewish teachers also used these short stories, which used real life situations, to teach religious truths.

The Pharisees were a religious group at the time of Jesus. They focused on keeping the law and Jesus argued with them about their interpretation of the law

Jesus is often called Christ but this is not his name. It is a title meaning 'anointed one'. It comes from the Greek 'Christos'

The author of Luke's Gospel was probably a doctor

Matthew's birth story mentions wise men but the number of wise men is never mentioned

John's Gospel does not have a birth narrative. It starts with an introduction called The Prologue

Luke's birth narrative mentions shepherds but not wise men

Jesus died in Jerusalem around the time of the Passover festival

The Sadducees were a religious group at the time of Jesus. They did not believe in immortality, resurrection or angels

In John's Gospel Jesus keeps saying, 'I am....' And then describing himself

In the Synoptic Gospels Jesus performs lots of miracles

In John's Gospel Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead

The author of John's Gospel only tells us about 7 miracles that Jesus performed and he calls these signs

The Zealots were a political group at the time of Jesus who wanted to overthrow the Romans

Jesus spoke ARAMAIC

John's Gospel starts with the same phrase as Genesis: 'In the beginning....'

The Supreme Court at the time of Jesus was the Sanhedrin. It was made up of 70 priests and elders and the High Priest

The Romans occupied Israel at the time of Jesus

Jesus was a very common name in first century Israel

In John's Gospel Jesus is called the WORD or LOGOS

Messiah comes from a Hebrew word meaning anointed one. Kings, priests and prophets were all anointed in the Bible

Jesus is sometimes called 'Son of David'. This is a Messianic title.

Matthew and Luke share 2 common sources. Mark and an unknown source known as Q (from the German Quelle meaning source)

Jesus was probably born around 4BC. Strange but true.

Some people think that the resurrection is a myth rather than a historical event.

Read all of these facts and try to work out how they are related and what they mean. Then complete all 20 questions. The first 10 are relatively straightforward but after that you made need to do some of your own research.

Answer in full sentences and where appropriate (questions 11-15) in short paragraphs. Good luck.

1. What was the Sanhedrin?
2. How many Gospels are there?
3. Which Gospel is not a Synoptic Gospel?
4. Which is the earliest Gospel to be written?
5. Which language did Jesus speak?
6. What was the Holy of Holies?
7. What was Jesus' last name?
8. What religion did Jesus follow?
9. Why is Jesus sometimes called Son of David?
10. Where was the Temple located?
11. What is the Prologue in John's Gospel?
12. What is the Messianic secret?
13. What is the synoptic problem?
14. What is the solution to the synoptic problem?
15. Why is Mark's Gospel often thought to be the first to be written?
16. What are the 7 'I am' sayings in John?
17. What are the 7 signs in John's Gospel?
18. What is the origin of the word Messiah?
19. Why did Jesus clash with the Pharisees?
20. Which 2 Gospels do not have birth narratives?

