

Jesus: Philosopher, Revolutionary or God

Sources

Suetonius (AD 69-140), The Twelve Caesars.

“Because the Jews at Rome caused continuous disturbances at the instigation of Christ, he (Claudius) expelled them from the city.”

“Punishments were also inflicted (by Nero) on the Christians, a sect professing a new and mischievous religious belief.”

Thallus (c. AD 50), Goguel.

Includes an explanation for the alleged darkness occurring at the death of Christ as a natural phenomena.

Pauline Epistles Letters written by Paul (earliest c. AD 52) directed to various Christian clergy.

Gospel of Mark Probably the oldest (c. AD 65) of the gospels, and forms the bases for the latter gospels.

Gospel of Matthew (c. AD 85) Written to a targeted audience of Jewish readers.

Gospel of Luke (c. AD 95) Written to appeal mostly to a gentile audience.

Gospel of John (c. AD 90) Unlike the other Gospels, this one is not biographical, but rather theological.

Readings

The Kingdom

1. “Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done , on earth as it is in heaven.”
– Matthew 6:9-10

2. “Jesus answered, My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world.” -- John 18:36

3. “The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say ‘Lo, there it is! or ‘there!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.” – Luke 17:20-21

The Beatitudes

4. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.....” – Matthew 5:3-11

The Attack Against the Establishment

5. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. So you outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” – Matthew 23:27

Who is Jesus

6. “So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” – John 12:13

7. “Who do men say that the Son of man is?” And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’” – Matthew 16:13-16

The Death

8. “And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, ‘Elo-i, Elo-i, lama sa bach-thani?’ which means, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’”
– Mark 15:33-34

9. “It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun’s light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this he breathed his last.” -- Luke 23:44-46

The Resurrection

10. “Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw the stone had been taken away from the tomb.....Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means teacher) Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to the Father, to my God and your God.’ Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord.’; and she told them that he had said these things to her.” – John 20:1, 16-18