

## Life of Jesus

NT Survey/Introduction

## Chronological Questions

- Introduction
- Birth of Jesus
  - Death of Herod as *Terminus ad quem*
  - Census of Quirinius as *Terminus a quo*

## Chronological Questions

- Death of Herod
  - Matt 2:1; Luke 1:5
  - Josephus *Ant* 17.8.1; *War* 1.33.8 – Herod died in the 34<sup>th</sup> year of his reign
  - Proclaimed King of Judah in 40BCE, reigned as King 37BCE
  - *Ant* 17.6.4 - Died shortly after an eclipse of the moon (March 12/13, 4BCE); after his death, Passover celebrated on April 11, 4BCE

## Chronological Questions

- Death of Herod
  - Anytime between March-April 4BC
  - Matt 2:16 - killing of children below age 2

## Chronological Questions

- Census
  - Luke 2:1-5
  - Augustus reigned from 44BCE-14CE
  - Problematic passage:
    - No Roman historian specifically recorded this census
    - Reference to Quirinius in Jos *Ant* 17.13.5 and 18.1.1 being the governor of Syria in 6CE
  - Could Luke be WRONG?

## Chronological Questions

- Census
  - Could Luke be WRONG?
  - How to reconcile?
- Possible date of Jesus's birth: 4-6BCE

### Chronological Questions

- Commencement of the ministry of Jesus
  - 2 dates:
  - The commencement of the ministry of John the Baptist: Luke 3:1-3 → 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius
    - 28-29CE
  - The first passover of Jesus' ministry
    - John 2:20 → 46 years. See *Jos Ant* 15.11.1 – Temple construction began in Herod's 18<sup>th</sup> year coinciding with the arrival of Augustus in Syria (15.10.3) → 20-19BCE

### Chronological Questions

- Commencement of the ministry of Jesus
  - Possible dates: 29/30CE → about 32-33 years old. See Luke 3:23 – “about 30 years old”

### Chronological Questions

- Length of Jesus' Ministry
  - Mark → seems to suggest a few months
  - John → 3 Passovers mentioned (2:13; 6:4; 11:55); could be more if 5:1 taken into account

### Chronological Questions

- Death of Jesus
  - Passover – Nisan 14
  - Passover celebrated on Thursday, and Jesus died on Friday → hence possible dates of Passover would be 27, 30, 33 or 36. 27 and 36 would be too early and late respectively.
  - Did Jesus die on 30 or 33?

### Chronological Questions

- Death of Jesus
  - Officers on trial:
    - Caiaphas the high priest (Matt 26:3, 57; John 11:49-53; 18:13-14) – began office on 18CE and disposed on 37CE (*Jos Ant* 18.2.2)
    - Pontius Pilate (Matt 27:2-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-19:16) – 26-36CE. Josephus accounts show him to be greedy, inflexible and cruel (*Ant* 18.3.1; *War* 2.9.2-4; 167-77). But during Jesus' time, he is submissive to the religious leaders. Why?

### Chronological Questions

- Death of Jesus
  - Officers on trial:
    - Pontius Pilate – Story of Sejanus (*Philo Flass* 1; *Leg Gai* 159-61) → Sejanus disposed and executed on Oct 18, 31 after which Pilate had no more protection in Rome. Herod Antipas (reigned from 4BCE-39CE) reported Pilate caused a riot in 32CE during the feast of Tabernacles (*Philo Leg. Gai* 299-305). Hence Pilate was eager to allow Herod Antipas to try Jesus (Luke 23:5-12) → hence both become friends (Luke 23:12)

## Chronological Questions

- Death of Jesus
  - Hence 33CE makes better sense.

## Chronological Questions: Summary

Date	Event	Major Data
4-6BCE	Birth of Jesus	Death of Herod the Great (4BC); Matt 2:13-20
28-29	Beginning of John the Baptist's ministry	15 <sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius' rule (Luke 3:1)
29	Beginning of Jesus' ministry	46 years since the completion of the temple (John 2:20)
33	Death of Jesus	Nissan 14 on Thursday

## Events in the Life of Jesus

- Birth
- Baptism
- Temptation
- Transfiguration
- Passion Week
- Death
- Resurrection

## The Birth of Christ

- The question of the virgin birth in recent scholarship – the denial of virgin birth, and virgin birth as a theological construct (note some statement of faiths: change from virgin(adjective) Mary to Virgin Mary (title))
- Some difficult texts
  - Matt 2:16-18
  - Luke 2:7 – no room in the inn? Christmas story correct?
  - Luke 2:8-20; Matt 2:1-12 – Visit of Shepherds and wise men

## Baptism

- Recorded in all 4 gospels
- The voice of the father
  - Allusion to Ps 2 or Isa 42:1

## Temptation

- The nature of the temptation
- The order of the temptation account in Matthew and Luke
- The significance of the temptation in light of Jesus' messianic call

### The Calling of the Disciples

- See Mark 3:13-19; Matt 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16

### Transfiguration

- The Background: The Event at Caesarea Philippi
- “some will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power...”
- “talking about his exodus (departure)” (Luke 9:30-31)
- The significance of the transfiguration in light of Jesus’ messianic call

### The Passion Week

- Palm Sunday – entry to Jerusalem
- Monday – cleansing of the temple
- Tuesday – teaching in the temple
- Wednesday - ?

### The Passion Week

- Thursday, after sundown – last supper, prayer in Gethsemane, Betrayal and Arrest
- Thursday-Friday, night time – Custody, hearing before Annas, Trial before Caiaphas, Peter’s denial
- Friday, early morning: Sanhedrin completes deliberations, Jesus sent to Pilate, hearing before Pilate, Jesus sent to Herod Antipas, Return to Pilate
- Friday, late morning, noon – Crucifixion
- Friday, mid afternoon – Jesus dies
- Friday, near sundown – Jesus buried
- Saturday – in the tomb
- Sunday - resurrection

### Issue of Dating of the Last Supper

- Contradiction in John’s and the Synoptic Gospels’ account?

### The Last Supper

- How to reconcile in Luke there seems to be 2 cups being mentioned, while in other gospels, only 1 cup is mentioned?

### The Last Supper: Elements

- Passover lamb – angel of death kept from visiting first born of Israel
- Unleavened bread – swiftness of God’s deliverance
- Salt water – tears shed in their captivity and crossing of Red Sea
- Bitter herbs – bitterness of slavery
- Harosheth – fruit puree, clay used to make bricks
- 4 cups of wine – promises of Ex 6:6-7

### The Ceremony: Exodus 6:6-7a; Mishnah Pesachim 10

- A blessing
- First cup of wine  
– *I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.*
- The serving of the meal: unleavened bread, bitter herbs, salt water, stewed fruit, and roast lamb

- The youngest son asks, “Why is this night different from other nights?”
- The father/host retells the story of the Passover
- Hallel praise - Psalm 113-115 sung
- Second cup of wine  
– *I will free you from being slaves to them*
- Breaking of bread and the eating of the meal

- Third cup of wine at end of meal  
– *I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment*
- Hallel praise - Psalms 116-118 sung
- Fourth cup of wine  
– *I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God*

### Passover

- Which cup did the gospels refer to?
- What is the significance that after the third cup, and singing of hymn, the Evangelists portray Jesus leaving immediately....what happen to the 4<sup>th</sup> cup? Did Jesus deliberately end the Passover meal prematurely?

### The Significance of the Cross

- The significance of the cross for Jesus