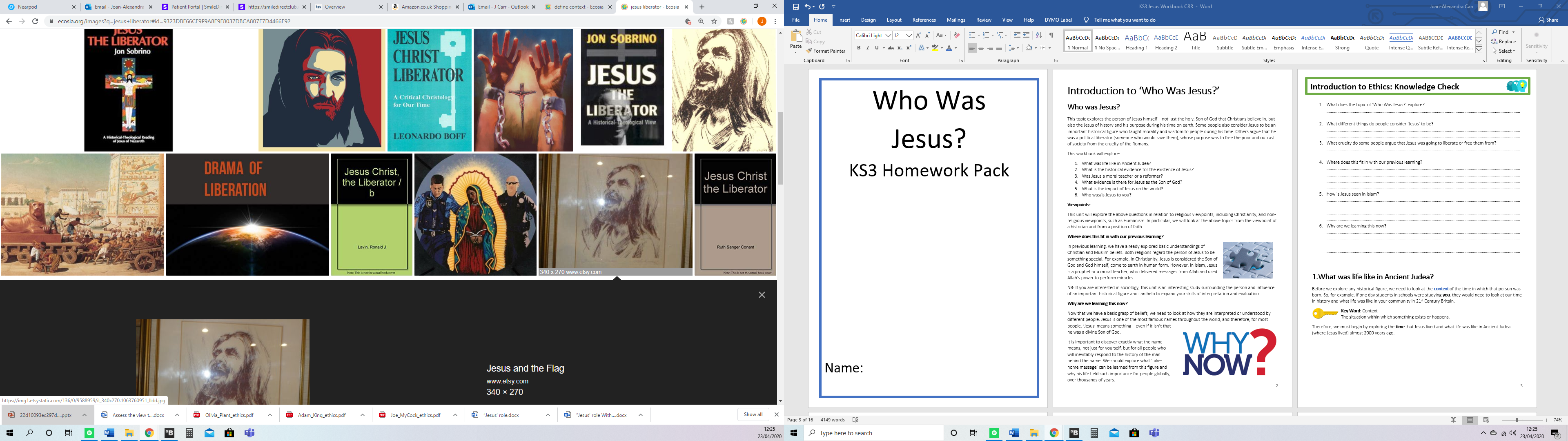
Who Was   
Jesus?  
KS3 Isolation Pack

Name:



Who w

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the information in the book and answer the questions that follow.

You will need to download this work book so that you can type in the answers.

When completed submit it to me to be marked in google classroom.

Mr Jones.

**Introduction to ‘Who Was Jesus?’**

**Who was Jesus?**

This topic explores the person of Jesus himself – not just the holy, Son of God that Christians believe in, but also the Jesus of history and his purpose during his time on earth. Some people also consider Jesus to be an important historical figure who taught morality and wisdom to people during his time. Others argue that he was a political liberator (someone who would save them), whose purpose was to free the poor and outcast of society from the cruelty of the Romans.

This workbook will explore:

1. What was life like in Ancient Judea?
2. What is the historical evidence for the existence of Jesus?
3. Was Jesus a moral teacher or a reformer?
4. What evidence is there for Jesus as the Son of God?
5. What is the impact of Jesus on the world?
6. Who was/is Jesus to you?

**Viewpoints:**

This unit will explore the above questions in relation to religious viewpoints, including Christianity, and non-religious viewpoints, such as Humanism. In particular, we will look at the above topics from the viewpoint of a historian and from a position of faith.

**Where does this fit in with our previous learning?**

In previous learning, we have already explored basic understandings of Christian and Muslim beliefs. Both religions regard the person of Jesus to be something special. For example, in Christianity, Jesus is considered the Son of God and God himself, come to earth in human form. However, in Islam, Jesus is a prophet or a moral teacher, who delivered messages from Allah and used Allah’s power to perform miracles.

NB: If you are interested in sociology, this unit is an interesting study surrounding the person and influence of an important historical figure and can help to expand your skills of interpretation and evaluation.

**Why are we learning this now?**Now that we have a basic grasp of beliefs, we need to look at how they are interpreted or understood by different people. Jesus is one of the most famous names throughout the world, and therefore, for most people, ‘Jesus’ means something – even if it isn’t that he was a divine Son of God.

It is important to discover exactly what the name means, not just for yourself, but for all people who will inevitably respond to the history of the man behind the name. We should explore what ‘take-home message’ can be learned from this figure and why his life held such importance for people globally, over thousands of years.

**Introduction to Ethics: Knowledge Check**



1. What does the topic of ‘Who Was Jesus?’ explore?

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1. What different things do people consider ‘Jesus’ to be?

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1. What cruelty do some people argue that Jesus was going to liberate or free them from?

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1. Where does this fit in with our previous learning?

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1. How is Jesus seen in Islam?

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1. Why are we learning this now?

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**1. What was life like in Ancient Judea?**

Before we explore any historical figure, we need to look at the **context** of the time in which that person was born. So, for example, if one day students in schools were studying **you**, they would need to look at our time in history and what life was like in your community in 21st Century Britain.

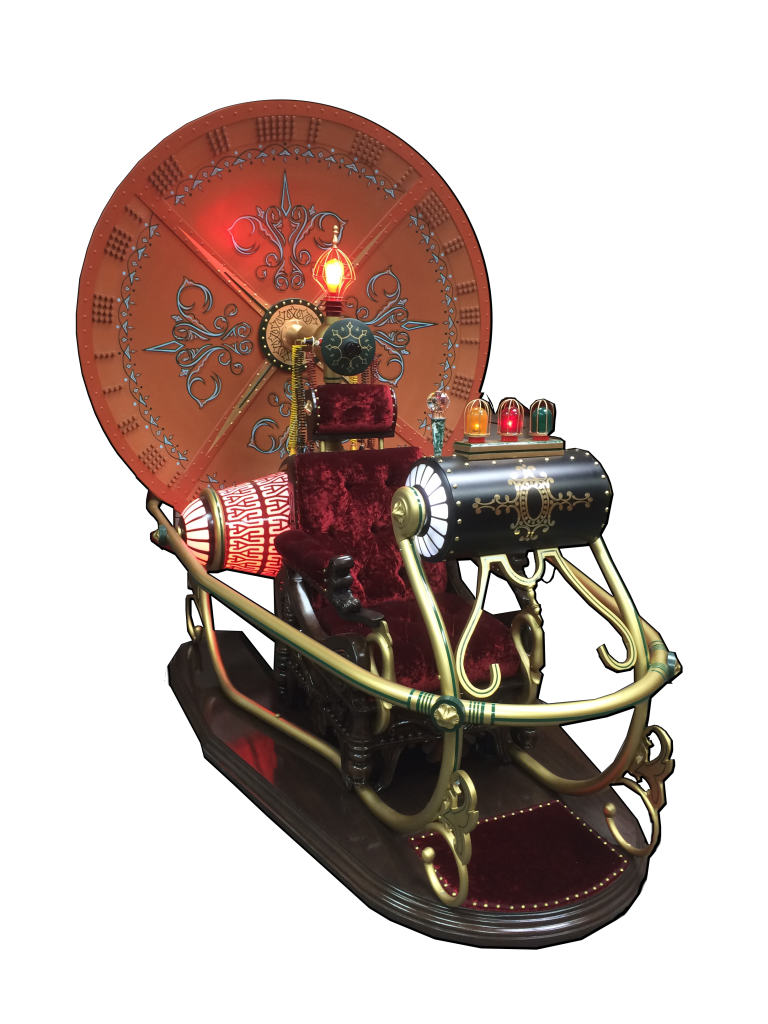
**Key Word**: Context  
The situation within which something exists or happens.

Therefore, we must begin by exploring the **time** that Jesus lived and what life was like in Ancient Judea (where Jesus lived) almost 2000 years ago.

**Enter the Time Machine…!**

In the time machine, you go back to Ancient Judea, 2025 years ago. You see:

* Judaism is the main religion, with believers trying to follow over 600 purity rules every day!
* The Romans are in charge, having taken control of Ancient Judea during their expansion from Rome
* Homes had no running water or electricity; personal hygiene wasn’t as good as it is today. This means that the poorer people can’t afford the same standard of cleanliness as the rich.
* Food is grown, traded for or bought
* People who are ill are ‘outcast’ from society and seen as ‘dirty’
* The people are suspicious of things they do not understand. For example,  
  people with leprosy are shunned and made to live together away from  
  the rest of society. Today, antibiotics can help to treat this disease.
* Only men are seen in the street. Women and children stay at home.
* Richer residents had slaves to help with their chores.
* The Pharisees are the leaders of the Jewish community, but still  
  answered to Roman rule.
* There are a group of rebels known as the Zealots. They opposed Roman  
  rule.
* Lots of people have claimed to be prophets in this culture.
* The Talmud (a Jewish holy book) gives two examples of Jewish miracle  
  workers at the time that Jesus is around. These men (and they were male,   
  never female) were often respected for their relationship with God. They  
  were even called ‘Lord’ or ‘Saviour’ too.
* The Jewish people are waiting for the Romans to fall and to be ruled by  
  a Jewish king once again. This would only happen if God wanted it to.



**Life in Ancient Judea: Knowledge Check**



1. What was the main religion 2025 years ago in Ancient Judea?

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1. Who is in charge of the area?

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1. What was personal hygiene like?

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1. How were the sick and ill treated?

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1. What was the role of women?

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1. If you were wealthy, who helped with the chores?

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1. Who were the Pharisees?

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1. Who were the Zealots?

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1. Was claiming to be a ‘prophet’ unusual at this time?

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1. What does the Talmud tell us about?

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1. What were the Jewish people waiting for?

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1. When would this (your answer to number 11) happen?

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1. Think about everything you’ve just learned. Was it unheard of, then, that a man like Jesus was in Ancient Judea at the time? Explain your answer.

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**2. Why did the Romans invade Judea?**

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| The Romans did not invade Judea because it was a wealthy land, or a desirable place to live. For the Romans to be able to trade with Egypt, they needed a safe route via land. **They conquered Judea so they could easily trade with Egypt**. |
| When the Romans invaded, they controlled the governance of Judea. The King who ruled there was still allowed to keep his crown, though he did not decide the laws of the land or the punishments for breaking these laws. **The Roman Empire chose a governor to rule Judea for the empire**. |
| The **people of Judea were used to harsh punishments** for sins and crimes, but were not prepared for the barbarity (harshness) that the Romans would bring with them in the form of punishments. **A new punishment imposed by the Romans was Crucifixion**, where a person was nailed to a cross and left to die an agonisingly painful death. This could take between five to twenty hours. |
| The **Romans were seen to be very rude towards Judaism**. They were disrespectful to a sacred place called the “Holy of Holies.” It was believed G-d appeared once a year in this place to communicate with the head priest of Judaism in Judea, only the head priest was allowed to enter this place once a year. **Roman soldiers were curious at meeting the Jewish G-d so would enter the place at their own pleasure**. |



**The Romans: Knowledge Check**

1. Why did the Romans invade Ancient Judea?

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1. What happened to the existing king when the Romans invaded?

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1. What sort of punishments were the people of Judea used to?

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1. Which new punishment did the Romans bring to Ancient Judea?

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1. How were the Romans rude towards Judaism?

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**Crime and Punishment under Roman rule and Jewish law**

**Key Word**: Sabbath  
The holy day of the week – the day for rest and for worshipping God. In Western cultures, and in Christianity, this day is Sunday. However, in Judaism, the Sabbath is Friday night at sunset to Saturday night at sunset.

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| **homer simpson bart - JungleKey.fr ImageDisrespecting your parents** | In Ancient Judea, **disrespecting your parents** was considered a great sin, and it was therefore a **crime** to disrespect or wound (hurt) your parents.  This is because one of the Ten Commandments is: *“You shall  respect your mother and your father.”*  This commandment is one of the ten unbreakable rules **God gave to Jews**; therefore, it ***has*** to be followed. The common punishment for this sin was **public strangulation**. |
| **Pebble Stone PNG Transparent Images | PNG AllWorking on the Sabbath (holy day)** | The Sabbath is the **day of rest**. For Jews this day is a Saturday.  The Jews celebrate the Sabbath because **God rested after creating the world**, so they mirror God in resting one day out of every seven.  God had instructed all Jews in the **Ten Commandments** *to* *practice (observe) the Sabbath*, so not doing so was seen as directly going against God.  The punishment for working on the Sabbath was a **public stoning**. |
| Stoning - Wikipedia**Homosexuality** | Jews believed that **only men and women** should have sex and procreate (have babies). The purpose of sex was to have children, and this should only be done **within a marriage**.  It is impossible to procreate naturally when practicing homosexual sex, therefore Jews saw this as an **abuse of a God’s blessing**. This is what made it a **sin**.  The normal punishment for Homosexual relationships was a **public execution by stoning**. |
| Learn English Words - BLASPHEMY - Meaning, Vocabulary ...**Blasphemy** | Blasphemy is using **disrespectful language towards God**, or insulting God. (In Judaism, even God’s name is not written down. Instead, they would write **G-d**! The gap between ‘G’ and ‘d’ shows us that there is much that we do not know about God!) There is no excuse for blasphemy as the Jews were told this was a **sin** when Moses was given the **Ten Commandments**,which say, *“Do not take the Lord’s name in vain”.*  Blasphemy was considered a serious crime in Ancient Judea, and was **punishable by a public execution of stoning**. |
| Fireman Fire Hot · Free vector graphic on Pixabay**Worshipping other gods** | Jews believe there is **only one God**, who is all powerful, knowing and loving in nature. It is said in the **Ten Commandments** that *“no-one is to worship any false gods.”* This means if anyone is worshipping any God other than the Jewish God, then they are committing a terrible **sin**.  The **punishment** for teaching about false Gods or worshipping false Gods was a **public execution by burning**. |



**Crime and Punishment: Knowledge Check**

**Key Word**: Crime  
An action that goes against the law.

**Key Word**: Sin  
An action that goes against God’s rules.

1. Why was disrespecting your parents considered a crime and a sin?

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1. What was the punishment for disrespecting your parents?

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1. What is the Sabbath?

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1. Why is working on the Sabbath seen as a crime and a sin in Ancient Judea?

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1. What was the punishment for working on the Sabbath?

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1. Why was homosexuality considered a crime in Ancient Judea?

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1. What was the punishment for homosexual relationships?

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1. What is blasphemy?

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1. Why was blasphemy a crime and a sin in Ancient Judea?

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1. What was the punishment for blasphemy?

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1. Why was worshipping other gods a crime and a sin in Ancient Judea?

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1. What was the punishment worshipping other gods?

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1. Were these punishment fair, in your opinion? Explain your answer.

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So, the Romans had invaded. Life wasn’t ideal for the people of Judea. The Jews cried out for their Messiah…

**3. What was the idea of the ‘Messiah’?**

**Fill in the Blanks: What was the Messiah?**

Even 2,000 years ago, the Jewish people had suffered a history of persecution at the hands of the ….............., where they had been enslaved.

Since this time, there had been many ….............. who spiritually led the Jewish people and who prophesised (…...........) the coming of a Messiah who would ….............. them.

When the Romans invaded Judea, many Jews thought this would be the time where the …............ would come to save them. Many Jews thought that this saviour would be a strong …............. who would defeat the Romans in battle.

The prophecies predicted that this Messiah would be born in …................, and would a descendent of King …............, and that he would be a ‘Prince of …................’

**Words:**David Warrior Messiah Egyptians Prophets   
Peace Save Bethlehem Predicted

**4. What is the historical evidence that Jesus existed?**

Some people doubt the existence of Jesus, however there is substantial evidence that Jesus the man did actually exist. Perhaps what people mean when they say they don’t believe in Jesus is that they don’t believe that he was the Son of God, which is a much more plausible belief to hold.

Let’s look at the evidence that gives evidence of Jesus’ existence as a real, walking talking human being. Before we do, we need to explore another key word: bias.

**Key Word**: Bias  
Being unfairly in favour of something or against something. For example, the media might not want to show positive images of the Prime Minister, so every picture they publish of him/her makes them look silly or weak.

The word ‘bias’ is important because when we explore historical documents, we need to understand whether or not the writer has a bias – anything that might have made them think unfairly about the event or person.

For example, the disciples (Jesus’ followers) will have written with bias. They believed in Jesus as the Son of God and wanted to spread his message; therefore, it is not as trustworthy as something that was written by a non-Christian, who had no interest in whether or not Jesus’ message was spread.

**Historical Evidence**

What does the source say?

Who wrote it?

|  |  |
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| Josephus    Jewish historian,  a former soldier, writing in 93AD | “There was a wise man, Jesus the son of Joseph.  Many people thought he was a wonder worker. He taught people who wanted to learn the truth and he won over many Judeans and many foreigners.  Those who followed him thought he was God’s chosen leader.” |
| Tacitus    Roman historian  writing in 115AD | “Nero blamed and tortured a group of people hated for their evil practices – a group popularly known as Christians.  Christ (Jesus), from whom the group took their name, was crucified by Pontius Pilate, one of our governors, during the reign of the Emperor Tiberius.  The deadly superstition broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but also in Rome.” |
| Pliny  Image result for pliny the younger  Roman governor | “They (Christians) were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn promise…never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to lie…” |

**Evidence Today**

**Evidence 1**: **The existence of churches**

**More Information:** There are over 37 million churches worldwide and over 2.5 billion Christians around the world – that’s a third of the entire human population! Can this many people really be wrong?

**Evidence 2**: **Some people experience miracles or religious experiences that confirm their faith.**

**More Information:** Many people claim to have seen or felt Jesus during an unexplained event called a religious experience. The most famous of these was Saul, who was blinded by Jesus’ light on the road to Damascus. He was   
helped to an inn by a Christian, where Saul regained his sight and converted to Christianity. After this, he became known as Paul.

**Evidence 3**: **The Bible (holy book of Christianity) and The Qur’an (holy book of Islam)**

**More Information:**

The Christian Bible predicts Jesus’ coming and tells us about his life on earth. It is a biography of Jesus’ life. It is written by 67 different writers, who all claim a similar story when discussing the history of God. Other holy books from other religions and cultures (Islam) also talk about the person of Jesus, who preached about God and  
performed miracles with God’s power.



**Historical Evidence: Knowledge Check**

1. What is a more plausible belief to hold about Jesus than saying he didn’t exist?

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1. What is the meaning of ‘bias’?

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1. Why is the word ‘bias’ important?

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1. Why would the accounts of Jesus written by the discipled have been biased?

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1. Who was Josephus?

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1. What did Josephus say about Jesus?

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1. What did Tacitus say about Jesus?

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1. Who was Pliny?

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1. What did Pliny say about Jesus?

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1. Why can Pliny be trusted?

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**TASK: Read the information about ‘Evidence Today’.**

In your opinion, which form of evidence is the most reliable source of evidence today in our modern world?

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**5. Was Jesus a Moral Teacher?**

As we have already seen, the crimes and sins in ancient Judea were almost one and the same. When Jesus started teaching, he separated sins from crimes, but said it was also important to follow the law – not just obeying God’s commands.

At the time, Jews were following over 600 purity laws every day. That’s so many rules! It would be very hard to keep on top of all of those laws!

However, one day, Jesus was preaching to his followers. A man asked him, “teacher, which is the greatest commandment?”

Jesus said, “Love God with all your heart, soul and mind,” and the second is, “love your neighbour as yourself.”

**Why is this important?**

This is a special moment in Christian history where Jesus turns 613 rules into just two – to Love God, and to Love others. This is the beginning of a difference between Judaism (then) and Christians today, who choose to firstly, Love God; secondly, love others.

Jesus also taught lots of stories called **Parables**, which are stories containing a moral or ethical message.

**Key Word**: Parable  
A story that tells people how to behave or how to act morally (right)

**Parable of the Good Samaritan: Luke 10: 30-37**

One of Jesus’ most famous parables includes the Parable of the Good Samaritan:

A lawyer asked Jesus, “What shall I do to go to heaven?”

Jesus replied with this story:

*A man was travelling to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who robbed him, and wounded him, leaving him half dead.*

*A priest went that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*

*A Levite came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.*

*But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him and went to him. He bound up his wounds and brought him to an inn, and took care of him, paying the costs himself.*

Jesus said, “Which of these three was neighbour to the injured man?”

The lawyer answered, “He that shewed mercy on him”.

Then said Jesus to the lawyer, “Go, and do likewise.”



**Moral Teacher: Knowledge Check**

1. What did Jesus say it was important to do?

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1. How many purity laws were Jewish people following during Jesus’ time?

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1. How many laws did Jesus say to follow? What were they?

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1. Why is it important that Jesus reduced these rules down?

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1. What are Parables?

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1. Summarise the Parable of the Good Samaritan in your own words.

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1. Which of Jesus’ rules or laws is the Parable of the Good Samaritan about?

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1. In your opinion, how does this Parable show that Jesus was a teacher or morals?

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**TASK**: Research one other Parable of Jesus’. Choose a Parable from the list below and explain how it shows Jesus to be a teacher or morals.

1. Parable of the Lost Son
2. Parable of the Sheep and the Goats
3. Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

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**6. Was Jesus a Jewish Reformer?**

 **Key Word**: Rituals  
A story that tells people how to behave or how to act morally (right)

Rituals are very common part of most religions; they are a way to demonstrate belief through an action. An example of a religious ritual is practicing the Eucharist (Christians eating bread and drinking wine at the end of a Church service, to represent the body of Christ).

In the times of Jesus Christ, Judaism had many rituals, and it was expected that if you were Jewish, you would live your life by these rituals, as they are a sign of respect to God. There are stories about Jesus where he argues that rituals are not as important as trying to live your life as a moral (good) person. He argued that God was more concerned with how you treated other people, than how you worshipped him.

Therefore, instead of following the rituals, Jesus argued that you should follow teachings about loving God and loving your neighbour instead.

By ‘neighbour’, Jesus did not mean the actual person who lives next to you, but everyone you come into contact with.

The following quotes are from Jesus:

* Love for neighbour as you love yourself
* Love your enemies
* Love the Lord your God
* Forgive others, as God forgives you
* He who is without sin may throw the first stone
* Treat others as you would like to be treated

**Jewish Reformer: Knowledge Check**

1. What is the meaning of ‘ritual’?

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1. What is an example of a ritual?

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1. What did Jesus argue about the rituals?

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1. Which of the quotes from Jesus (above) is the most important, in your opinion? Explain why.

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1. Which of the quotes from Jesus (above) is the least important, in your opinion? Explain why.

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**Judaism: A Religion of Rituals**

Religious rules in conflict with the will of G-d

An example of a Jewish ritual is eating according to the Jewish food laws. This is called ‘Kosher’. A Jew can only eat certain types of food (e.g. no Pork), and they must wash their hands, as this is a sign of respect to God. This rule is commanded in the Torah, which is the Jewish Holy Book.

**Fun Fact!** The first part of the Bible (the **Old Testament**) is the Jewish Torah!

Jesus and his disciples were eating food outside the temple with dirty hands. Some Priests criticised Jesus for this, as it was disrespectful to God.

Jesus replied with: *“It is not what we put into our mouths which makes us unclean, but what comes out which makes us unclean.”*

**TASK: Read “Judaism: a Religion of Rituals” (above) and answer the following questions:**

1. What point is Jesus trying to make here? (Think about what the law says and what Jesus was saying)

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1. Who do you think is correct in this instance? Jesus or the law?

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**7. Was Jesus a Political Liberator?**

 **Key Word**: Political Liberator  
A liberator is someone who ‘frees’ another person or a group. A ‘political liberator’ frees a person or group from the society that puts them down.

Some people believe that if Jesus was around today, he would be a **freedom fighter** – someone who took on the unfair authority to find justice for the poor and weak in society.

There is evidence in the Bible for this opinion:

1. **Jesus mixes with the outcasts**As we have already seen, in Judea it was seen as ‘unclean’ to mix with people who were ill, diseased, bleeding or dying. However, Jesus included everyone in his teachings and miracles. From **Zacchaeus** the tax collector, who was shut out of society because of his cheating ways, to women who had sold their bodies to men. Jesus is shown to be someone who frees and ‘saves’ all, not just those who society accepts. His work is for all people.
2. **Jesus heals people**Jesus heals many people during his miracles. He heals blind men, paralyzed men, the woman who couldn’t stop bleeding, and he even raises people from the dead. This went against the culture of the time because these people were considered unclean and were outcasts. He frees these people from their suffering. Some people argue it is a physical healing, whereas others argue it was a spiritual healing – a healing of the mind.
3. **Jesus talks about God’s “Kingdom”**Jesus talks knowledgeable about God’s Kingdom, or heaven. He said, “the first will be last and the last will be first”, meaning that those people who were put down and outcast in this world, will be first in the world to come. He is able to ‘free’ people from the restrictions of this world, when people are so obsessed with money and material things, and promise them a life of eternal bliss with God.

This view of Jesus being a political liberator **directly goes against** the popular opinion that Jesus was a pacifist.

**Key Word**: Pacifist

Someone who is opposed to any form of violence.



**Political Liberator: Knowledge Check**

1. What is the meaning of ‘political liberator’?

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1. What do some people believe Jesus would be if he was around today?

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1. Explain what evidence there is in the Bible for Jesus being a political liberator.

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1. In your opinion, which view is more realistic:
   1. Jesus was a pacifist. He did not go against the law at the time and did not want to get into any direct conflict with the authority.
   2. Jesus was a political reformer. He went against the law when he had to because of the unfair state of the society he lived in.

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**8. Was Jesus the Son of God?**

Many Christians believe that Jesus was the Son of God because of these main reasons:

1. **Jesus’ mother, Mary, was a virgin**

The Bible records accounts of Jesus’ birth. Mary is considered to be a pure human being – the only human being to be born without sin, except for Jesus. Because of this, God blessed her with a child – Jesus.  
  
However, some people argue we *know* how babies are made – through sexual intercourse. How could this be a one-off event?

1. **He had knowledge of God that he could not have got from anywhere else**  
   When Jesus was a boy, he had unusual knowledge of God and would often be found in the Temples talking with the Rabbis on matters of faith. Later, when he started his teaching, his quotes, teachings, stories and parables were all very different for the context of the time that Jesus was raised in. They would not have been believed by many people. In fact, it is these teachings (that were so different to the laws in place at the time) that got him killed.  
     
   However, if Jesus had been studying the Jewish Bible (called the Torah) from a young age, he would have known the holy book well. In the Torah, there are sayings such as ‘love your neighbour’ and ‘Love God’ was a commandment given by Moses. Therefore, his knowledge might not have been entirely unique.
2. **He could perform miracles**  
   The Bibles all tell stories of Jesus’ miracles – Jesus is able to act with God’s power to heal the sick, cure the paralysed and repair injuries. Interestingly however, the word ‘miracle’ isn’t used in the Bible. Instead, the writers use the word ‘wonder’. These ‘wonders’ have even been documented by famous historians at the time, which would not contain bias. For example, looking back at topic 4 in this booklet, Josephus calls Jesus a “wonder-worker”.  
     
   However, it was not uncommon for people to claim to work wonders or miracles at the time of Jesus in Ancient Judea. Could it be that Jesus was just another faker?
3. **He came back from the dead**  
   The most difficult miracle to explain is Jesus’ own resurrection (Jesus coming back to life), where he was seen to be killed, buried and left in a tomb. The Sunday following, the tomb was empty and Jesus had ‘risen’. There are many reports of physically seeing the risen Jesus in the Bible; it is believed that he was seen by over 500 people. If this is true, then how could Jesus **not** be the Son of God? Only God’s power would be able to do such an amazing act!  
   However, these accounts are found in the Bible and therefore could contain bias because they were written by the disciples, who would have had an agenda when writing their Gospels. Therefore, the accounts might not be completely reliable.

**Key Word**: Miracle

An event that goes against the laws of nature and can only be explained by the   
action of a deity (God)

**Key Word**: Virgin

Someone who has not had sex. Sex is needed to create life.



**Son of God: Knowledge Check**

1. What are the main reasons that Christians believe Jesus was the Son of God?

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1. What was special about Jesus’ birth?

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1. What opposing argument is there against this evidence that Jesus was born to a Virgin, Mary?

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1. What was so special about Jesus’ knowledge of God?

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1. What opposing argument is there against the evidence that Jesus had rare, special knowledge?

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1. What was special about the miracles Jesus could perform?

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1. What non-biased evidence is there for Jesus performing miracles?

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1. What opposing argument is there against the evidence of Jesus’ miracles?

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1. What was so special about the resurrection?

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1. What opposing argument is there against the evidence that Jesus rose from the dead?

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TASK: Which argument for Jesus being the Son of God is the most convincing, in your opinion? Explain why.

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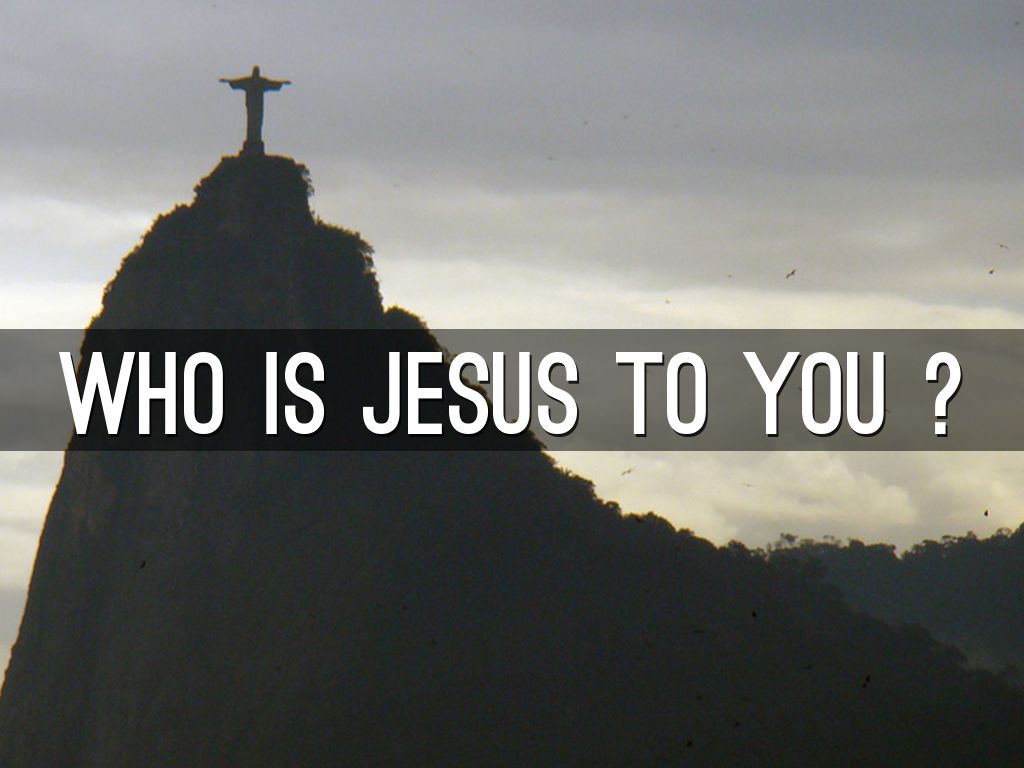
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**9. Who was Jesus to you?**

**TASK:** Think about everything we have explored in this booklet, including all of the different ideas of who Jesus might be – a historical figure, a teacher, a liberator, a Son of God.

In the space below, explain in detail your own opinion on who Jesus was.

Use the sentence starters below to help you:

* *In my opinion, Jesus was…*
* *This is because…*
* *In the Bible is says…*
* *However, this could be biased because…*
* *Historical accounts also report Jesus to be…*
* *These are not biased because…*
* *It could be that Jesus also was a…*
* *The evidence for this is…*
* *However, I think it is more likely that Jesus was a…*
* *This is because…*

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