

1. WHAT DOES THE NAME JESUS MEAN?



Dads and mums usually choose a name for their baby before the baby is born.

Sometimes they choose two names: one if you turn out to be a boy, and another if you're a girl!

So you probably got your name before anybody knew very much about you!

It's good to have a name, isn't it? You wouldn't much like being just a number, would you?

Babies' names are usually chosen for a reason. There are all kinds of reasons. Maybe the parents just liked the name.

Some mums and dads chose their baby's name because someone else in the family had it. Sometimes it's because of somebody well-known they hope their baby will be like.

God chose Jesus' name for him.

He chose it for him before anybody else knew exactly when he was coming into the world.

Most names have a meaning. Sometimes names come from other languages. In those languages the word means something special.

Did you know that the name Jesus is really the same as the name Joshua? It comes from two Hebrew words which mean *the Lord saves*.

God sent an angel called Gabriel to tell Mary that she was going to have a baby boy. Gabriel means *Man of God*. Mary means *bitter*.

Mary was probably only about sixteen at the time. She loved God very much and wanted to serve him. Gabriel told Mary that when the baby was born she was to call him Jesus.

Mary was going to marry a man called Joseph. He was a very good man. God sent his angel to Joseph as well to let him know about Jesus. The angel told Joseph what was going to happen. He explained why this name was so important.

Gabriel said to Joseph: 'Jesus will save his people from their sins'.

So, right from the start of his life, Mary and Joseph knew what Jesus was going to do.

They must have thought a lot about what the angel said.

They must have wondered: How is Jesus going to do this?

That is one of the things we are going to try to discover in *The Big Book of Questions and Answers about Jesus*.

Each bit of *The Big Book* will tell you something more about Jesus.

1

Question

What does the name *Jesus* mean?

Answer

The name *Jesus* means: 'The Lord saves'.

One day in Old Testament times, God spoke to Moses from inside a burning bush! Moses asked God: 'Who are you? Do you have a name I can call you?'

God said: 'I am who I am. Call me 'I AM'.'

So from then on God's people called him I AM. In Hebrew his name was Yahweh. Yahweh said to Moses: 'I have come to save the people from their slavery in Egypt and to take them into a new land. I will save them.'

The man who led them into the promised land was called Yahweh Saves. His name was Joshua. But God knew we would need another kind of salvation from another kind of slavery. He promised he would send a Saviour.

For years and years God's plan was hidden from almost everybody. But God told bits of his plan to men called prophets. They learned that a Saviour would come. They wrote down what God told them so that the secret wouldn't be lost. So when Jesus was born, some people were waiting for the Saviour. They weren't sure who the Saviour was. But they knew he would come. Jesus is that Saviour. That is why he was called: The Lord Saves.

Memory Verse

You are to give him the name *Jesus*, because he will save his people from their sins.

Matthew chapter 1, verse 21.

ACTIVITIES



Read Matthew chapter 1, verses 18-25 to discover how Jesus got his name.

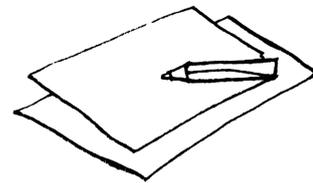
TALKING TIME:



Ask your mum or dad if your name means anything special. Why were you given your name? Do you have brothers and sisters? What do their names mean?

ACTION TIME:

Turn up Exodus chapter 3 in the Bible. Draw a picture of what is described there – with God's words coming out of the bush.



PRAYER TIME:



Lord Jesus, I am so glad that you have a name I can use when I speak to you. Thank you for being so willing to come into this world to be our Saviour. Help me to trust you to be my Saviour. Amen.

2. WHERE AND WHEN DID JESUS LIVE?



Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the land of Judea.

The Romans ruled the world then. They had a kind of king, who was called Caesar. He allowed other countries to have their own kings—so long as they did what he wanted them to do. So they weren't real kings at all.

In Judea the name of the king was Herod. He was not a good man.

One of these Roman kings, called Caesar Augustus had decided to have what is called a census. In a census all kinds of information about people is written down. It helps the government to decide what to do. Some countries today have a census every ten years.

Caesar Augustus wanted to raise taxes. He wanted money to help him rule the Roman Empire. He needed to build roads; he needed to pay his soldiers. Lots of money was needed.

Nowadays in a census, every family just gets a form to fill in.

In those days, everyone had to go to the original home town of their family.

Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth. They had to go to Bethlehem.

That was a journey of about 90 miles.

Jesus was just about to be born. The journey must have been a very hard one for Mary.

When they got to Bethlehem, it was full of people. There was no room for them anywhere. But an innkeeper allowed them to use his stable. Isn't that amazing? Jesus was born in a stable for animals.

People came to visit the baby Jesus. Shepherds and strange wise men from the East came to see him. Someone else wanted to come to see Jesus. That someone else was King Herod.

When King Herod heard about the birth of a new king, he wanted to get rid of him. To make sure, he planned to kill all the baby boys born in Bethlehem under two years old.

Joseph took Mary and Jesus as far away as possible – they ended up in Egypt. Then, when Herod died, they all moved back home to Nazareth. Jesus grew up in Nazareth. Later on he seems to have moved to Capernaum which is near the Sea of Galilee.

All this happened two thousand years ago.

Question

Where and when did Jesus live?

Answer

Jesus was born about two thousand years ago in Bethlehem, and then went to live in Nazareth, where he grew up.

Jesus is a real person. He had experiences like ours. Some of them must have been very difficult.

He was not born in a nice hospital, but probably in a cave.

When he was a little boy he had to be taken to another country because the King was trying to kill him.

He lived in this world in the little town of Nazareth. He watched Joseph making things out of wood; he went to school; he had to do his homework.

Jesus began life as a very small baby; he grew up to be a boy. Then he became a teenager. Finally he became a full grown man.

For a long time Jesus just lived quietly, loving his Heavenly Father. He experienced the same kinds of things you do.

That is how we know he understands what it is like for us.

Memory Verse

She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke chapter 2, verse 7.

ACTIVITIES



Read Matthew chapter 2, verses 1-23 to find out what adventures Jesus had when he was still a little boy.

TALKING TIME:

Ask your mum what it was like to look after you in the first few years of your life. Ask your dad what he thinks it must have been like for Joseph to look after Mary and Jesus when they were in Egypt.



ACTION TIME:



Look up a map of Palestine at the back of a Bible. Draw an outline of it and then fill in the places where Jesus lived at different times.

PRAYER TIME:

Father God, I thank you for sending your Son, the Lord Jesus, to the world to live and die for sinners like me. Help me to be more like your Son. Make me someone who loves and trusts you.
Amen.

