After John’s death Herod the tetrarch believed Jesus to be:
- John resurrected, Elijah
- Or one the other prophets

According to Luke
- Powerful, but enigmatic prophet
- His birth is an answer to prayer
- The first preacher of the gospel of salvation
- He prepares the way of the LORD
  - Who will baptize with the Holy Spirit

Jesus of Nazareth
- Jesus esteems John to be the greatest, but..
- The one who effects salvation is greater than the one who preaches it

Jesus of Nazareth according to Matthew
- Jesus is the Christ
- Jesus is the direct descendant of David and of Abraham
- Jesus’ family tree
  - From Abraham to David
  - From David to the Babylonian captivity
  - From the Babylonian captivity to the birth of Christ
- Jesus family tree signifies
  - Jesus is the heir to the Abrahamic promises and covenant
  - Jesus is the direct heir of Judah from whom will come kings
  - Jesus is heir to the Davidic covenant
- Jesus is the extension of the covenants and agent of the 6th cycle
- Jesus identity is shaped by Israel’s salvation history
- Jesus’ identity clarified by names and titles
  - Named Jesus—God will save his people from their sins
  - Named Immanuel—God with us
  - Named King of the Jews by the magi
  - Herod understood King of the Jews to be the Christ
  - Born to be ruler and shepherd
- Jesus’ identity clarified by names and titles
  - Not just and random Joshua
  - Jesus must be the Messiah, the incarnate Christ
- Jesus as the incarnate Christ
  - Immaculate conception/virgin birth fulfills many prophecies
• The fulfillment formula/theme
  o That which was spoken/written by/through the Lord/Prophet
  o The virgin shall conceive and bear a son
  o Born in Bethlehem
  o Called out of Egypt
  o Herod kills the children
  o Matthew emphasizes the continuity from the earlier cycles to the present

Jesus of Nazareth according to Luke
• Luke’s narrative complements Matthew’s
  o Births of John and Jesus signal the last days have begun
  o After Malachi prophecy ceased
  o Lk reports an outburst of renewed prophecy

• Outburst of renewed prophecy
  o John the Baptist
  o Elizabeth
  o Zacharias
  o Simeon

• Therefore, the last days have begun
• Outburst of renewed prophecy
  • Therefore, the last days have begun
  • An initial fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy
  o The outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh
• Mary’s baby is identified by name and title: Jesus
• Angels identify Jesus as Savior, Christ and Lord
  o Titles used to identify Israel’s God
  o Titles used by Roman kings and emperors
  o But here attributed to a carpenter’s baby boy?
  o Blasphemous for any baby unless he truly is the Savior

• Luke’s genealogy begins with son of Joseph
• Concludes with son of Adam, son of God
  o Identify the dual nature of Jesus—both man and God

• This is the result of the immaculate conception/virgin birth
• Identifies Jesus as the Christ
  o The Hebrew= Meshiach, anglicised as Messiah, is the anointed one
  o Greek = Christos > Christ

• Jesus’ anointing
  o Occurred when Jesus is baptized by John
  o Two signs of Jesus’ anointing
The New Start
According to Matthew

Kingdom of Heaven/God, a present reality
• The term, kingdom of heaven, appears approx. 40x in Matthew
• Its arrival announced by John and Jesus
  o “repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (4.17)
  o “blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (5.2)
  o “blessed are those who have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (5.10)
  o “Unless... you will not enter the kingdom of heaven” (5.20)
  o “your kingdom come” (6.9)

Kingdom of Heaven/God, a future reality
• The immediate future of the distant reality
• An immediate reality
  o “There are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom” (16.28)
  o i.e. the transfiguration (17.1-8)
• Heavens rule/ kingdom
  o Is experienced in repentance and forgiveness
  o Bestows blessings
  o Is expressed in submission to God’s will
  o Dividing between the righteous and unrighteous extends to the end of the age

The New Start
According to Luke

Luke’s gospel distinction
• Incorporates approx. 600 verses of Mark
• Incorporates approx. 200 verses of Matthew not found in Mark
• Also contains data exclusive to his own gospel
• One of Mark’s theme’s Jesus is the Son of Man
• One of Matthews themes: Jesus is the Son of David
• Luke presents Jesus as the Son of God
Implications:
• In terms of interrelatedness, there is one gospel
• In terms of form, there are many gospels

Son of God
• According to his emphasis
  o Lukes genealogy works back generations, son of, son of, etc
  o From Joseph to Adam, son of God (3.38)
• This theme highlights 4 events in Jesus’ life
• Some Jews react violently to Jesus’ claim to be their redeemer God
  ▪ Water libation ceremony
    • Offering of water poured on the altar
  ▪ Jesus interrupts the ceremony
    • “if anyone thirsts, lit him come to me and drink”
    • “out of his heart will flow rivers of living water”
    • Jesus is speaking of the Spirit
  ▪ 3 responses
    • Jesus is the prophet
    • Jesus is the Messiah
    • Jesus cannot be the Messiah, he’s just Joe carpenter guy
  ▪ The unbeliever’s wanted to kill him
  ▪ Candlestick/torch ceremony
    • Four pillars lit like huge candles
    • Temple became “the light of Jerusalem”
  ▪ Jesus declares
    • “I am the light of the world”
    • “Whoever follows me...will have the light of life”
    • Heals a blind man who affirms Jesus is the Son of Man.

The growth & spread of Christianity

Background
  o Judgment ending the 5th cycle of turning points
    ▪ Jewish revolt against Roman rule—68AD
    ▪ Romans crush revolt
      • Temple destroyed—70AD
      • Many slaughtered/enslaved
  o 6th cycle of turning points begin with John the Baptist and Jesus
    ▪ Four witnesses, one message
    ▪ Advances to Luke’s witness to the growth of Christianity

Secondary Agents

• God is the primary agent
  o Jesus will commission and empower secondary agents
  o Acts reports on these secondary agents
    ▪ Re the growth and spread of Christianity
• Luke and Acts are a single book in 2 parts
  o Rarely treated accordingly
  o Acts is an historical sequel to all 4 gospels