

# Contents

Introduction / 9

Abbreviations / 13

## Part 1: Background Questions About the “Historical” Jesus

A: Questions Related to the Quest for the Historical Jesus

1. What Is at Stake Regarding the Four Gospels? / 17
2. Do the Gospels Present an Accurate Description of the Life of Jesus? / 27
3. What Were the First Two Quests for the Historical Jesus? / 39
4. What Is the Third Quest for the Historical Jesus? / 47
5. What Are the Various Views of the Historical Jesus? / 55

B: Questions Related to the Sources of the Historical Jesus

6. What Does the Old Testament Teach About the Coming Messiah? / 67
7. Is Jesus’ Life Confirmed by Non-Jewish and Jewish Sources? / 75
8. Are the Apocryphal Gospels a Reliable Source of the Historical Jesus? / 85
9. Was the Oral Tradition Regarding the Historical Jesus Reliable? / 97
10. What Does the NT (Outside the Gospels) Teach About Jesus’ Life and Teaching? / 107
11. What Do We Learn About the Historical Jesus from Archaeology? / 117

## Part 2: Questions About Jesus’ Birth and Childhood

A: Questions Related to the Birth of Jesus

12. When Was Jesus Born? / 129
13. Was Jesus Really Born of a Virgin? / 135
14. Why Does It Matter That Jesus Was Born of a Virgin? / 143
15. Did Isaiah 7:14 Predict That Jesus Would Be Born of a Virgin? / 153

B: Questions Related to the Childhood of Jesus

16. Did Jesus Have Brothers and Sisters? / 163
17. Was Jesus’ Family Rich or Poor? / 173
18. Did Jesus Do Miracles as a Child? / 181
19. What Language(s) Did Jesus Speak? / 189

## **Part 3: Questions About Jesus' Life and Teaching**

### **A: Questions Related to the Life of Jesus**

20. Why Are There Four Different Accounts of Jesus' Life? / 197
21. When Did Jesus Begin His Earthly Ministry? / 207
22. What Did the Baptism of Jesus Signify? / 213
23. What Is the Significance of Jesus' Temptations in the Wilderness? / 219
24. Who Were the Twelve Disciples, and Why Did Jesus Choose Twelve? / 229
25. What Does It Mean That Jesus Was Transfigured? / 241
26. Did Jesus Really Perform Miracles as an Adult? / 249

### **B: Questions Related to the Teaching of Jesus**

27. What Was the Focus of Jesus' Teaching? / 259
28. What Is the Main Message of Matthew About Jesus? / 267
29. What Is the Main Message of Mark About Jesus? / 277
30. What Is the Main Message of Luke About Jesus? / 283
31. What Is the Main Message of John About Jesus? / 293
32. What Did the Historical Jesus Say About His Return (in the Olivet Discourse)? / 301

## **Part 4: Questions About Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection**

### **A: Questions Related to the Crucifixion of Jesus**

33. What Is the Significance of the Triumphant Entry? / 311
34. When and Why Did Jesus Cleanse the Temple? / 319
35. Who Was Responsible for Jesus' Death? / 327
36. Why Did Jesus Die? / 335
37. Did Jesus Remain in the Tomb Three Days and Three Nights? / 343
38. Where Did Jesus' Spirit Go While His Body Was in the Tomb? / 347

### **B: Questions Related to the Resurrection of Jesus**

39. Did the Historical Jesus Rise from the Dead? / 355
40. What Is the Meaning of Jesus' Ascension? / 365

Select Bibliography / 371

Scripture Index / 375

Ancient Sources Index / 401