

Theme: Christian beliefs and practices – INCARNATION.

Key question: Was Jesus the Messiah?

Back ground: a messiah was needed

The **idea of a 'messiah'**, or 'saviour', is important in Jewish culture, and was **central to Jewish belief** in the years that Jesus lived and taught.

The land of Israel had been attacked and invaded since its creation 1,000 years previously. In 586 BCE the Jewish people were taken into exile in Babylon. Fifty years later they were allowed to return, but from then on, **their land was continually under occupation** by one foreign power or another. From 63 BCE, the Romans were the occupying power. The Jewish people hoped for a saviour, **a messiah, who would vanquish their enemies** and restore them to their homeland to live in peace under their own laws

Keywords

Incarnation – a God taking human form (to become flesh). Christians believe that God took human form by becoming Jesus.

Prophecy - A prediction of what will happen in the future.

Old Testament - The first part of the Christian Bible. Written about time before Jesus.

Gospel - The teaching of the life of Jesus.

Messiah - The promised Saviour.

Immanuel - 'God is with us'

Advent - The period leading up to the birth of Jesus.

Christ - the Greek word for 'anointed one', or 'Messiah'.

Key questions

- Was Jesus the Messiah?
- Why do Christians want to make Christmas about Jesus Christ?
- Why do Christians believe the world needed a "Saviour"?
- Why might people think that the world needs a saviour today?
- Imagine that there is a God: if this God sent a new messenger to Earth in the twenty-first century, what would the messenger say?
- Why are these symbols important and how do they help us recognise the messiah was promised?



Attainment targets

- I can explain the place of Incarnation and Messiah within the 'big story' of the Bible.
- I can identify Gospel and prophecy texts, using technical terms.
- I can explain connections between biblical texts, Incarnation and Messiah, using theological terms.
- I can show how Christians put their beliefs about Jesus' Incarnation into practice in different ways in celebrating Christmas.



- I can comment on how the idea that Jesus is the Messiah makes sense in the wider story of the Bible.
- I can weigh up how far the idea that Jesus is the Messiah — a Saviour from God — is important in the world today and, if it is true, what difference that might make in people's lives.

Key knowledge:

- Jesus was Jewish.
- Christians believe Jesus is God in the flesh.
- They believe that his birth, life, death and resurrection were part of a longer plan by God to restore the relationship between humans and God.
- The Old Testament talks about a 'rescuer' - a messiah. Some texts talk about what this 'messiah' would be like.
- Christians believe that Jesus fulfilled these expectations, and that he is the Messiah. (Jewish people do not think Jesus is the Messiah.)
- Christians see Jesus as their Saviour.

Key texts in the Bible.

Prophecies

Isaiah 7:14 - a special person sent by God. An Old Testament prophet like Elijah.

Micah 5:2 – Someone born in Bethlehem. A king for Israel to bring the country back to God.

Isaiah 9:6-7 - A great leader like David. Someone to make Israel a great nation and bring peace to the world.

Isaiah 11:1-5 - Someone descended from King David. A military leader to fight and defeat the enemy — the Romans.

Gospels

Matthew 1:18-24 – How the birth of Jesus came about.

Matthew 2:1-9 – The wise men searching for the baby who was 'born to be king'.

Luke 2:1-7 - The journey Mary and Joseph took from Nazareth, where they lived, to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.

John 1:14 – Jesus was God in human form.

