

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST

FROM ANNUNCIATION TO ASCENSION



BIBLE STUDY TEXT AND QUESTIONS VOLUME 01

LESSONS 001 THROUGH 013

Written by
Glen M. Copple

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“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

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“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

Class Overview

In order to get to know Jesus, we are going to embark on a three-year journey through His life and teachings. The objective is to get to know Him more intimately in an effort to become more like Him. We want to see and feel what He taught and what He did, so we will be able to live our lives more like God wants us to live. We will use Jesus as our role model.

The agenda is to study the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, taking the events of Christ's life in chronological order as best we can determine. The four Gospels will be arranged side by side when appropriate so that we may see how each writer saw the event being described. This will enable us to get a better view of what happened, and how it was understood at that time.

Why just the four Gospels?

We will be using Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in our study as our main study books. They give the historical record of Jesus' life and teachings on this earth. By concentrating on the Gospels and what they say, as well as, how they were understood by the early readers, we will be more able to apply to our own lives. The end goal is to get to know Jesus more intimately.

We will cite passages from the Old Testament, since the early readers had those to reference. We will not quote New Testament writers because the first Christians would not have had access to those writings. Our desire is to see Jesus from the perspective of the first readers who may not have been aware of the Epistles and other New Testament writings.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

Class Guidelines



Welcome to the “Getting To Know Jesus,” Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ Training Series. Many people since the days of Christ have desired to know Jesus just like the Greeks who were in Jerusalem around the time of His Crucifixion (*John 12:21*.) Many people claim to believe in Him, but how many really know anything about Him?

Could you give an accurate answer to anyone who asked you about who Jesus is and what He taught? The only way we are going to get to know Him is to study what the Bible says about Him and see how it applies to us today. In so doing, we will become intimately acquainted with Him and find ourselves living more like Him.

Our desire is to help you understand Jesus in a way that will help you better understand who He is and what He has done and how it applies to your life today.

Our Mission is to help you develop a passionate, personal, and powerful relationship with Jesus Christ so that you may live your life more like His.

Class Policies



This page shall establish some general guidelines to maintain a Christ-like spirit in the study sessions, and guard against destructive habits. They should be distributed, read, and understood by all who are taking this training series.

- 1) New Hope Gospel Ministries is committed to being as non-denominational as is humanly possible. We are not seeking uniformity, but unity based on the Word of God.
 - a) We recognize that students will be coming from all religious walks of life. Students come from various denominational backgrounds or levels of spiritual influence and maturity. We want to recognize that some of our strongly-held beliefs about the Bible may not always be shared, understood, or agreed upon by others.
 - b) It is unfair to expect everyone to be on the same level of spiritual maturity and understanding. Allow others the freedom to have a different understanding of a passage than you do, but seek to find that which you have in common. Build on your similarities, not your differences.
 - c) Our goal is to help people come to a closer personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the study of the four Gospels. Each individual is going to have to determine his own level of relationship with Jesus for himself.
- 2) New Hope Gospel Ministries does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, social status, or religious background.



Regarding Discussion Sessions

- 1) Discussion groups should be no larger than twelve individuals. Six to eight individuals are an ideal size.
- 2) All individuals should be encouraged, but not forced, to participate.
- 3) Discussions can become lively at times. Please remember to **let only one person talk at a time** and try not to talk when someone else is talking.
- 4) **If you are sharing, please keep it short** to allow others to share. Be aware lest you begin to dominate the discussion and exclude others.
- 5) Remember that **each person comes from a different background and level of spiritual maturity**. We want to build unity, not uniformity.
- 6) It is not necessary that everyone agree. **It is important that everyone feels loved and accepted.**
- 7) In matters of opinion, liberty, **in all things love.**



Regarding Homework Questions

- 1) Homework questions are optional for those who want to study deeper. They do not need to be turned in or graded.
- 2) Homework is designed to allow for a broad range of research. Each individual can delve as deep into researching the homework as he personally desires. What you get out of these lessons will be proportional to what you put into them.
- 3) To help with homework, we strongly recommend the following reference books:
 - a) A concordance
 - b) Other translations of the New Testament
 - c) A Bible atlas
 - d) A Bible dictionary
 - e) Other study tools may be helpful but are not required
- 4) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet of paper and insert it in your book.

Regarding Prayer Sessions



- 1) All **prayer requests are** to be considered **personal**.
- 2) Please don't share any prayer requests outside your prayer group unless they are your own, or you are specifically asked to do so.
- 3) If someone expresses a personal problem as a prayer request, **we should not try to solve his problem**. Let him express it and **listen** with love and sympathy. If you have a "solution" or something that you think may help, express it to him **after** the prayer time.
- 4) Please try to **keep prayer requests short** to allow others time to share, and ample time to pray.



Disclaimers

1. "Getting To Know Jesus" is a non-denominational Bible study of the four Gospels on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.
2. Although we may appear to defend some practices and argue or question others, we are truly seeking to only teach what the four Gospels clearly teach.
3. Our goal is to understand Jesus in such a way that we will live more like Him. We understand the Bible to teach that Jesus came to set us an example as well as to die on the Cross for our sins.
4. This is a Bible study and as such, we take the liberty to presume that the Bible, particularly the four Gospels are true and accurate today.
5. This is not intended to be a theological study, so we will not be dealing with textual criticisms or other theological questions. The student is welcome to pursue these issues if so interested, but they are not a part of the goals of this Bible study.
6. We have chosen to use the New International Version of the Bible for our Scripture text because it is a modern, accurate and readable translation. The NIV is accurate to the oldest of know manuscripts, yet is written in a style that reflects modern American English sentence structure. This makes it easier to understand for the new believers and the younger persons, who have not been exposed to King James English or foreign sentence structures.

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About the Author

The Story Behind “GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

Preparing the Soil

You could easily say that I was “born and raised going to church.” Every SONday from when I was about two weeks old, mom and dad would take me to the church building to worship the God who created us and the Jesus who died for us. There I would grow up learning all of the Bible stories that are taught to children in the SONday morning Bible School classes.

When I was in sixth grade, my parents moved to Osage City, Kansas. There we attended the Christian Church every SONday. I went with mom, dad, brother, and sisters for SONday School and Worship. The Christian Church was small. The attendance ran from the low twenties to the mid thirties. The building only had seats for about 120 people. Our minister was usually a student from the local Bible College (seventy miles away in Manhattan, Kansas).

It was in that church that I accepted Christ and was baptized into Him. It was there that I earned my “God and Country” award while in Boy Scouts. And it was there that I preached my first sermon.

In that small, old country church-like building was a sign. It was on the wall, on the right side of the sanctuary, about head height, towards the front, where an overflow-classroom wing jutted out to the right. That sign made a tremendous, life-changing, impression on me that lives to this day. The sign was on a royal blue card with silvery “Old English” style lettering as best I can remember. It said, **“Only one life, will soon be past, Only what’s done for Christ will last!”**

I saw that sign many times when I was in junior high and high school. Often I would look over at it and refresh my priorities with its words. There was something about that sign that was screaming at me for attention.

Planting the Seed

All of my life has been controlled or influenced by those words. It has never been enough for me to just go to church and sit. I’ve always wanted to be part of the action. I’ve always wanted to help people come closer to Christ. A seed had been planted.

While in college, I was asked to preach one summer at my home church in Osage City, Kansas. The minister had just resigned and they wanted to know if I would take on the task. I preached at Osage City for that summer and then another minister took it and stayed for the school year. I was rehired and stayed for fifteen months.

After graduating from state college with a Bachelor’s of Science and a major of Automotive Technology, I went to work in Phoenix, Arizona. After a year and a half, I was not enjoying my work and my life. I remembered how I felt when I was preaching and decided that this was my call to enter the ministry. I went to a Bible college in Joplin, Missouri and a little over three years later moved to Wasco California where I pastored Wasco Christian Church from May 1977 to May 1985. It was during my ministry there that I taught completely through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ using a harmony of the Gospels.

When I left Wasco, I came to the Los Angeles area and in October 1986, I was called to pastor at Carson Christian Church in Carson, California. I was there three years and three months. During that time, I again taught through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, using the harmony of the Gospels. Each time I did it, it took me three years to complete the study.

I had grown to appreciate entrepreneurs while at Wasco and started to envision one day having a business that served God and reached people around the world. A seed was starting to germinate.

The Seed Takes Root

After leaving Carson Christian Church in January of 1990, I worked in various secular jobs and was a volunteer in whatever church I was currently attending. One of the jobs I had teaching an adult Bible school class, led me to realize that I really enjoyed teaching adults. I also came to realize that I enjoyed teaching the Bible. I also considered my upbringing and my college training, ministry and walk with Jesus and felt a burning desire to teach people about Jesus Christ. The seed was taking root.

A couple of years later, when I was working as a software trainer, I shared a dream of a three-year Bible study of every event in Jesus life from the Annunciation to the Ascension. We would see what Matthew, Mark, Luke and John had to say about each event and how it applies to our lives today. I shared that dream with a co-worker who, at that time, was selling software training and he came back the next day to tell me that he believed in my dream and wanted to help me achieve it. He got me started writing my business plan and actually believed that I would one day be teaching others about Jesus. That was October, 1995, the day that the “Getting To Know Jesus” vision started to become a reality. The seed was pushing up through the soil.

After spending most of a year writing the business plan, I realized that I needed to start writing the lessons. I assembled my Bible software, several commentaries and related study books, sat down at my computer and started breaking the life of Christ, using my harmony of the Gospels, into 150 lessons. It ended up being 160 lessons because I felt that some of the material needed more time than could be addressed in one lesson.

The Seed Bears Fruit

During the years of writing the lessons, I attended a “Second Wind Seminar” put on by Patrick Morley at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest. At that seminar, we talked about what we wanted to do with the rest of our lives. While sitting there, I realized that I already knew my “second wind.” I wanted to spend the rest of my life teaching others about Jesus and how they could become more like Him.

When my wife and I joined Church of the Beach Cities, we got involved in the classes for growing towards maturity. A class called “301” helped us discover and clarify why we were on earth. It only reinforced what I had already discovered. Likewise, reading Rick Warren’s book, “Purpose Driven Life” again reaffirmed that my calling is to teach others about Jesus and encourage them to live their life more like Him. That is at least three reinforcements to the original and developing ministry I now call “Getting To Know Jesus.”

Due to part-time work, computer break downs, holidays, vacations, etc. it ended up taking me six years to write a three-year Bible study. Once the lessons were written, I assembled them into books, collected and added photographs to each lesson, and inserted maps, charts, and other materials. After nine years, and several stages of editing the books were assembled. By that time, I had already started sending the first books out to people who had supported our ministry with their monetary and time donations. The seed had grown and produced its fruit.

The last couple of years have entailed getting the “Getting To Know Jesus” Bible study lessons out to more people. With no financial assistance and little marketing savvy, that has been difficult. However, I have been consistent in trying. The first group of supporters (eighteen people) has received all of the “Getting To Know Jesus” books. Another twenty or so are currently somewhere in the process, along with over 100 missionaries in thirty-five foreign countries.

In the early stages of writing the books, I attracted the attention of Dr. Robert Schuler at Crystal Cathedral and was invited to teach a class there for six weeks so they could evaluate the lessons. From that, I received a letter of endorsement from Dr. Tino Ballesteros, Christian Education Minister at Crystal Cathedral. I also received letters of endorsement from Joe Garman at American Rehabilitation Ministries, Dr. Bill Peters at Angel Fire Ministries and others.

Since September 2001, I have committed full-time to working on this ministry. I am convinced that this is what God has called me to do. I am trusting, believing, and walking in faith that He is going to bless my ministry to change the lives of many people and provide a living for me and my wife until He calls us to leave this earth and join Him in Heaven.

The Great Commission Realized

In 2006, I made a proposal to Logos Research Systems for adding “Getting To Know Jesus” to their software library and signed a contract in August of that year. On April 27, 2007, Logos announced the pre-publication release of “Getting To Know Jesus” to their software library. This is a major publishing contract and we look forward to the “Getting To Know Jesus” material going around the world and blessing the lives of many people. This has taken eleven years to get to this point and we are only getting started!

Our current vision is to add a twenty-five minute video (suitable in quality and length for a thirty minute television time slot) to the “Getting To Know Jesus” product line. I will teach for twenty minutes (leaving five minutes for the opening and close.) These videos will be distributed by streaming Internet video or DVD to those wishing to add them to their “Getting To Know Jesus” Bible Study books. The students will be encouraged to read the lesson, watch the video and do the discussion questions in a group. This will make a complete turnkey product for learning about Jesus and how we can become more like Him. This facet of the ministry is currently waiting on the funds to get started.

When this is completed, I’m most sure that the Lord will give me more to do to build this ministry so it is reaching more, teaching more and blessing more people as they seek to live their lives in a way that honors God. My goal will be to truly spend the remainder of my life helping others in “Getting To Know Jesus!” When I die, I pray that people will say, “He showed us Jesus.” Thank you for the part that God has called you to have in this ministry.

In His Service,

Glen M. Copple

Discipleship Covenant

(Your name here)

I, the above named, do here-by enter into a commitment with God and my Christian friends to:

1. Complete the study of "Getting To Know Jesus"
2. Participate in all weekly sessions except when urgent circumstances beyond my control prevent my attendance. When unable to attend, I will strive to make up the session at the earliest possible opportunity.
3. Participate openly and honestly in the group sessions.
4. Keep any personal matters shared by others in the group in confidence. I will not discuss any of these matters outside the group meetings unless approached by the person who shared them.
5. Be patient with others as God works in us all to make us what He wants us to be. I will trust God to show us His will. I will not try to manipulate or force others to do what I think. I share what I sense God may be saying to us and see how the Spirit leads others to respond.
6. I will pray regularly for fellow disciple partners.
7. I will pray regularly for my pastor and my church.
8. I will pray for those who don't yet know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Other "Getting To Know Jesus" group disciples:

This Bible study series is dedicated to:

Sylvia Copple,

my wife,

who has put up with my believing
in this ministry for over twelve years.

and

Bill Hultquist,

who believed in my dream,
got me started writing a business plan,
and has mentored me over the years.

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Wall of Gratitude

Zig Ziglar said that if you ever see a turtle on a fencepost, you know that he didn't get there by himself. Likewise, I would not be where I am today and the "Getting To Know Jesus" Bible study series would not exist if it were not for a number of people assisting me be where I am today. I have included some names here, and their contribution so you may know that I didn't accomplish this on my own.

I will ever be grateful to every person on here and to the many others who believed in this ministry and contributed money or services. I also don't want to take for granted the prayers of so many who have prayed for us to this date.

My Life and Relationship with Jesus Christ

Oscar & Fern Cople – My parents who taught me the ways of Jesus by taking me to church and living it in their lives.

Mrs. Orton – SONday School teacher in Council Grove who gave her love and time to teach children about the Bible.

Bernie Piper – Preacher who baptized me into Christ at age eleven.

Ed King – Scoutmaster who helped mold me into a leader. He also told me that cussing shows a lack of vocabulary.

Ronald Curtis – Newspaper delivery employer who gave me my first real "job."

Mrs. Schlobaum – A speech teacher that encouraged me in speech and debate.

Wayne Jones – Employer, when I was in High School, who forgave my mistakes and was an understanding boss.

Terry Neidens – Preacher who helped me earn my God and Country Award and encouraged me to think about Bible College. He later participated in my ordination to the ministry.

Roger Ward – Preacher who helped me to earn my God and Country Award and encouraged me to think about Bible College. He later participated in my ordination to the ministry.

Leroy Knight – Preacher who asked me why I wasn't going into the Ministry.

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Sylvia Cople – Wife who has believed in me, prayed for me, worked to support us while I worked to make this a reality, stuck with me during difficult times and is the best companion God could have ever given me.

Bill Hultquist – Entrepreneur who helped me with the Business Plan for New Hope Gospel Ministries, has mentored me over the years and has become my business manager.

Jake Unger – Did video production, camera, editing and helped put a video on the Internet (YouTube and GodTube.)

Peter Rhee – Webmaster who has assisted me with www.gettingtoknowjesus.org and www.gettingtoknowjesus.com.

Joe Garman – American Rehabilitation Ministries and American Bible Academy – Was our first customer!!! And requested 1,000 sets for Prison Ministry distribution.

Max & Marcy Anderson – Who have contributed time, talents, and treasures because they believe in what God has called us to do.

Van Earl Wright – Assistance in YouTube and GodTube promotional videos

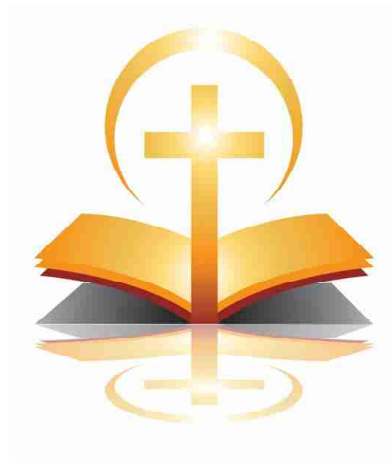
Marilyn Cain – Faithful supporter and contributor for several years.

Arlene Diamond – Contributor/Fund Raiser

Mike Blevins – Producer and scriptwriter for video project

Bob Davis – Wrote text for web site to rank high in the search engines.

Dante Fiorini – The webmaster who is currently in charge of www.gettingtoknowjesus.org, www.gettingtoknowjesus.com and www.newhopemin.org.





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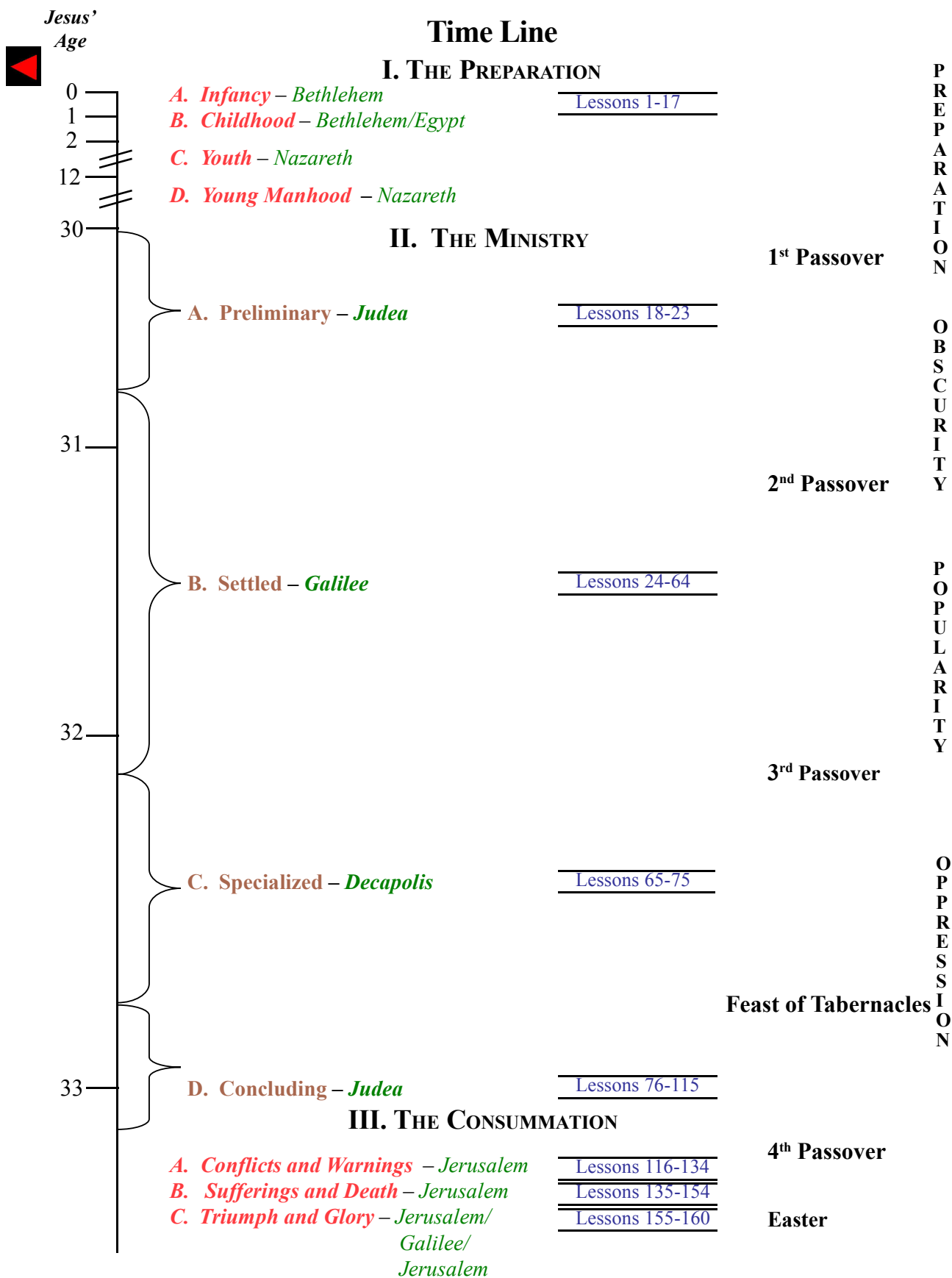
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“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

Time Line





“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

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c. Nicodemus is an Example of These (<i>John 3:1-21</i>)	019
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(2) Christ's Testimony About "Heavenly Things" (<i>John 3:14-21</i>)	019
2. In the Country (Jesus Merges His Campaign with John's) (<i>John 3:22—4:1-4; Matthew 4:12; Mark 1:14a; Luke 3:19-20; 4:14a; cf. Matthew 14:3-5; Mark 6:17-20</i>)	020-021
a. Jesus is Baptizing Disciples in Judea (<i>John 3:22</i>)	020
b. John also is Baptizing at Aenon (<i>John 3:23-24</i>)	020
c. John Testifies Concerning Jesus at Aenon (<i>John 3:25-36</i>)	020
d. John is Imprisoned by Herod (<i>Luke 3:19-20</i> compare <i>Matthew 4:12</i>)	020
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b. The Call of the Four to Learn Evangelism (<i>Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11</i>)	025
c. The Day of Miracles (<i>Matthew 8:14-17; Mark 1:21-34; Luke 4:31-41</i>)	026
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(2) Afternoon – At Peter's House – Peter's Mother-in-law Healed	
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(1) A Morning of Prayer (<i>Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42a</i>)	027
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(From Palm SONday to Pentecost, 57 days; Spring of 30 A.D.)

Fourth Passover (*John 11:55*)

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(SONday to Wednesday)

116-129

A. The Final Controversies and Warnings

116-125

(From SONday to Tuesday of Passion Week)

1. Three Dramatized Parables

(*Matthew 21:1-22; Mark 11:1-26; Luke 19:29-48; John 12:12-19*) (SONday)

116-118

a. The Triumphal Entry

(*Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19*) (SONday)

116-117

b. The Withering of the Fig Tree (*Matthew 21:18-19; Mark 11:12-14*) (Monday)

118

c. The Cleansing of the Temple (*Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48*) (Monday)

118

d. Christ's Lesson from the Withered Fig Tree (*Matthew 21:20-22; Mark 11:20-26*) (Tuesday)

118

2. Three Parables of Warning

(*Matthew 21:23--22:14; Mark 11:27--12:12; Luke 20:1-19*) (Tuesday)

119-121

a. Jesus Authority Challenged (*Matthew 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-8*) (Tuesday)

119

b. The Parable of the Two Sons (*Matthew 21:28-32; Mark 12:1a*) (Tuesday)

119

c. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (*Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 12:1b-12; Luke 20:9-19*) (Tuesday)

120

d. The Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son (*Matthew 22:1-14*) (Tuesday)

121

3. Three Catch Questions (*Matthew 22:15-40; Mark 12:13-34; Luke 20:20-40*) (Tuesday)

122-124

a. About Giving Tribute to Caesar

(*Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26*) (Tuesday)

122

b. About Marriage in the Resurrection

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c. About the Greatest Commandment

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(*Matthew 23:1--24:2; Mark 12:38-13:2; Luke 20:45-21:6; John 12:20-50*) (Tuesday)

125-126

a. Warning His Disciples Against the Example of the Jewish Rulers

(*Matthew 23:1-12; Mark 12:38-40; Luke 20:45-47*)

125

b. A Seven-Fold Warning Against the Scribes and Pharisees (*Matthew 23:13-36*)

125-126

c. Lamenting Over Jerusalem (*Matthew 23:37-39*)

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d. Commending a Poor Widow's Gift (*Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4*)

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e. Reflecting About the Coming of the Greeks (*John 12:20-36*)

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g. Jesus Summarizes his Own Message and Mission (*John 12:44-50*)

128

h. On Leaving the Temple, Christ makes an Astonishing Prediction

(*Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:5-6*)

128

2. Looking Back From the Mount of Olives

(*Matthew 24:3--25:46; Mark 13:3-37; Luke 21:7-36*) (Tuesday Evening)

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128

(2) What will be the Signs of the Destruction of Jerusalem?

128

(3) What Shall be the Sign of Your Coming?

128

(4) What Shall be the Sign of the End of the Age?

128

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"GETTING TO KNOW JESUS"

Outline

Outline and Scripture Text

Lesson Number

Introduction 001

Introductory Notes by Gospel Writers

002

Marks Title

(Mark 1:1)

Luke's Preface

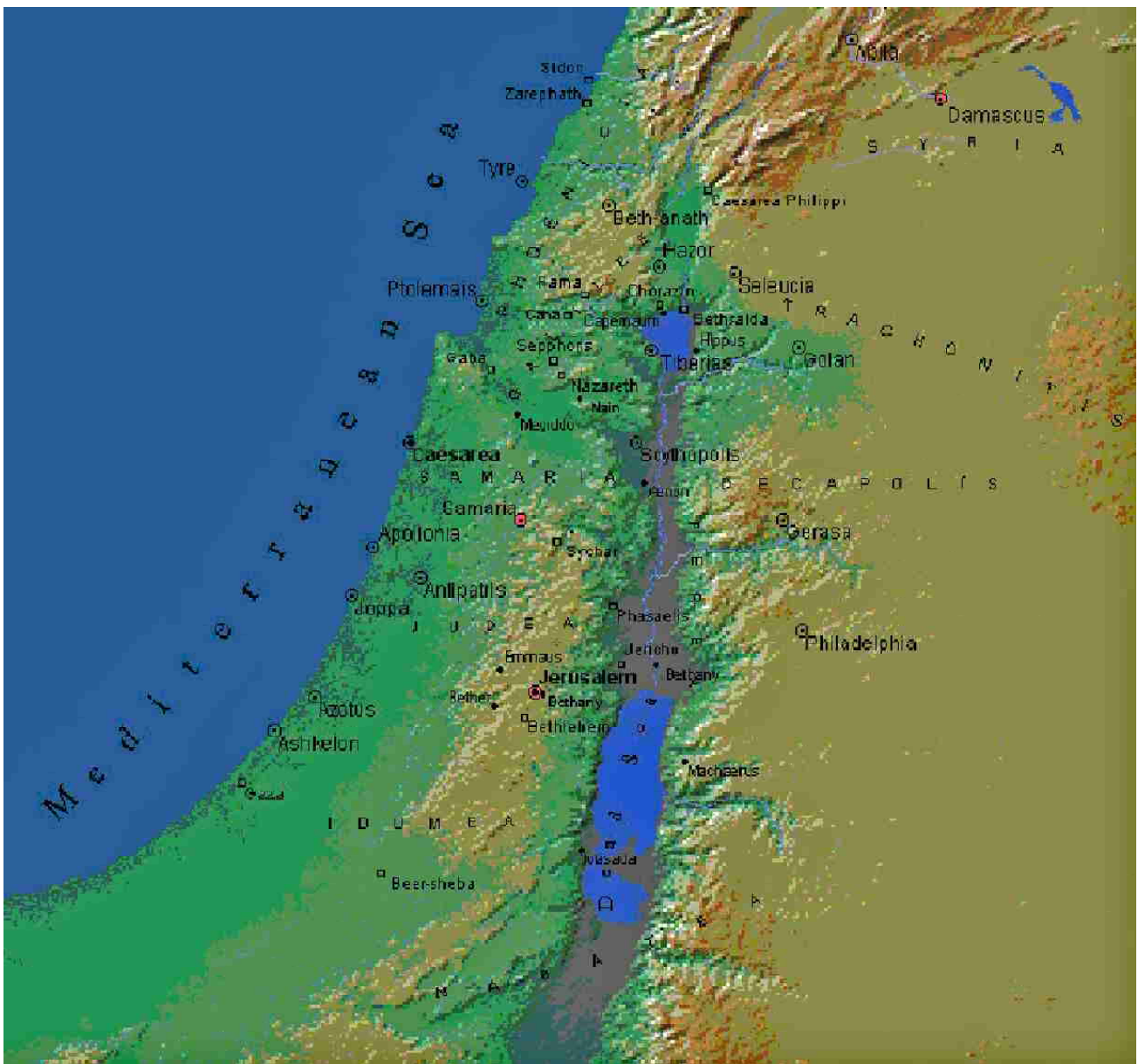
(Luke 1:1-4)

John's Prologue

(John 1:1-18)

Matthew's Genealogy (Luke's genealogy included)

(Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38)

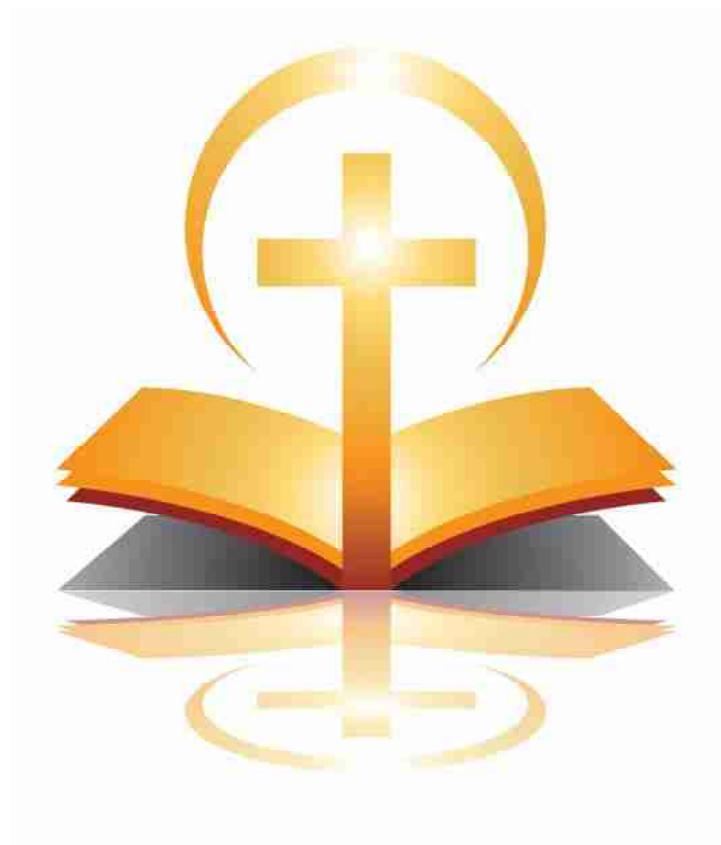


With the exception of the excursion to Egypt when He was an infant, this is the extent of the land that Jesus traveled while on this earth.

Map courtesy of Logos Bible Atlas

Lesson 001
Bible Study Text and Questions
The Preparation of the World

Written by
GLEN M. COPPLE



The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ
from Annunciation to Ascension

New Hope Gospel Ministries

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New Hope Gospel Ministries

presents

"Getting To Know Jesus"



Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ Bible Study Series

LOC - 001 - The Preparation of the World

Fullness of Time ——— The Inter-testament Period

<i>Persian Captivity -</i>	<i>539 to 331 BC</i>
Hellenistic (Greek) Rule -	331 to 167 BC
Egyptian Oversight -	331 to 198 BC
Syrian Oversight -	198 to 167 BC
Independent (Maccabean) Rule	167 to 63 BC
Herodian and Roman Rule	63 BC to 70 AD

Fullness of Time - Politically

<i>Common language:</i>	<i>Greek - read and spoken by everyone</i>
<i>Scattered culture:</i>	<i>Jews transplanted all over the "known world"</i>
<i>One government:</i>	<i>Roman rule (no war)</i>
<i>Ease of travel</i>	<i>Roman roadways made travel easy</i>

Fullness of Time - Economically

Economic depression as the result of Herod's war and extravagance
Worry, anxiety, despair

Fullness of Time - Morally

Spirit of despair - evil pursued to oblivion
Total abandonment of God's moral standards

Fullness of Time - Religiously

Great expectation of the soon coming Messiah
False messiahs have come and gone

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 001 – The Preparation of the World

Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

We will look at the history that prepared the world for the coming of Jesus!
 God knows how to accomplish His purpose!
 God is still very aware and active in the affairs of this world!
 People are searching for what God has to offer!

Lesson Commentary

(Your Notes Here!)

Welcome to the “Getting To Know Jesus,” Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ Training Series. Many people since the days of Christ have desired to know Jesus just like some Grecians who were in Jerusalem around the time of His Crucifixion (*John 12:21*). Even more people claim to believe in Him, but **how many really know anything about Him?**

*Can you give an accurate answer to anyone who asked you about who Jesus is and what He taught? **The only way we are going to get to know Him is to study what the Bible says about Him and see how it applies to us today.*** In so doing, we will become more intimately acquainted with Him and will find ourselves living more like Him. Our desire is to help you see Jesus in a way that will help you to better understand who He is and what He has done and how it applies to **your** life today. **We want to help you grow into a dynamic, personal and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ in order that you may live your life more like Him.**

Overview of the Class

In order to do this, we are going to embark on a three-year journey through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The objective is to get to know Jesus more intimately in an effort to become more like Him. We want to see and feel what He taught and what He did, expecting to become more like Him.

The agenda is to do a weekly Bible study of the Gospels according to *Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*, taking the events of Christ’s life in chronological order as best we can determine. The four Gospels will be arranged side by side when appropriate so that we may see how each writer saw the event being described. This way we will get a better view of what happened, and how it was understood at that time. From this, we will be able to see how we can live our lives in a way that is more pleasing to God.

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Why Just the Four Gospels?

(Your Notes Here!)

We will be using *Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John* in our study as our main study books. They give the historical record of Jesus' life and teachings on this earth. By concentrating on the Gospels and what they say and how it is understood by the early readers, we will be better able to make application to our own lives. **The goal is to get to know Jesus more intimately.**

In the Fullness of Time —The Inter-testament Period

To help us better understand culture and period around which these events happened, we need to look into some of the events prior to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. There are four Inter-testament periods. Each one played a part in the preparation for the Jews and the whole world to receive Jesus and the Good News of His salvation.

1. Persian Rule — 539-331 B.C. Persia conquered Judah thus ending their freedom and independence until they were destroyed by Rome in 70 A.D. Nehemiah rebuilt the temple around 440 B.C. This was the first rebuilding of the Temple. Herod later rebuilt it to an even grander scale than it had ever been before. He started about 25 B.C. and finished around 66 A.D. (91 years in construction.) Herod's rebuilding of the Temple was going on through Jesus' life. **The Persian era prepared the world for the coming of Jesus through the rebuilding of the Temple.**
2. Hellenistic (Greek) Rule — 331-167 B.C., Alexander the Great conquered the world. He was successful in this enterprise because he did not try to annihilate his enemies, but scattered and mixed people from all of the countries that he conquered thus making them into a common nation. This was accomplished by:
 - 1) Transplanting groups of peoples all over the known world,
 - 2) Teaching all peoples a common (Greek) language, and
 - 3) Educating them in Greek culture and customs.

The Greeks transplanted groups of people to other countries to mix and weaken their cultures and histories and to strengthen the Greek culture and rule. Many Jews went to Alexandria, Egypt, named after Alexander the Great. Others went to other places like Corinth, Macedonia, and even Rome. When the early Christians traveled there, they could speak to their fellow countrymen about the promised Messiah, Jesus, and lead these people to become Christians. This weakened the nationalities and religious beliefs of individual nations, groups and individuals and later was helpful in facilitating the spreading of the Gospel because everyone was able to understand the Greek language. This helped start churches that reached out into that community and teach others about the God who became Man to pay for our sins and give us eternal life.

In Egypt, the Old Testament was translated into Greek during this period. It was translated by seventy scholars and called the Septuagint. Later, the New Testament books were all written in Greek, which made it possible for anyone living in the days of the early Church to be able to read and understand what the authors wrote. They didn't need anyone to interpret it for them. (The Jewish religion survived during this time by becoming a "church" or religion instead of a state or government.) **The Greeks prepared the world for the coming of Jesus by giving them a common language and culture.**

The rule over the Jews under the Greeks was sub-divided into two periods:

The Jews were under Egyptian rule from 331-198 B.C. The Ptolemies reigned through this period until about 30 B.C. It was during this time that Cleopatra lived in Egypt. She married Mark Anthony and thus built a relationship with the Caesars in Rome. The Egyptians were kind to the Jews and sponsored the translation of the Old Testament into the Greek language.

Syria (also known as the Seleucids) took Israel away from the Egyptians and ruled over the Jews from 198-167 B.C. They destroyed the walls around Jerusalem and prohibited possessing or reading Hebrew Scriptures.

3. Independent (Maccabean) ruled 167-63 B.C. The Maccabeans were a family of Jews who successfully led a



Looking west-northwest over the Temple Mount from the Mount of Olives on the East side of Jerusalem as it looks today.

rebellion during this period. The Jews experienced some degree of independence during this time, but it still was not like what they had lived with during the prophets. This period was characterized by strife and discord caused by the lust for power. The Dead Sea Scrolls were written during this era. **The Dead Sea Scrolls contributed significantly to the validation of the Old Testament.** You can read more about the Maccabees in the Apocrypha (writings attributed to the period between the Old and New Testaments, but not regarded as Scripture by most protestant churches.) The political aims of the Hasmoneans (as the Maccabees came to be called) alienated many of the religious Jews. The descendants of the Hasmoneans became the Sadducees of Jesus’ day.

4. Herodion and Roman Rule ran **63 B.C.-70 A.D.** After the Greeks had spread their culture, the Romans rose to power and conquered them and the other nations of the known world. The Romans made travel very easy by building roads and aqueducts, and relocating groups of peoples to other locations. This further weakened nationalities, but it also encouraged commerce and travel. When the early Christians spread out from Jerusalem, it was easy to travel to another community, share the Gospel, and start a church in that community. This also facilitated the Apostles in spreading the Gospel through the world. As they traveled or wrote their letters, it was fairly easy to get the message out to other Churches and bodies of believers. **The Romans contributed for the coming of Jesus by making travel easy for the early evangelists.**

Herod the Great got control of Israel through the influence of his father, Antipater, an Idumean. Idumeans were descendants of Esau from the southern portion of the Dead Sea. Herod was an efficient ruler and a clever politician. He provided subsidies during famine and began many building projects, including the beautifying of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. In spite of this, most devout Jews hated him. He was known for his jealousy for power that caused him to murder some of his wives and children.

Ways That God Prepared the World for His Church

This is basically another look at how God prepared the world and saw the timing come together for the advent of His Son to save mankind from their sins by instigating a New Covenant that was available to all men, regardless of ancestry or personal history. This is a review of what we have just covered, but in a different light to make it more understandable and useable.

1. Fullness of Time Politically

Common Language – Because of Alexander the Great conquering of the Jewish people and teaching them the Greek language and culture, they had a common language which allowed all men to understand the message when the Apostles

started the church several years later. Though many Jews also spoke Aramaic, it was the Greek language that spread the Gospel around the world.

Scattered People – Jews were transplanted all over the “known world” by both the Greeks and the Romans. When the early Christians tried to flee the persecution that started in Jerusalem, they went to their Jewish neighborhoods in other cities and told them about Jesus as the promised Messiah. This started Churches all over the world very rapidly.

Common Government – Rome ruled with an iron hand, but there was no war during this period of time. This is the only time in the earth’s history that there was not a war somewhere.

Oh what a difference the true presence of Jesus makes!

Ease of Travel – Roman roads made travel easy. One government meant there were no problems with “border crossings”, no need to learn a new nation’s laws and customs. This will later facilitate the rapid spread of the Gospel.

It is the fullness of time today – As we see the events currently transpiring around the world, we don’t know the details, but there is a high expectancy of the Second Coming occurring soon! Souls are seeking peace and significance through politics, possession and media. Man needs to make God the ruler of his political life.

2. Fullness of Time Economically

Pending Depression – Though there was a wealthy Jewish aristocracy, most Jews were poor farmers, craftsmen or businessmen. Over half of the world’s population were slaves under the Roman Empire. After a severe war and Herod’s extravagance after the war, the Jews were discouraged and depressed. They are experiencing the rejection of God, which was the result of their rebellion and disobedience to Him. They believed that wealth was proof of God’s blessing on those who had it. Their life was care ridden, with worry, anxiety and despair. Jesus came and offered hope, forgiveness and life. Those who were slaves were full of fraud, deceit and immorality.

It is the fullness of time today – In a world that is filled with financial insecurity, greed and economic turmoil, man needs to look to something besides money for security and meaning. Jesus Christ is the rock of stability on which we can build a foundation that will give us security whether we have money or not.

3. Fullness of Time Morally

Spirit of Despair – Israel had grown neglectful of God’s absolute moral standard. They thought they could write their own “laws” and break them at will. Because of their abandonment of God and general moral decay, evil was pursued to disaster and oblivion. They thought it was acceptable as long as they didn’t get caught. The prevailing attitude was to eat, drink

and be merry because they saw no hope, future or reason to try to do otherwise.

(Your Notes Here!)

Jesus presented a moral alternative of abstaining from sin and justification from past sins. Many people decided to repent of their sin and follow Him. To them, He gave hope and a reason to live a moral and righteous life.

It is the fullness of time today –immorality and crime can only be rehabilitated through a relationship with Jesus Christ. He is the alternative to sin and hell. There are many people today who want a reason to not do evil. They want to know of a moral absolute that provides some security and hope instead of the hedonistic selfishness that leaves people empty and lonely.

4. Fullness of Time Religiously

Jews had a great expectation of Messiah coming after 400 years of prophetic silence. But the prophetic signs given in the Old Testament show that it was time for the Messiah to come. Many false messiahs had recently come and gone. John the Baptist increased that expectation by his establishing himself as a prophet. No prophet has lived among the people of Israel for 400 years. Into this expectation, Jesus came and went and many missed Him because they had different expectations than what He delivers.

It is the fullness of time today – false saviors, cults, satanism and misconceptions surround us and leave many people seeking, wanting, feeling condemned and without hope. Jesus is the solution to their problems and events indicate that He could be coming soon. It is time to get ready now!

Today is the Day of the Lord. What is your role in it? What are you doing to help others in “Getting To Know Jesus?” Maranatha – “Come Lord Jesus” – If Jesus comes before we have completed “Getting To Know Jesus,” class will be completed in Heaven. See you there!

Next, we will look at the Gospels and how each writer approached his account of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We will be further introduced to a life changing journey through the Good News of God sending His only Son to live among us and die for our sins in order that we might live forever with Him. If any of you are curious, we will be looking into the events of the actual birth of Jesus in Lesson 007.

Please read lesson 002 for next week. Bring a friend and join us as we get started “Getting To Know Jesus.”





LOC – 001 – The Preparation of the World **Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Application**

1. In what way do you now see that God has been preparing you through the events in your life for His purposes?
2. How have you personally experienced God's timing and intervention in your life?
3. What does the word “Gospel” mean? What does it mean to you?
4. What do you hope to get out of “Getting To Know Jesus?”
5. What have you learned out of this study that has or will change your life?

LOC – 001 – The Preparation of the World

Questions for Homework



Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. The homework for this lesson is to read the first five pages and become familiar with the guidelines for this class and the outlines of the four Gospels.

2. Do a word study on the Greek word - "logos." What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 002
Bible Study Text and Questions
Introduction to The Gospels and Their Writers

Written by
GLEN M. COPPLE



The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ
from Annunciation to Ascension

New Hope Gospel Ministries

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“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

LOC - 002 - The Authors of the Four Gospels



MATTHEW

Written to: The Jews

Theme: Jesus is the Messiah: The King of the Jews.

Key Phrase: “Kingdom of Heaven,” the Kingdom God had promised.

The key verse is stated at the very beginning. *Matthew 1:20-23 (v.22)* “...Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled ...”

Key Word: “Fulfilled”: Jesus has fulfilled all of the prophecies of the Old Testament.

Focus: What Jesus said.

Date: The Gospel according to Matthew was written around **60-70 A.D.**

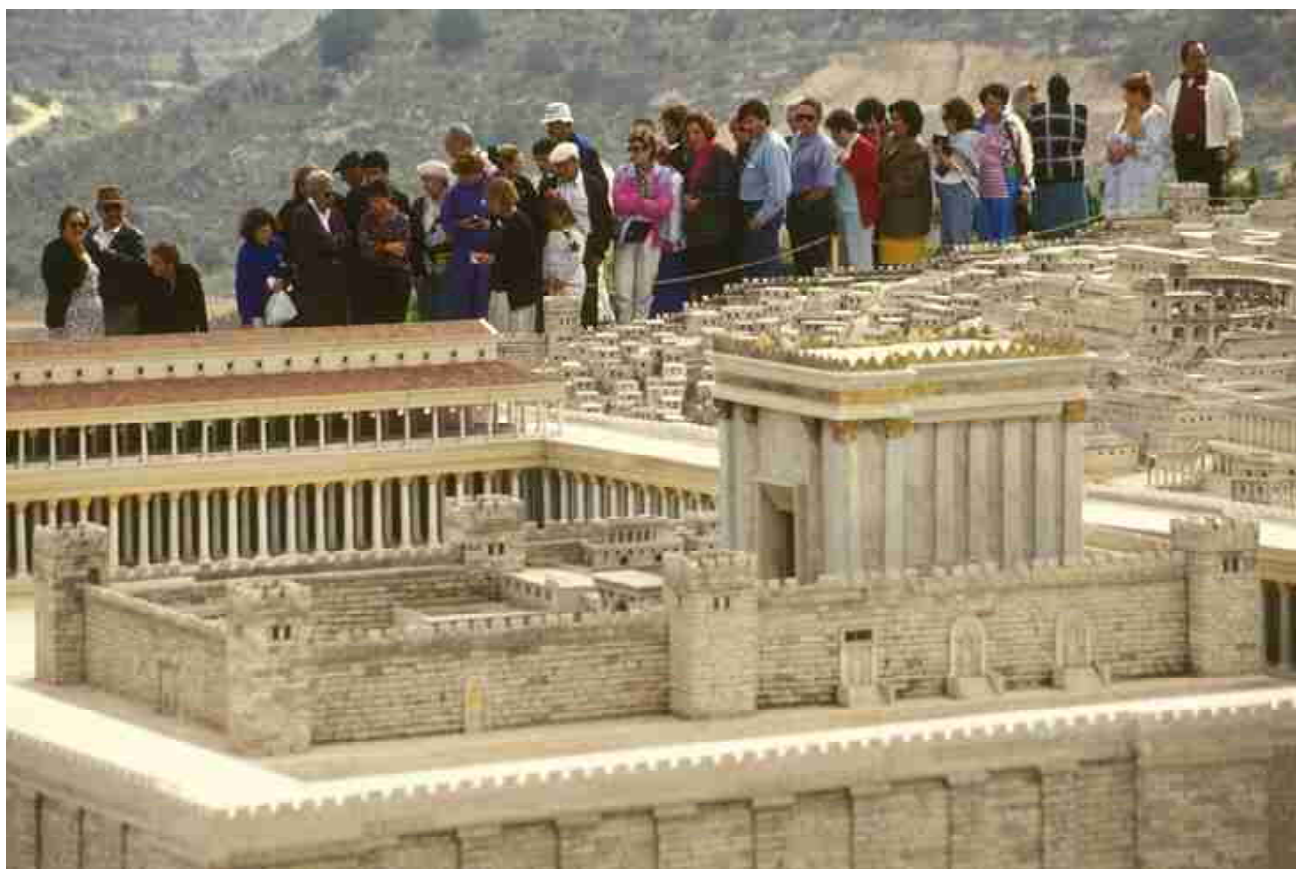
Author: Matthew is credited as being the author, although nothing is said about it in the Gospel.

MATTHEW - A TOPICAL OUTLINE

<i>Birth and Infancy of the Messiah</i>	1:1—2:23
<i>Genealogy</i>	1:1-17
<i>Birth Narratives</i>	1:18-2:18
<i>Removal to Nazareth</i>	2:19-23
<i>Prelude to the Messianic Ministry</i>	3:1—4:25
<i>Preparation Ministry of John the Baptist</i>	3:1-12
<i>Baptism of Jesus</i>	3:13-17
<i>Temptation of Jesus</i>	4:1-11
<i>Summary of Galilean Ministry</i>	4:12-25
<i>Discourse 1: Righteousness of the Kingdom</i>	5:1—7:29
<i>The Beatitudes</i>	5:1-16
<i>The Character of Kingdom Righteousness</i>	5:17-48
<i>The Practice of Kingdom Righteousness</i>	6:1—7:12
<i>The Choice of the Kingdom</i>	7:13-27
<i>The Manner of Jesus' Teaching</i>	7:28-29
<i>Narrative 1: Mighty Deeds of the Kingdom</i>	8:1—9:38
<i>A Series of Miracles</i>	8:1—9:8
<i>The Kingdom and the Old Order</i>	9:9-17
<i>More Miracles</i>	9:18-83
<i>Discourse 2: Proclamation of the Kingdom</i>	10:1-42
<i>The Preachers and Their Mission</i>	10:1-15
<i>The Response To Be Expected</i>	10:16-42
<i>Narrative 2: The Presence of the Kingdom</i>	11:1—12:50
<i>The Kingdom and John the Baptist</i>	11:1-15
<i>The Challenge to the Present Generation</i>	11:16-30
<i>Opposition to the Kingdom</i>	12:1-45
<i>Fellowship in the Kingdom</i>	12:46-50
<i>Discourse 3: Mystery of the Kingdom</i>	13:1-58
<i>The Parable of the Sower</i>	13:1-9
<i>Parabolic Method Explained</i>	13:10-23
<i>Other Parables</i>	13:24-52
<i>The Response to Jesus' Parables</i>	13:53-58
<i>Narrative 3: Crisis of the Kingdom</i>	14:1—17:27
<i>Crisis of Opposition</i>	14:1—15:20
<i>Withdrawal to the North</i>	15:21-39
<i>Further Conflict</i>	16:1-12
<i>Crisis of Faith</i>	16:13-20
<i>Preparation of Jesus' Disciples for His Death</i>	16:21—17:27
<i>Discourse 4: Fellowship of the Kingdom</i>	18:1-35
<i>Humility</i>	18:1-20
<i>Forgiveness</i>	18:21-35
<i>Narrative 4: Conflict Caused by the Kingdom</i>	19:1—23:39
<i>Teachings on the Way to Jerusalem</i>	19:1—20:28
<i>Healing at Jericho</i>	20:29-34
<i>Events in Jerusalem</i>	21:1-22
<i>Controversies with the Jews</i>	21:23—22:46
<i>Denunciations of the Scribes and Pharisees</i>	23:1-39

Discourse 5: Future of the Kingdom
Prophecy of the Coming of the Kingdom
Warnings to Readiness
The Judgment of Nations
Passion of the King
The Plot to Betray Jesus
The Last Supper
Events in Gethsemane
The Trials
The Crucifixion
Burial
The Resurrection
The Women and the Angel
False Witness of the Guards
The Ascension

24:1—25:46
24:1-36
24:37—25:30
25:31-46
26:1—27:66
26:1-16
26:17-30
26:31-56
26:57—27:26
27:27-56
27:57-66
28:1-20
28:1-10
28:11-15
28:16-20



A model of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem.

MATTHEW: THE GOSPEL OF THE MESSIAH: an alternative outline

<i>The Prophecies of the Messiah Realized</i>	
<i>The Advent</i>	1:1—4:11
<i>Preaching of John the Baptist</i>	3:1-12
<i>The Principles of the Messiah Announced</i>	
<i>The Inaugural Address (Sermon on the Mount)</i>	4:12—7:29
<i>Challenge to Enter</i>	7:13-14
<i>The Power of the Messiah Revealed</i>	
<i>The Miracles</i>	8:1—11:1
<i>Challenge to Follow</i>	10:34-39
<i>The Commission</i>	10:1-42
<i>The Program of the Messiah Explained</i>	
<i>The Parables</i>	11:2—13:53
<i>Challenge to Acceptance</i>	11:28
<i>Challenge to Understanding</i>	13:51
<i>The Parables</i>	13:1-52
<i>The Purpose of the Messiah Declared</i>	
<i>The Crisis of the Cross</i>	13:54—19:2
<i>Challenge to Testify</i>	16:13-15
<i>The Meaning of Forgiveness</i>	18:1-35
<i>The Problems of the Messiah Presented</i>	
<i>Conflict with Opponents</i>	19:3—26:2
<i>Challenge to Repentance</i>	23:37-39
<i>Denunciation and Prediction</i>	23:1—25:46
<i>The Passion of the Messiah Accomplished</i>	
<i>The Death and Resurrection</i>	26:3—28:10
<i>Epilogue</i>	
<i>Rumor and Reality</i>	28:11-20
<i>Challenge to Action</i>	28:16-20
<i>The Great Commission</i>	28:18-20

MARK

Written to: The Romans
Theme: Jesus is the Son of God
Key Verse: *10:45* "...For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."
Key Word: "Immediately": Jesus was always "doing" something. The action in this Gospel moves rapidly from one event to another.
Focus: The Super-Human Power of Jesus: What He did as opposed to what He said.
Key Phrase: "Jesus as a Servant" (*10:45*)
Date: 60-70 A.D.
Author: John Mark, under the instruction of Peter.

MARK – A MARK - A GEOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE DETAILED OUTLINE

The Period of Preparation	1:1-13
Ministry of John	1:1-8
Baptism of Jesus	1:9-11
The Temptation of Jesus	1:12-13
The Galilean Ministry	1:14—9:50
First Period (Popularity)	1:14—3:12
<i>The First Four Disciples</i>	1:14-20
<i>A Busy Day at Capernaum</i>	1:21-45
<i>Healing the Paralytic</i>	2:1-12
<i>The Call of Levi (Matthew)</i>	2:13-22
<i>Sabbath Controversy</i>	2:23-22
Second Period (Specialized)	3:13—7:23
<i>Friends and Foes</i>	3:13-35
<i>Teachings in Parables</i>	4:1-34
<i>First Withdrawal: Gerasene Demoniac</i>	4:35—5:20
<i>Raising Jarius' Daughter</i>	5:21-43
<i>Rejection at Nazareth</i>	6:1-6
<i>Mission of the Twelve</i>	6:7-13
<i>Death of John the Baptist</i>	6:14-29
<i>Second Withdrawal: Feeding of the Five Thousand</i>	6:30-56
<i>Controversy over Cleansing</i>	7:1-23
Third Period (Concluding)	7:24—9:50
<i>Third Withdrawal: Tyre & Sidon</i>	7:24-30
<i>Healing the Deaf Mute</i>	7:31-37
<i>Fourth Withdrawal: Feeding the Four Thousand</i>	8:1-10
<i>Teaching and Healing</i>	8:11-26
<i>Fifth Withdrawal: Caesarea Philippi</i>	8:27—9:1
<i>The Transfiguration</i>	9:2-29
<i>Teaching on Humility</i>	9:30-50
Perean Ministry	10:1-52
Teaching on Divorce	10:1-16
Riches and Ambition	10:17-45
Blind Bartimaeus	10:46-52
Passion Week	11:1—15:47
SONday: <i>The Triumphal Entry</i>	11:1-11
Monday: <i>Cursing the Fig Tree</i>	11:12-14
<i>Cleansing the Temple</i>	11:15-19
Tuesday: <i>Faith and Fear</i>	11:20-33
<i>Parable and Controversy</i>	12:1-44
<i>The Olivet Discourse</i>	13:1-37
<i>The Anointing at Bethany</i>	14:1-11
Thursday: <i>The Last Supper</i>	14:12-25
Friday: <i>Jesus in Gethsemane</i>	14:26-52
<i>The Jewish Trials</i>	14:53-72
<i>The Roman Trial</i>	15:1-20
<i>The Crucifixion and Burial</i>	15:21-47
The Resurrection	16:1-20

LUKE

Written to: The Gentiles: Greeks, non-Jews.

Theme: A chronological account of the Life of Jesus.

Key Verse: *1:3* "...it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order..." Another Key Verse is *19:10*: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Key Word: Savior

Focus: Jesus the Man, the Divine Human Savior. Luke looks at Jesus' life and His miracles.

Date: 64-70 A.D.

Author: Luke, the physician

LUKE - A DETAILED OUTLINE

<i>The Gospel's Preface</i>	1:1-4
<i>Preparation for the Savior's Mission</i>	1:5-80
<i>Birth of the Savior's Forerunner</i>	1:5-80
<i>Birth and Childhood of the Savior of the World</i>	2:1-52
<i>The Savior's Way Prepared by the Forerunner</i>	3:1-20
<i>Baptism, Genealogy, and Temptation of the Savior</i>	3:21—4:13
<i>Galilean Ministry of Jesus</i>	4:14—9:50
<i>Jesus' Declaration that He is the Savior Sent by God</i>	4:14-32
<i>Revelation of His Divine Authority</i>	4:33—5:26
<i>Jesus' Role as Savior of Sinners</i>	5:27-32
<i>Inauguration of a New Order by the Savior</i>	5:33—6:49
<i>Revelation of His Unlimited Power</i>	7:1—8:56
<i>Continued Revelation of His Divine Authority</i>	9:1-27
<i>The Savior's Divine Glory Revealed</i>	9:28-50
<i>Journey from Galilee to Jerusalem</i>	9:51—19:44
<i>The Savior's Mission of Redemption</i>	9:51—10:37
<i>The Savior's Special Instructions on Service and Prayer</i>	10:38—11:13
<i>Christ's Warnings to Both Enemies and Followers</i>	11:14—14:35
<i>The Savior of the Lost</i>	15:1-32
<i>The Savior's Commands to His Followers</i>	16:1—17:10
<i>Ingratitude of Nine Lepers Healed by the Savior</i>	17:11-19
<i>Suddenness of His Return Predicted</i>	17:20—18:14
<i>The Savior, Little Children and the Rich Young Man</i>	18:15-30
<i>Toward the End of the Journey</i>	18:31—19:44
<i>The Last Days of the Savior, His Crucifixion & Burial</i>	19:45—23:56
<i>Second Cleansing of the Temple: Silencing His Enemies</i>	19:45—21:4
<i>Coming Destruction of Jerusalem Announced</i>	21:5-24
<i>His Return to be in Glory and Majesty</i>	21:25-36
<i>Judas' Arrangement to Betray Jesus</i>	21:37—22:6
<i>Institution of the Holy Communion</i>	22:7-38
<i>The Savior's Atonement for the Sin of the World</i>	22:39—23:56
<i>Resurrection, Appearances, & Ascension of the Risen Lord</i>	24:1-53
<i>The Savior's Triumph over Death</i>	24:1-35
<i>Doubts of His Followers Dispelled</i>	24:36-49
<i>The Savior's Return in Triumph to the Father</i>	24:50-53

JOHN

Written to: Unbelievers

Theme: "...that you might believe..." John is a spiritual Gospel. It is a revelation of Who Jesus is.

Key Verse: *20:30-31* "...these things are written that you might believe..."

Focus: Who Jesus IS! The King, not the Kingdom. Jesus is the King. Jesus is portrayed as deity, the mystery of the person of Jesus. He was like a man, yet unlike man. John focuses on Jesus the Man, Who He was, and what He did.

Date: 90 A.D.

Author: John, the Apostle



This is most of the populated world in Jesus day. All of the events in the New Testament occurred within this area.

Map courtesy of Logos Bible Atlas

JOHN - A REVEALING OUTLINE

<i>The Revelation of the Word in Eternity</i>	1:1-2
<i>The Revelation of the Word in Creation</i>	1:3-4, 9
<i>The Revelation of the Word in Redemption</i>	1:5—21:25
<i>The Sweeping Witness of the Prologue</i>	1:9-14, 16-18
<i>The Crowning Witness of the Old Dispensation</i>	1:5-8, 15, 19-28
<i>The Opening Witness of the New Dispensation</i>	1:29-51
<i>The Great Signs and Public Discourses</i>	2:1—12:11
<i>The First Sign: Water and Wine</i>	2:1-12
<i>The Second Sign: Cleansing the Temple</i>	2:13-22
<i>Feast: Messiah in the Temple: Passover</i>	2:23-25
<i>Discourse (Nicodemus): Christ the Source of New Life</i>	3:1-21
Dispute over John the Baptist and Jesus	3:22-4:3
<i>Discourse (Samaritan Woman): Christ the Water of Life</i>	4:4-42
<i>The Third Sign: Healing at a Distance</i>	4:43-54
<i>Feast: Messiah in the Temple: Passover</i>	5:1
<i>The Fourth Sign: Healing the Impotent Man on the Sabbath</i>	5:2-16
<i>Discourse (Scribes & Pharisees): Christ the Divine Son</i>	5:17-47
<i>The Fifth Sign: Feeding the Five Thousand</i>	6:1-15
<i>The Sixth Sign: Walking on Water</i>	6:16-21
<i>Discourse (Multitudes): Christ the Bread of Life</i>	6:22-59
<i>Discourse (Disciples): Christ the Life-giving Spirit</i>	6:60-71
<i>Feast: Messiah in the Temple: (Dedication)</i>	7:1-52
The Woman Taken in Adultery	7:53—8:11
<i>Discourse (Pharisees): Christ the Light of the World</i>	8:12-30
<i>Discourse (Professed Followers): Christ the Fount of Freedom</i>	8:31-59
<i>The Seventh Sign: Healing the Man Born Blind</i>	9:1-41
<i>Discourse (Pharisees): Christ the Good Shepherd</i>	10:1-21
<i>Feast: Messiah in the Temple: Dedication</i>	10:22-42
<i>The Eighth Sign: Raising Lazarus</i>	11:1-44
Withdrawal to Ephraim as Jews Lie in Wait	11:45-54
Jesus Anointed by Mary in Bethany	11:55—12:11
<i>The Climatic Passion Week</i>	12:12—19:42
<i>The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (SONday)</i>	12:12-19
<i>The Gentiles Seek for Jesus (Tuesday)</i>	12:20-36
<i>The Jews Reject Jesus</i>	12:37-50
<i>Feast: Messiah in the Temple: Passover and Lord's Supper (Thursday)</i>	
<i>Jesus Instructs by Example</i>	13:1-38
<i>Discourses in Parting (Disciples): Christ's Legacy to His Followers</i>	
<i>Discourse on Comfort</i>	14:1-31
<i>Discourse on Admonition</i>	15:1-27
<i>Discourse on Prediction</i>	16:1-33
<i>Prayer for Intercession</i>	17:1-26
<i>Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane (Friday)</i>	18:1-12
<i>Trial of Jesus</i>	18:13—19:16
<i>Crucifixion and Burial</i>	19:16-42
<i>The Risen Lord and His Redeemed Family</i>	20:1—21:25
<i>The Empty Tomb</i>	20:1-18
<i>Other Resurrection Appearances</i>	20:19—21:2
<i>Instructions to His Disciples</i>	21:3-23
Devotional Postscript	21:24-25

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 002 – The Authors of the Four Gospels

Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

- God prepared and guided four men to write the Gospels.
- Each writer targets a specific audience and purpose.
- Four different writers tell their perspectives of Jesus’ life and teachings.
- Jesus is both God and man (deity and human.)

Lesson Commentary

(Your Notes Here!)

Welcome to “Getting To Know Jesus,” the life and teachings of Jesus Christ Bible study series. Many people since the days of Christ have desired to know Jesus just like the Greeks who were in Jerusalem around the time of His Crucifixion (*John 12:21*.) Even more people claim to believe in Him, but **how many really know anything about Him, His life and teachings?** In this lesson, we are going to look at the four writers and their audiences, backgrounds and style. This way, we will be better able to understand why they tell the story about Jesus the way that they do.



Matthew

Author: None of the four Gospels identify their authors. The names of the writers were added later and represent the thinking of the early Church.

Matthew doesn’t identify himself as the author, but he is given such credit from the earliest of scholars to today. *Matthew*, also known as Levi, was a Jew who was a tax collector for the Roman government in the city of Capernaum. This made him despised among his brethren. He was considered a traitor. Why would Jesus want to have anything to do with such a man?

He gave up his past to become a disciple of Christ. Later, Jesus chose him to be one of the Apostles.

The Gospel according to *Matthew* is known as the Gospel to the Jews. Tradition holds that it was originally written to the Church in Jerusalem. Much of Jewish civilization was built around their scriptures, the Old Testament. *Matthew* appeals frequently to their Scriptures.

Overview: *Matthew* is the most quoted of the four Gospels. *Matthew* sought to show the Jews that Jesus had fulfilled all of the prophecies of the Old Testament. He is the one for which they had been searching and waiting. His writing style would assume that his readers were familiar with Jewish custom and teaching. He makes frequent reference to those teachings in the Old Testament when showing Jesus was the Fulfiller.

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Matthew's arrangement of the events of Jesus is both biographical and topical. Rather than just follow a specific order of events, he also dealt with particular topics. The biographical part is in two sections. The first section begins in *4:17*; the second begins in *16:21*.

The topical structure is peculiar to *Matthew*. There are five blocks of text that are grouped around one dominant theme. See the attached outline. Each block ends with the phrase, "When Jesus had finished . . ." With the attached introductory narrative and concluding story, there are seven divisions in all. Each is summed up in the Epilogue that confronts the reader with the consequences of Jesus claims. The readers will either choose for Christ or against Him.

Jesus was the Messiah of the Old Testament promise and His mission was to bring the Kingdom of God to men. Jesus was a humble servant and dying on a cross was a stumbling block, contrary to current Jewish way of thinking. *Matthew* showed Jesus fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy. The Jews were looking for someone different. They looked for glory, power, and earth-shaking conquering of their enemies. Jesus' Kingdom infiltrated rather than conquered. He was the Messiah, but not the One the Jews were expecting. *Matthew* writes to establish that fact.

When we read from *Matthew's* Gospel, we need to remember that he was writing to Jews. He would refer to customs and prophecies that they understood, which are not common to us. We must understand how the Jews would have understood this before we can make appropriate application to our lives. **We will need to ask ourselves, how would the Jew of Jesus' day understand Him?**



Mark

Author: *John Mark*, under the instruction of Peter

John Mark is credited with being the author. His mother's name was Mary. He was a cousin of Barnabas. He started with Paul on his first missionary journey, but turned back. Later he was found with Paul in Rome; however, tradition suggests that he was more closely connected to Peter. His Gospel strongly reflects Peter's character. The personality of Peter is reflected in almost every page. *Mark's* Gospel has movement, quick, and impulsive. Rapidity of action is a main characteristic. *Mark* has been called a moving picture of the ministry of Jesus.

Overview: The Gospel of *Mark* seems directed mainly at Rome and was possibly written there. It is also an active Gospel. Either *Mark* had a personality much like Peter's or Peter had a strong influence in writing this Gospel. Many scholars consider the latter to be a strong possibility. *Mark* isn't concerned with chronological order. Roman civilization gloried

in government and power. Therefore, *Mark* concentrates more on what Jesus did.

(Your Notes Here!)

Mark uses ten Latin words not found elsewhere in the New Testament. He also explains customs because he is writing to Gentiles. *Mark* shows the active side of Jesus. He records fewer words of Jesus than any other Gospel. Chapter Four with four parables and Chapter Thirteen, a discourse on the Apocalypse, comprise the major portion of Jesus teachings as recorded by *Mark*. This Gospel contains a vivid, vigorous, straightforward account of the public ministry of Jesus. The Romans were power seekers, and *Mark* portrayed Jesus in His power and glory. The Last Week, Death, and Resurrection comprise one-third of the book.

Three Characteristics of *Mark*:

1. Rapidity of Action – Moving quickly from one event to another.
2. Vividness of Detail – Added detail brings the narrative to life.
3. Picturesqueness of Description – A pictorial Gospel. Each event is portrayed as a living picture.

Mark includes eighteen Miracles of Jesus (about the same as *Matthew & Luke*). *Mark* only has four parables (*Matthew* has eighteen, *Luke* has nineteen).

Mark has only thirteen verses of introduction. (*Matthew* has seventy-six, *Luke* has one hundred eighty-three). The last twelve verses of *Mark 16:9-20*, are not found in the oldest manuscripts.

When we read from *Mark's* Gospel, we want to remember that he wrote to Roman citizens. He didn't deal as much with what Jesus said because those words were directed at Jews and were spoken in the context of Jewish custom. Romans would appreciate and understand Jesus' actions much easier than His words. They would appreciate the displays of power over the rhetoric. We will want to ask ourselves what would the Romans think about what *Mark* was telling them? **We will want to see how *Mark's* Gospel points us to the real source of power.**

Luke

Author: *Luke*, the physician



Luke, an educated and skilled physician, set out to write a chronological account of the life of Jesus. The Apostle Paul probably influenced him very much. He was Paul's personal physician, an educated and thorough, first-rate historian. The Gospel according to *Luke* was probably written after *Matthew* and *Mark's* Gospels. Most scholars suggest that *Luke's* Gospel was written while Paul was in prison in Caesarea, from where *Luke* was able to travel and talk to many witnesses first-hand. *Luke* stated his purpose for writing in the first four verses: “. . . that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught,” *Luke 1:3*.

Overview: *Luke's* preface is in the elaborate style of many such among historians. He uses common language with grace

(Your Notes Here!)

and vigor. *Luke* goes into the greatest detail on the birth of Jesus. He is the only writer to mention anything about Jesus' youth. He gives the human genealogy of Christ traced to Adam, vs. *Matthew's* legal genealogy through Mary to Abraham. *Luke* records several events not found in *Matthew*, *Mark*, or *John*. Greek civilization represented culture, philosophy, wisdom, reason, beauty and education. *Luke* focuses on the life and miracles of Jesus, His humanity and His power. He writes a Gospel that will appeal to the interests of the Greeks. More attention is given to the power of Jesus in doing miracles.

Much attention is given in *Luke* to Jesus as the Divine Savior, from Chapter One, His birth, to Chapter twenty-four, His Resurrection. As one reads through the Gospel, Jesus is revealed as the Divine Redeemer who came to save the lost. He saves us from the power of evil spirits, severe illness, leprosy, the power and consequence of sin. He also raises the dead, calms a storm, and saves the multitudes from hunger.

Jesus' exaltation of womanhood and His attitudes toward the poor are emphasized in *Luke*. He plays more lightly on the faults of the Apostles to focus more strongly on Christ. Much joy is found throughout the book's account along with considerable focus on the work of the Holy Spirit and prayer. Over half of the book deals with Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem and the events following His Ascension. Though Jesus came to save and not to destroy, those who refuse to be saved bring terrible suffering upon themselves. Jesus is not only the Divine Savior, but also the Almighty Redeemer who is the only Son of God. Proof is given through His Resurrection: Jesus, Savior of the World, sent, approved, and equipped by God.

Luke's Gospel is universal for people of all ages and conditions:

Jews	1:13; 2:10
Samaritans	9:51-56
Heathens	2:32; 3:6, 38
Publicans, sinners, and outcasts	7:37-50
Respectable people	7:36
The poor	1:53
The rich	19:2; 23:50

When we read from *Luke*, we might want to consider that he wrote to the, Gentiles. However, we will still need to interpret it in first century context, which may differ from our thinking. *Luke* is revealing Jesus to us as a human being that was also God. Jesus is a man who is God in a fleshly body. We don't want to forget the qualifications and related skill of the author, a respected and educated physician. Most of our chronology of the Gospels will be taken from *Luke's* account. **Luke's readers wanted to know. What are you seeking to know about Jesus?**

John



(Your Notes Here!)

Author: *John*, the Apostle

The Gospel is written by *John* the Apostle, though he never mentions himself by name. He is credited as being the one "...whom Jesus loved." By comparing *Matthew 27:56* with its parallel in *Mark 15:40*, we see that Salome was the mother of *John*. If *John 19:25* is referring to the same group of women, then Salome would also be a sister to Mary. This would make *John* and James cousins of Jesus and of *John* the Baptist. This isn't conclusive, but possible. He and his brother, James, are fishermen with their father, Zebedee. They are possibly partners of or at least are well known to Peter and Andrew. They fish the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum.

Overview: *John*, along with James, his brother and Peter formed an "inner circle" of the Apostles with Jesus. They were the ones with Jesus at the raising of Jarius' daughter, at the Mount of Transfiguration, and in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Gospel of *John*, as well as the Letters and the book of Revelation were most likely written while he was in exile on the isle of Patmos. *John* was close to the same age as Jesus and lived to around 100 years old. His Gospel and letters were written after most of the other books of the New Testament.

Of the four Gospels, *John's* is quite different from the other three. It is a spiritual Gospel to show Whom Jesus is. It emphasizes the King instead of the Kingdom. It records Christ's work in Judea. It is definite in locating the time and place of related events. It abounds in non-parabolic teaching. It dwells at great length on events and discourses in less than a twenty-four hour period: Chapters Thirteen through Nineteen. It records special emphasis on the promises of the coming, and the work of the Holy Spirit. It is rhythmic in style. Truths are often stated both positively and negatively, typical of Hebrew poetry.

Keywords in John compared to the other Gospels

	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Love	15	8	15	43
World	11	17	11	98
Believe	18	5	10	77
Life	12	7	13	49

Jesus is portrayed as more than a man. He is "God come in the flesh." The Hebrews wanted proof of Jesus claims. *John* presents ample and varied proof. The Gospel only covers twenty selected days out of Jesus' three years of ministry, but *John* goes into detail on the events of each of those days. All events reveal Who Jesus is, and what He does. He is the Source of New Life – the Water of Life, and the Bread of Life. *John* links the entire destiny of both Jew and Gentile as part of the entire creation to the Resurrection of the Incarnate, Crucified Logos. The whole Gospel cites evidence, statements, and proofs of God's love for man.

Man's most important question is "Who is Jesus?" *John* answers:

(Your Notes Here!)

- The Word of God 1:14
- The Lamb of God 1:29, 36
- The Messiah 1:41
- The Son of God 1:49
- The King of Israel 1:49
- The Savior of the World 4:42

Seven signs are recorded that reveal the person and mission of Jesus.

- Turning water into wine 2:1-12
- Cure of the nobleman's son 4:46-54
- Cure of the paralytic 5:1-18
- Feeding of the five thousand 6:6-13
- Walking on water 6:16-21
- Giving sight to the blind 9:1-7
- Raising of Lazarus 11:1-45

The purpose of these signs is disclosed in *John 12:37-43*.

John records seven great "I Am" sayings of Jesus.

- The Bread of Life 6:35
- Light of the World 8:12
- Door of the Sheep 10:7
- Good Shepherd 10:11
- Resurrection and the Life 11:25
- The Way, the Truth, and the Life 14:6
- The True Vine 15:1

When we read from *John*, we are going to see the behavior, actions, and thoughts of the King, Jesus. *John* mentions the love of God more than any other Bible writer. We see the love of God and the love of Jesus portrayed throughout the Gospel. This with the key verses (*John 20:30-31*) will bring us to answer the question: "To love or not to love Jesus and the God who sent Him." *John* answers the question "What is truth?"

Next week, we will open the Gospels and look at *Mark's* introduction, *Luke's* Preface, *John's* Prologue and *Matthew's* Genealogy. How do they introduce their accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ?

Read *Matthew 1:1-17; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:1-4; 3:23-28; John 1:1-18*, bring a friend and join us for "Getting To Know Jesus."





LOC – 002 – “Background on the Four Gospels”
Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Application

1. What is the wisdom in Matthew writing his Gospel to the Jews? How can that influence you in witnessing to others today?
2. Mark’s Gospel speaks of Jesus’ power. How do you relate to Jesus’ power?
3. How does Luke’s diligence in searching for the truth about Jesus challenge you in your walk with Him?
4. John talks about the “Word.” What does “Word” communicate to you?
5. What have you gotten out of this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 002 – “Background on the Four Gospels”

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. What can you find out about the person, personality, and character of each of the Gospel writers?

2. How did their personae influence their style of writing?

Matthew:

Mark

Luke

John

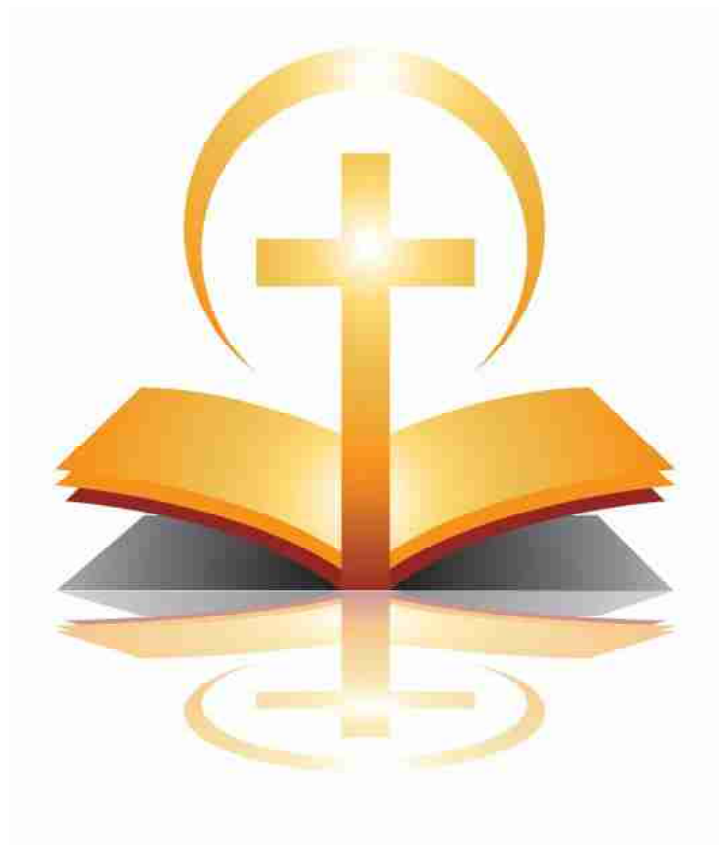
3. Do a word study on the Greek word - euangelion (gospel.) What does it mean and why is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 003

Bible Study Text and Questions

Introductions To Each Gospel

Written by
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INTRODUCTORY NOTES BY THE GOSPEL WRITERS*



1. MARK'S TITLE

Mark. 1:1

*God's Good News
(Mark 1:14)
concerning His Son
(Romans 1:1-4).*

¹The beginning of the Gospel ^{**}
about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ^{***}

2. LUKE'S PREFACE

Luke 1:1-4

*What others
have written.*

¹Many have undertaken
to draw up an account
of the things
that have been fulfilled among us,
²just as they were handed down to
us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses *(II Peter:16-18; I John.1:1-2 Acts 1:21-22)*
and servants of the word,

*What Luke
proposes
to write.*

³Therefore, since I myself
have carefully investigated everything
from the beginning,
it seemed good also
to me to write an orderly account
for you, most excellent Theophilus,

*What his
purpose is.*

⁴so that you may know the
certainty of the things you have been taught.

NOTE: Lettered footnotes are part of the New International Version text.

Starred footnotes are the author's comments.

^aSome ancient authorities omit the Son of God. [But cf. *Luke 1:32,35;4:3,9; Matthew 4:3,5; Mark 1:24;14:61,62; Luke 22:67-70*]

^b Or accurately.

^{*}These "Notes by the Gospel Writers" are not properly a part of the story of Christ's Life itself, but introductory to it. ^{*}

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

1. To find the passage you wish to study turn to the index. Gospel references are at the right side of the page.
2. Read the title or subject of the incident, e.g. "Luke's Preface"
3. Read the marginal titles on left of page.
4. Note that the ideas are grouped into paragraphs.
5. See how the "Marginal Titles" summarize the paragraphs.
6. See the relation and sequence of the paragraphs.
7. Consider how the "Marginal Titles" for a complete outline of the story.
8. Visualize each scene and see it merge into the next, like a moving picture.
9. Consider what the main message of the whole story is, and the truth it teaches.
10. Think out its application to life today, in yourself, in others, and in society.
11. Do this for every incident in the book, then you will "see Christ openly set forth before your eyes,"
and He and His message will be much more real to you.

[YOU CAN REMEMBER the
Outlines of "Mark's Title" and of
"Luke's Preface," by noting how the
Marginal Titles of the paragraphs are
related to each other. Try it.]

Study these pages man times, until you have mastered them and they have become your habits of thought and conduct.)

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3. JOHN'S PROLOGUE

John 1:1-18

THE WORD

(His Essential Nature and Relationships (1-5))

His Pre-Existence

¹In the beginning was the Word,

*His Relation
to God*

and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

*His Relation
to Things*

²He was with God in the beginning *
³Through him all things were made; (*Colossians 1:16*)
without him nothing was made that has been made.

*His Relation
to Men*

⁴In him was life,^a
and that life was the light of men (*John 1:9,14*)
⁵The light shines in the darkness,
but the darkness has not understood** it.

(2) His Historical Manifestation and How He was Received (6-13)

*John comes
to testify
concerning Him.*

⁶There came a man who was sent from God;
his name was John.
⁷He came as a witness
to testify concerning that light,
so that all men might believe through him.
⁸He himself was not the light;
he came only as a witness to the light.

*The true light
of all men
was coming.*

⁹The true light
that gives light to every man
was coming into the world.

*He had been
in the world
since its creation
through Him.*

¹⁰He was in the world,
and though the world was made through him,
the world did not recognize him.

*His own people had
not received Him.
Some had believed
and so had received
Him.*

¹¹He came to that which was his own,
but his own did not receive him.

*They became
Children of God,
by being born of
God (*John 3:3-5*).*

¹²Yet to all who received him,
to those who believed in his name,
he gave the right to become children of God—

(3) His Unique Character and Mission (14-18)

*He became
the incarnate Word
full of gracious truth.*

¹³children born
not of natural descent,
nor of human decision
or a husband's will,

[YOU CAN REMEMBER
the Outline of John's Prologue.
The Title is "The Word".
There are three Main Divisions.
See how they fit together. Next, note
how the paragraph titles in the
margin are associated. Then repeat
them aloud with eyes shut. Then
write them. Proceed with the second
and third main points in the same
way. Do this again just before
retiring. Repeat next morning.

^aOr was not anything made. That which has been made was life in Him.

* *1 John 1:1; 2:13,14; Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 40:21*

** Or understood it.



*He manifests
God's unique glory.*

¹⁴The Word became flesh (*Philippians 2:5-8*)
and made his dwelling among us.
full of grace and truth. (*Colossians 1:15-20*)
We have seen his glory, the glory
of the One and Only [Son], (*John 2:11; II Corinthians 4:6*)
who came from the Father,

*He is
incomparably
greater than
John.*

(¹⁵John testifies concerning Him. He cries out,
saying, "This was He of whom I said,
'He who comes after me has surpassed me
because He was before me.'") (*John.1:30*)

¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all
received one blessing after another.

*He is greater
than Moses.*

¹⁷For the law was given through Moses;
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

*He only
adequately reveals
the Father.*

¹⁸No one has ever seen God, * (*John 6:46; I John 4:12; Colossians 1:15; Exodus 33:20*)
but God the Only [Son],
who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

4. MATTHEW'S GENEALOGY

*(Compared with Luke's)**

THE HUMAN ANCESTRY OF THE MESSIAH

Matthew. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38

*From Abraham
to David
(1,000 years)*

¹A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ
the son of David, the son of Abraham:

²Abraham was the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

³Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was
Tamar, Perez the father of

Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram,^a

⁴Ram the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,

⁵Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother
was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose
mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse,

⁶and Jesse the father of King David.

*From David
to the Captivity
(100 years)*

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother
had been Uriah's wife,

⁷Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam
the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa,^b

⁸Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat
the father of Jehoram, Jehoram the father
of Uzziah,

Luke 3:23-38

*(Luke tells the genealogy in reverse order
and differs in some items. We lack data to
make a complete comparison because*

neither gives the facts.)

being the son, (as was supposed) of Joseph

²⁴*the son of Matthat,*

the son of Levi,

the son of Melchi,

the son of Jannai

the son of Joseph

²⁵*the son of Mattathias*

the son of Amos

the son of Nathum

the son of Esli

the son of Naggai

the son of Joanan,

the son of Simein

the son of Josech

the son of Joda

²⁷*the son of Joanan,*

the son of Rhesa,

the son of Shealtiel^d

the son of Neri

²⁸*the son of Melchi,*

the son of Addi

the son of Cosam

the son of Elmadam

the son of Zerubbabel,

the son of Er

²⁹*the son of Jesus*

the son of Eliezer

the son of Jorim^e

the son of Matthat

the son of Levi

³⁰*the son of Symeon*

*From Joseph
and Mary Back
to David.*

* *Bodily senses cannot perceive spiritual realities.*

*From Captivity
to Christ*

⁹Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,

¹⁰Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon,^c Amon the father of Josiah,

¹¹and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

¹²After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,^d Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

¹³Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor,

¹⁴Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, Akim the father of Eliud,

¹⁵Eliud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob,

¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

¹⁷Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.

Summary

*the son of Judas
the son of Joseph,
the son of Jonam
the son of Eliakim,
³¹the son of Melea
the son of Menna
the son of Mattatha
the son of Nathan
the son of David
³²the son of Jesse,
the son of Obed
the son of Boaz,
the son of Salmon,^e
the son of Nahshon,
³³the son of Amminadab,^f
the son of Arni,^g
the son of Hezron
the son of Judah,
the son of Perez
³⁴the son of Jacob,
the son of Issac,
the son of Abraham*

*From David back
to Abraham*



*Frm Abraham
back to Adam*

*the son of Terah,
the son of Nahor,
³⁵the son of Serug
the son of Reu
the son of Peleg
the son of Eber,
the son of Shelah
³⁶the son of Cainan,
the son of Arphaxad
the son of Shem
the son of Noah,
the son of Lamech
³⁷the son of Methuselah,
the son of Enoch,
the son of Jared,
the son of Mahalaleel,
the son of Cainan
³⁸the son of Enos
the son of Seth
the son of Adam
the son of God*

**The Talmud hints that Matthew gives Joseph's descent and Luke Mary's. Luke calls Joseph the son of Heli. By marrying Mary, the daughter of Heli, he became his son or as we would say son-in-law. These genealogies connect the Old Testament and the New Testament and indicate the fulfillment of the prophecy. The Old Testament says the Messiah will be a descendant of David and also of Abraham.*

^aGreek Aram. ^bGreek Asaph. ^cSome authorities read Amos. ^dGreek Salathiel.

^eSome ancient authorities read Sala. ^fMany ancient authorities insert son of Admin or Son of Aram. ^gSome ancient authorities write Aram.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 003 – Introduction to the Four Gospels - From the Writers



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

- We want to understand the author’s purpose for writing their Gospel.
- We want to see how the Gospels introduce their stories about Jesus.
- Understanding the background will help us to better apply what we learn about Jesus.

Lesson Commentary

Read *Mark 1:1; Luke 1:1-4; John 1:1-18; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38*

(Your Notes Here!)

In the first lesson, we looked very briefly at the period between the Old and New Testaments. We also got some background information (the who, what, how, when, where and why) on Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. We learned that each writer was addressing a different audience. Matthew was an Apostle, a Jew and wrote to a Jewish audience. Mark was writing to the Romans under the instruction of the Apostle Peter. Luke wrote to all Gentiles under the direction of the Apostle Paul. John wrote to any that were unbelievers in order that they might believe. From time to time, you will want to refer back to Lesson 001 and the outlines and summaries of each of the Gospels until you can remember their contents.

Today we will look at the introductory comments made by each of the four Gospels to introduce their works to their readers. Keep in mind that each writer came from a different background and wrote to a different audience. This will influence how they introduce their Gospel stories.

Mark’s Title:

Mk. 1:1 – Everything has a beginning on this earth. In Mark’s Gospel, the beginning is not only of Jesus life on earth, but of the narrative of that Gospel about Jesus. Even though He was with the Father in the act of creation, His life and ministry on earth had a beginning.

The Greek word for Gospel is “Euangellion.” It literally means “Good News.” Jesus is the Good News of God coming and living among man, to redeem us from our sins, and to set us a godly example. The Gospel is Christ and the Gospel is about Christ. Mark is the only writer to use the word “Gospel” in the title of his book.

Jesus is the Greek word for the Hebrew word “Joshua.” It means “Yahweh,” or “God, is salvation.” Christ is the Greek word for “Anointed One.” The Hebrew word is “Messiah.”

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Mark wrote to Romans. They sought POWER! They wanted to know about this God who became a Man. They understood gods as beings of power. Jesus is the Son of the only GOD! (“Son of God” is not found in some of the older manuscripts). Romans were interested in stories about His power, so Mark only gave one verse of introduction and then went right into the history and action of Jesus' life. The title “Son of God” points to Jesus’ unique relationship to God. He was a Man (Jesus), and God’s “Special Agent” (Messiah), but He is also fully divine. As the Son, He depends on and obeys God the Father.

Luke’s Preface:

Luke’s preface employs the style of contemporary historical and technical writers. It contains sources, research, method, purpose, and addressee. He used this style of introduction in *Luke 3:1-2* and in *Acts 1:1-2*. None of the other writers of the Bible used this approach to their writings. John’s Gospel contains a prologue, but it is more a theological statement than a mere introduction.

Lk. 1:1 – “Others have written” could easily mean that Luke’s audience already had knowledge of Matthew, Mark, and others who had written about Jesus. Luke seeks to give a chronologically accurate historical account. Where Mark uses the theological term “Gospel”, Luke uses an historical term “account”.

Lk. 1:2 – Luke consulted with others who had seen Jesus, for accuracy of his details. He tells the gentiles who this MAN called Jesus really is. Jesus is the Savior. Luke recognized that there were several other stories being passed around about Jesus. Some of these stories had become distorted, so he set out to find out the truth and convey it to his audience.

Lk. 1:3 – Luke’s message is primarily to those who are Greeks and gentiles. Since “everyone” spoke Greek, all gentiles were included in this definition.

Theophilus means Lover of God. “Theos” means God. “Philus” is one of the Greek words for Love, brotherly love, friendship. It is unclear whether Theophilus is referring to a particular person or to anyone who loves God. By using the term, “most excellent”, Luke is recognizing Theophilus as a person of honor. This could possibly be a Roman leader who is open to the Gospel and will facilitate its spread. **We should consider Theophilus as a title describing our attitude towards God. Are you one who loves God?**

Lk. 1:4 – Luke wants to assure his readers of the TRUTH about what they have heard regarding Jesus. They want to know about the Man. Luke tells them about His life on this earth.

John's Prologue: The Deity of Jesus

(Your Notes Here!)

John's prologue falls into three parts that are divided by the statements about John, the Baptist, in *John 1:6-8* and *15*. The first part (*John 1:1-5*) deals with the cosmic, creative work of the "Word" and the relationship of the "Word" to God and creation. The second part (*John 1:9-14*) narrates the advent (coming or arrival) of the Word and the response evoked by it. *John 1:14* summarizes this advent and begins to set forth the incarnate "Word's" nature. For the first time the author speaks, as if he's making a confession, in the first-person plural. In the third and final part (*John 1:15-18*) the community of disciples confesses briefly and succinctly who the "Word" is and what his advent means.

Jn. 1:1 – In the beginning, before time existed, Jesus is. Word, in the Greek is "Logos." It is not a unit composed with letters, but a concept, an account. Jesus was WITH God, WAS God, three distinct Persons, yet One and the Same.

Jn. 1:2 – Jesus was present before the Creation. He is not a created being. He always was, always is and always will be!

Jn. 1:3 – Jesus is the cause, not an effect. He was an active part in the creation of the earth. In Genesis, you will notice the words, "Let us..." Read Jesus' words in *John 5:21-26*.

Jn. 1:4 – Jesus is the SON of God. He is also our SON (sun) God. The Light shines in the dark, and it cannot overcome the light. Jesus is present tense, not past tense. He gave initial life, physical, human life. He also gives eternal life, spiritual life.

Jn. 1:5 – Just as a light is able to shine in the dark, so Jesus "shines" in the darkness of the sin in this world. And the dark cannot keep the Light of the World from shining brightly! **Is Jesus' light shining out in your life?**

Jn. 1:6 – John the Baptist, not the Apostle, came to prepare people for Jesus' coming. The Old Testament had been foretelling the coming of Christ for about four thousand years of earth's history (actually, the Old Testament is less than 1,500 years old by Jesus' day). The Jews in John's day were in a mind set, albeit, some were wrong in their interpretation, that the Messiah would be coming soon. The Apostle John is writing to tell them that Jesus had already come.

Jn. 1:7 – John the Baptist will be the first witness for Jesus, an immediate forerunner, like one running ahead of the King's caravan to announce His coming. People would make ready to receive Him, and show Him respect.

Jn. 1:8 – We will see later, that John the Baptist knew that he was not the Messiah, but was one who ran ahead to prepare others for the long awaited Messiah.

Jn. 1:9 – Being under the Light of Jesus, changes men’s lives. We want to learn more about Jesus so we can become more like Him. **That is the reason for “Getting To Know Jesus.”**

Jn. 1:10 – This verse is very similar to *John 1:5* about the fact that the world is too busy looking the other way to realize that they have missed the living presence of God.

Jn. 1:11 – Jesus came to His own countrymen first, and as we will see as we continue “Getting To Know Jesus,” He reached out to them and they rejected Him. **How many times have you seen testimony about Jesus before you accepted Him?**

Jn. 1:12 – Jesus gives the “right,” the POWER, to become sons of God to those who will accept Him. Come to Jesus! History shows that the oppression of the Church has failed. No power on earth can conquer the Church, which is the Kingdom of God on earth!

Jn. 1:13 – Being born again into God’s Kingdom is a different process than physical birth. It is something that only God can do to us for us. It is something that gives eternal life and something that you have a choice in whether you want to do it or not. **Are you “born again?”**

Jn. 1:14 – The “Word” is a continuation of the comments in *verses 1-3*. Compare what Paul will later write in *Philippians 2:6-8*. Jesus is the essence of Grace and of Truth.

Jn. 1:15 – John (the Baptist) realized who Jesus, his cousin, really was and told others so they could follow Jesus. Jesus is so great, compared to John, because Jesus existed before John.

Jn. 1:16 – John (the Baptist) reminds his followers that **we have all already been the recipients of God’s grace!**

Jn. 1:17 – The Mosaical Law can only condemn. There is no provision for the forgiveness of sin in the Old Testament, only a rolling back of the penalty until Jesus could come and pay the price. Only Jesus saves! **Aren't you glad that you have accepted Him and are saved from the penalty for your sins?**

Jn. 1:18 – No one can prove that God exists, but Jesus’ life and teachings are evidence to who God is, what He has done, and how he wants us to live.

Matthew’s Genealogy (Compared with Luke’s)

Here are the legal descendants. Tracing the family tree is important to prove one’s heritage or right. Jesus being of the lineage of David is important to qualify Him as the King according to prophecy. These genealogies are more for theological purposes than for biological.

Matthew follows Joseph’s line. The legal lineage of Jesus is important to the Jews. This will show the Jews that Jesus is a qualified descendant of David. *Matthew* does mention Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. Tamar and Rahab were prostitutes



Mt. Tabor among the hills of Galilee

Photo courtesy of Cheryl Eastman

and foreigners. Ruth was also a foreigner. Bathsheba was the woman with whom David had an adulterous affair. **God can work His divine will even out of man’s fallen state. God works on us through His grace, not our perfect actions.**

Matthew shows three sets of fourteen generations. There is no known reason for this. It might be because David is fourteen in Hebrew numerology. There is strong evidence that some of the ancestors are deliberately omitted from the list. Their dubious past excluded them. Included in the omissions were Ahaziah, Joash, and Amazaiah.

In those ancestries where the ancestor had brethren, he usually descended from a younger brother such as Abraham, Jacob, Judah, or David. You will notice that Ishmael and Esau are excluded while all of the sons of Jacob are included. Though not the fathers of Christ, they are patriarchs of the Church. They may be mentioned to give hope to the twelve tribes that were scattered abroad.

Luke followed Mary’s line. It is the physical lineage of Jesus. This was easier for Gentiles to relate. He traced it from Mary to Adam to God. **In that way, we may all trace our lineage back to Jesus.** God became flesh and dwelt among men! “Son” means “of the lineage of; a direct descendent: in-law, grand, great-grand...” Matthew goes from Abraham to Joseph.

(Your Notes Here!)

(Your Notes Here!)

Luke has eleven series of seven names each for a total of seventy-seven names. He traced from Jesus to Adam whereas Matthew traced from Abraham to Jesus. Luke followed David's line through Nathan whereas Matthew followed the line through Solomon.

Many events preceding the coming of Christ have brought the Jews to a point where they are looking for the prophesied Messiah. Others have come and claimed to be the Messiah, but have been rejected for one reason or another. Jesus has to establish Himself as the true Messiah. His lineage is one step in that process.

Next week, we will look at the annunciation of John the Baptist, and his birth to Zechariah and Elizabeth. We are going to begin our journey from annunciation to ascension. There will be times of excitement and times of information. It will be a time to see how you can become more like Jesus so He can change your life. We are going to enter into a more intimate relationship with God through His SON!

Read *Luke 1:5-25* and join us for "Getting To Know Jesus."





LOC – 003 – Introduction to the Gospels - From the Writers **Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Application**

1. How did Mark relate his Gospel to the Romans who were so impressed with power? How does that help you relate the Gospel to people you know?
2. How can you “proclaim” the “Gospel”, the Good News?
3. Can you relate to “Theophilus” (God lover)? Explain.
4. Why is John’s description of Jesus as the “Word” so fitting?
5. In *John 1:10* we learn the world did not recognize Jesus. Why? Would you have recognized Him?
6. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 003 – Introduction to the Gospels - From the Writers

Questions for Homework

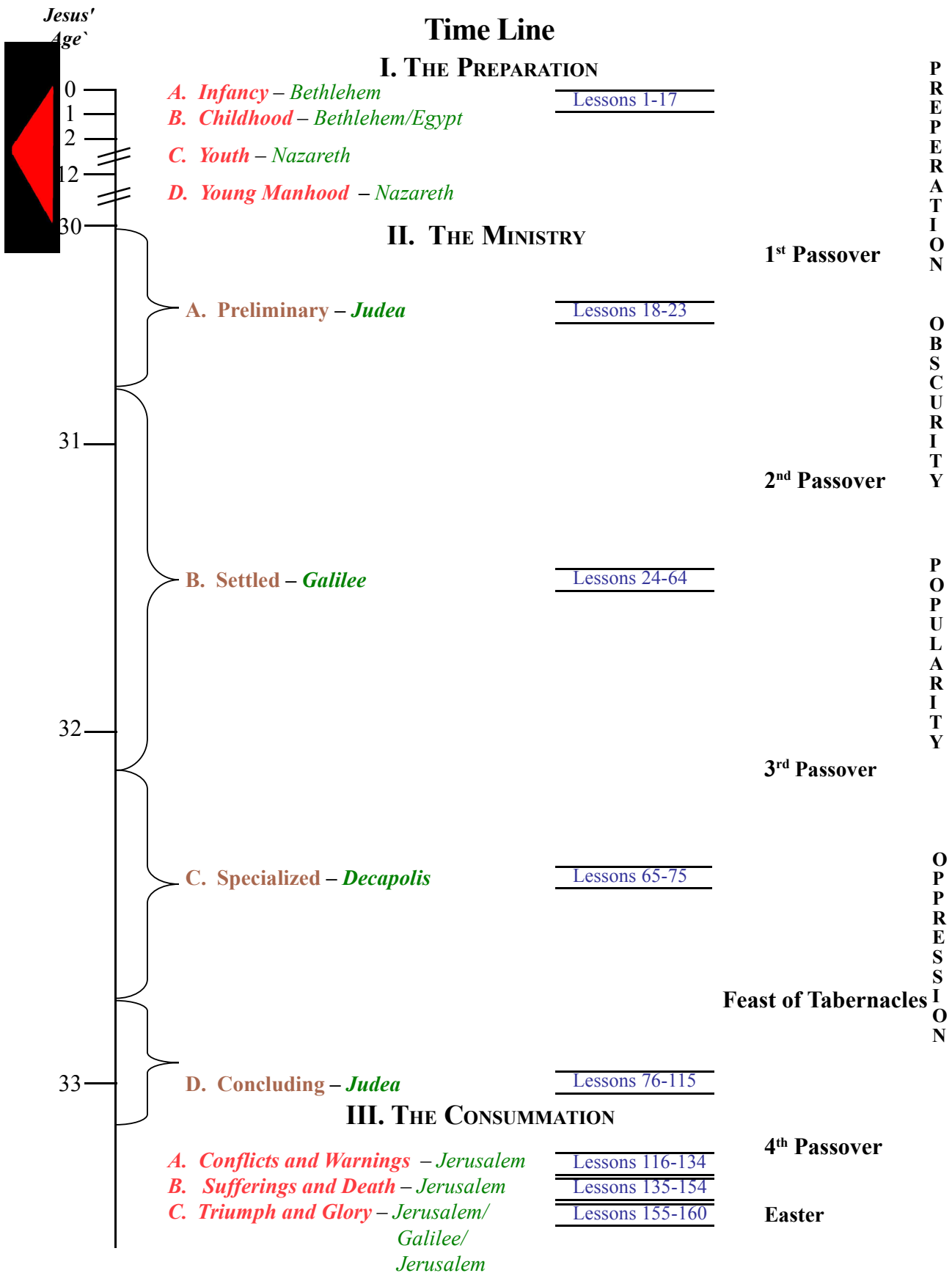
Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. Do a word study on “Logos”, word, using your concordance. How many times is the word used? Is there any other reference to Jesus as the “Word”?
2. Discuss the differences between the genealogies of Matthew and Luke.
3. Who are some others who had written about Jesus that were not included in the Bible we have today?
4. Do a word study on the Greek word - huios (son) used in *Luke 3:23*. What does it mean and why is it used in the Bible?

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”

Time Line



THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF CHRIST



PART ONE

[In Detailed Outline] (*Learning The Father's Message in the Laboratory of Life-Hebrews 5:8-9*)
(*From His birth, B.C. through His childhood. A.D. 9*)

Outline and Scripture Text (The rest of this outline will be included in Book 3) (B.C. 4 to A.D. 7) (<i>Ideal Childhood</i>)	Lesson Number
THE PREPARATION (LEARNING GOD'S MESSAGE IN THE LABORATORY OF LIFE).....	004-017

(From His Birth around 5 B.C. to the Beginning of His Public Ministry around 27 A.D.)

I. The Infancy of Jesus (6-5 B.C.)	004-009
A. <i>The Annunciation to Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:5-25)</i>	004
B. <i>The Annunciation to Mary (Luke 1:26-38), (Bethlehem)</i> <i>and Her Visit to Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56)</i>	005
C. <i>The Annunciation to Joseph (Matthew 1:18-25)</i>	005
D. <i>The Birth and Early Life of John the Baptist (Luke 1:57-80)</i>	006
E. <i>The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-20) (Bethlehem)</i>	007
(Continued from outline in Book 2 page 2.)	
F. <i>The Circumcision and Naming of Jesus (Matthew 1:25b; Luke 2:21)</i>	008
G. <i>The Consecration of Jesus (Luke 2:22-39a) (Jerusalem)</i>	008
H. <i>The Visit of the Magi (Matthew 2:1-12) (Bethlehem)</i>	009
I. <i>The Flight to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-18)</i>	009
II. The Childhood of Jesus (4 B.C. to 7 A.D.)	010
A. <i>His Nazareth Home (Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 2:39b)</i>	010
B. <i>His Normal Growth (Luke 2:40)</i>	010
1. His Physical Growth	
a. <i>In Size</i>	
b. <i>In Strength</i>	
2. His Mental Growth	
a. <i>The Increase</i>	
b. <i>The Fullness</i>	
3. His Spiritual Growth	
a. <i>The Source</i>	
b. <i>The Use</i>	
III. THE YOUTH OF JESUS (8 A.D. TO 25 A.D.)	010
A. <i>The Inquiring Boy (Luke 2:41-50)</i>	010
B. <i>The Obedient Son (Luke 2:51)</i>	010
C. <i>The Developing Youth (Luke 2:52)</i>	010
1. In Wisdom	
2. In Stature	
3. In Grace	
a. <i>With God</i>	
b. <i>With Men</i>	
IV. The Young Manhood of Jesus (36 A.D. to 27 A.D.)	011-017
A. <i>John is Preaching and Baptizing (Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18; Cf. John 1:33)</i>	011-012
B. <i>Jesus is Baptized by John (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23a)</i>	013

[You Can Remember Try committing this outline. First Note Its Subject, "The Preparation."

Then Note its Three Main Points and how they naturally follow each other. Now take the details under Point 1. There are 9 of them.

See how the first three are related; then the next two; Circumcision was eight days after birth and consecration was at 40 days. Then follow "Magi," and "Flight to Egypt." Locate each story on the map.

Review night and morning.



Bethlehem's Manger Square and the Church of the Nativity.

Photo courtesy of Corel Corporation, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Lesson 004

Bible Study Text and Questions

Annunciation to Zechariah and Elizabeth

Written by
2 709 8 L . : : ; 70



The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ

from Annunciation to Ascension

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A. THE PREPARATION*(for the Ministry of Jesus)



1. The Infancy of Jesus (6-5 B.C.)

(ANCIENT PROMISES AND PROPHECIES COMING TRUE IN HIS DIVINE—HUMAN INFANCY)

A. The Annunciation to Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:5-25)

The Introduction

The Time, Place, and Persons.

⁵ In the time of Herod king of Judea

The King.

The parents of John are characterized.

Their priestly descent.

Their names.

Their character.

there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; (Cf. *I Chronicles 24:1-10*) his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

⁶ Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.

Their one great sorrow.

⁷ But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.

The Story

In the Priests' quarters the one who is to offer incense is chosen by lot.

⁸ Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. (*Exodus 30:1-10; Revelation 8:3-5*)

The people are praying outside the Temple.

¹⁰ And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

Inside the Holy Place at the Altar of Incense an angel appears to Zechariah.

¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

Zechariah is overawed.

¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

The angel tells his message:

¹³ But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. (*Luke 1:60, 63*)

A son is promised.

He will bring joy to many

¹⁴ He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth.^a

He will be Spirit-filled,

He will bring Israel to Repentance.

¹⁶ Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God.

^aScripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION_R, NIV_R Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House."

¹⁷ And he will go on before the Lord,
in the spirit and power of Elijah,
to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children (*Malachi 4:5-6*)
and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—
to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”



*Zechariah asks
for assurance.*

¹⁸ Zechariah asked the angel,
“How can I be sure of this?
I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

The angel replies I am Gabriel.

¹⁹ The angel answered,
“I am Gabriel.
I stand in the presence of God, (verse **26**)
and I have been sent to speak to you
and to tell you this good news.

*God has sent me to
tell you this message,*

and you will be dumb.

²⁰ And now you will be silent and not able to speak
until the day this happens,
because you did not believe my words,
which will come true at their proper time.”(verse **64**)

*The people outside
wonder at the Delay:*

²¹ Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah
and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

*Zechariah comes out, and dismisses
the service in silence.*

²² When he came out, he could not speak to them.
They realized he had seen a vision in the temple,
for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

The Conclusion

Zechariah returns home.

²³ When his time of service was completed,
he returned home.

The angel's promise comes true.

²⁴ After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant
and for five months remained in seclusion.

²⁵ “The Lord has done this for me,”
she said.

“In these days he has shown his favor
and taken away my disgrace among the people.”



Model of King Solomon's Jerusalem, Holyland Hotel.

Photo courtesy of Cheryl Eastman

^a Greek Zacharias.

* For the complete outline of the life of Christ, see preceding pages. It will greatly help you if you refer to it often.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 004 The Annunciation to Zechariah & Elizabeth



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

- God can intervene in the lives of individuals against the laws of nature.
- Nothing is impossible with God.
- We should pray and never lose hope.
- God determines who is righteous.

Lesson Commentary

(Your Notes Here!)

Read *Luke 1:5-25*

We begin our adventure with the annunciation of the birth of *John* the Baptist. This is significant because of the role that *John* played in preparing the way for Jesus Christ and fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament. This event takes place 4-6 B.C.

Our dating system that centers on the birth of Christ, was devised by the historian Dionysius. He missed three to four years in computing the actual birth year of Jesus. Luke records the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, writing to the Gentiles, who liked culture, wisdom, reason, beauty, and education. He sought to show Jesus’ humanity and power. Let’s begin seriously “Getting To Know Jesus.”

The Cast

Lk. 1:5 – Herod the Great will rule from 37 BC to 2 BC. He will die shortly after the massacre of children in Bethlehem (to be discussed in a few weeks.) He is a powerful, yet ruthless ruler. He murders anyone who poses a threat to his throne. In this paranoia, he even had his own sons killed.

Zechariah is a descendant of Aaron, whose descendants are the priests of Israel. God made a covenant of priesthood with the descendants of Aaron. He made a covenant of royalty with the descendants of David. John the Baptist comes through the line of Aaron, and Jesus will come through the line of David. Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, are advanced in years and they have no children. She is past menopause so she is past the age of child bearing.

Lk. 1:6 – Zechariah and Elizabeth are upright (many translators use “righteous”) by God and man’s standards. They love God, obey Him and worship Him from very deep within themselves. This shows in their lives and is recognized by their peers. A good way to interpret “righteous” is right living. *To be righteous is a hard concept to understand.* It is something to be determined or imputed by God alone and something that we will

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struggle with trying to understand and do for the rest of our lives. **Thank God for His grace and His righteousness.**

Lk. 1:7 – Incidental to this story is the fact that Zechariah and Elizabeth have no children. This is usually “blamed” on the woman (although we know that it isn’t always the truth.) Add to this the fact that they are advanced in years and it establishes the power of God in what is about to take place.

In the Temple

Lk. 1:8 – Zechariah is serving in the Temple as a Priest. There are so many priests by this time that they take turns serving in the Temple. (See *I Chronicles 24:1ff* for an explanation.)

Lk. 1:9 – Because of the large number of priests by this time, this will probably be the only time in Zechariah’s life that he will get to offer incense. There are twenty-four divisions. Each division serves for one week, twice per year. Zechariah is of the descendants of Abijah and it has finally come time for him to serve in Jerusalem.

Lk. 1:10 – Zechariah is offering incense in the Holy Place of the Temple. This represents the prayers of the entire nation. The people are praying outside while this is being done. At this moment, Zechariah is the focal point of the entire Jewish nation. He is their spiritual representative before God. **Prayer is significant in that it is not only a time to petition God for healing from sin and deliverance from the trials of this world, but it is also an opportunity to pour out your heart in worship and praise to God.**

The Angel’s Message

Lk. 1:11 – An angel appears standing just to the right of the Altar of Incense. The prophet, Zechariah, of the Old Testament is the last person to have had contact with an angel. Now we have a priest named Zechariah being visited by an Angel after some 400 years of silence with not even a prophet to speak for God.

Lk. 1:12 – Zechariah is somewhat afraid. This is not your typical every day experience. Though he is righteous before God, he is still discomforted at this interruption to the laws of Nature. How many angel visits occurred over the four thousand-year history of the Old Testament?

Lk. 1:13 – The angel responds. “Do not be afraid.” This is the first of several times this phrase will be said in the New Testament. Even in his old age, Zechariah believes that God can give him and Elizabeth a son and that they are to name him “John.” This son fulfills a prophecy given in *Isaiah 40:3ff*. We will get to know him as *John* the Baptist. (They already know the sex of the child and that he will grow up to do great things for God. **How much would you new parents like to know that your child will do great things?** Prayers of faith filed in

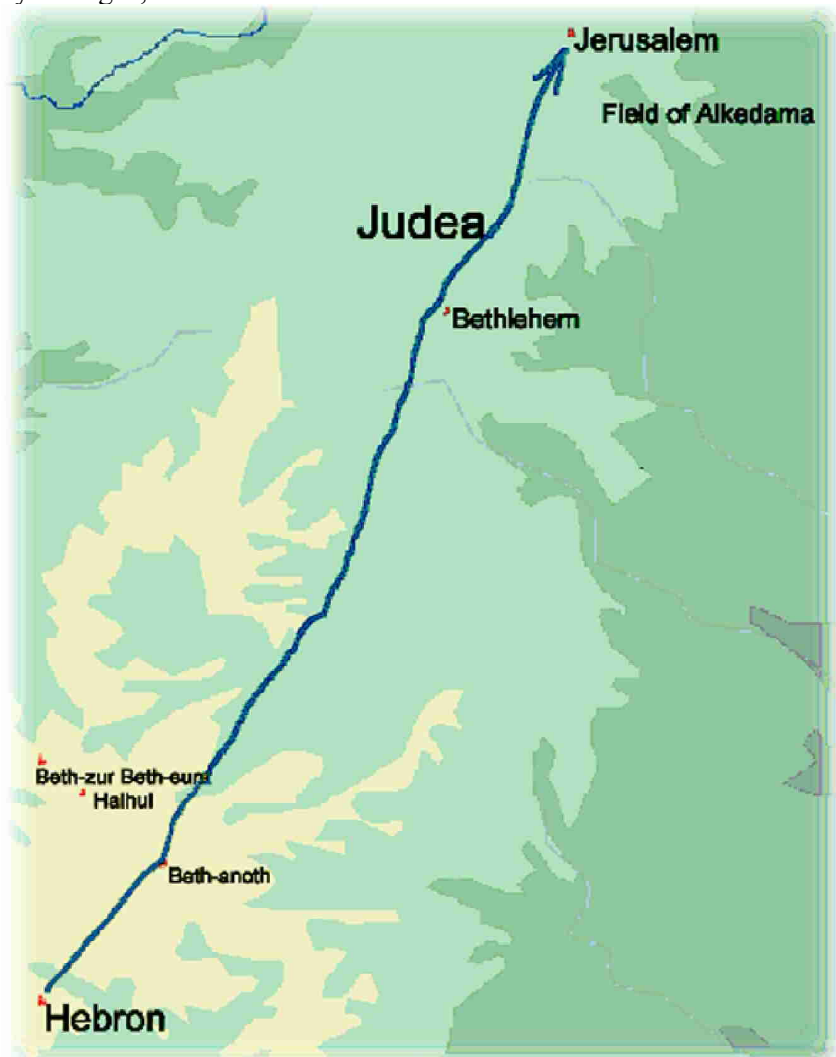
Jesus' birth. His reasoning is valid because he and Elizabeth are old. They are past the age of being able to bear children. However, it is not wise to question the messenger of God, especially if that messenger is an angel.

Lk. 1:19 – Gabriel calling! Gabriel is God's messenger of good news! His name means "power of God" or "mighty one of God". He is always the one who gets to deliver good news.

Lk. 1:20 – There are consequences for questioning the angel. Because Zechariah questioned the angel's word, he is struck mute and deaf for his disbelief. The word used for "mute" is also used to include deafness. **How many of you would ask for a sign if an angel appeared to you?**

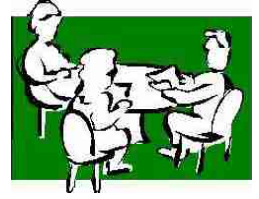
Lk. 1:21 – Meanwhile, outside the Temple, everyone is waiting. What are they thinking? Has Zechariah become ill or has he died? They are waiting for him to pronounce a blessing upon them to signify that their prayers have been heard. This extended period causes them to question.

Lk. 1:22 – When Zechariah comes out, he can't speak so He has to write. The people soon realize by his signs, that he has



Map from Hebron to Jerusalem. Some believe that Zacharias lived close to Hebron. He will travel about 20 miles (32 kilometers) to Jerusalem when it is his duty to serve in the Temple.

Map courtesy of Logos Bible Atlas
Copyright April 1999, Glen M. Copple



LOC – 004 The Annunciation to Zechariah & Elizabeth
Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Application

1. Discuss what “righteousness” involves, and what it does not. How does it relate to right vs. wrong?
2. How would you feel if you saw an angel?
3. Why was Zechariah’s consequence for questioning the angel so significant?
4. How does God speak to us today? Have you ever felt that God was speaking directly to you?
5. What is the relationship between righteousness, good deeds and the grace of God?
6. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 004 The Annunciation to Zechariah & Elizabeth

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. Where else is Gabriel mentioned in the Bible? What else can you learn about him?
2. Do a word study on “righteous,” writing on what you discover.
3. What other Scriptures tell us how we can be righteous?
4. Look up *Isaiah 40:3*. Is John referred to anywhere else in the Old Testament?
5. How has the world been changed by the coming of Christ (schools, governments, societies)?
6. Do a word study on the Greek word - epeidon (favor) used in *Luke 1:25*. What can you find out about what it means and how it is used in the Bible?

Lesson 005

Bible Study Text and Questions

Annunciation to Mary and Visit to Elizabeth

Written by
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The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ

from Annunciation to Ascension

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**2. The Annunciation to Mary (Luke 1:26-38),
and Her Visit to Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56)**



The Angel's Coming:

*He Is Sent
To Nazareth
To Mary*

²⁶In the sixth month, (v.19) God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,
²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David.
The virgin's name was Mary.

*He Comes To Mary
and Greets Her*

²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."^a

She Is Startled

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

*The Angel's Message Is
A Wonderful Promise*

³⁰But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.

*Mary Is To Be the Mother of the
Messiah,
His Greatness and Fame
His Kingdom Will Never End*

³¹You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus. (Matthew 1:21)

³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. (v.35) The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,

³³and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; His kingdom will never end." (Isaiah 9:6-7; Zechariah 9:9-10)

*Mary Wonders
How It Can Be*

³⁴"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The Angel Explains

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born^b will be called the Son of God. (v.32)

*He Gives
A Thoughtful
Suggestion*

³⁶Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month.

³⁷For nothing is impossible with God." (Mark 14:36)

Mary Vows Obedience

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said."

The Angel Departs

Then the angel left her.

^aSome ancient authorities add "Blessed are you among women!"

^bSome ancient authorities add "of you."



Mary's Coming and Greeting

³⁹At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea,
⁴⁰where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's Response

⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

What She Said

⁴²In a loud voice she exclaimed:
"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!

*She Blesses Mary
And Her Child
She Rejoices*

⁴³But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

⁴⁴As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

and Prophecies.

⁴⁵Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be^a accomplished!"

Mary's Song of Praise:

⁴⁶And Mary said:

*For God's
Blessing to
Her*

"My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me-- holy is his name.



Interior of the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth

Photo courtesy of Shirley Burge

^aor Believed, for there will be.



*For God's Mercy
and Judgment
Upon All*

⁵⁰His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has performed mighty deeds with his
arm; he has scattered those who are proud
in their inmost thoughts.

⁵²He has brought down rulers from their
thrones but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

*For God's
Blessing to Israel*

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵to Abraham and his descendants forever,
even as he said to our fathers.”

*Mary's Prolong Stay
Her Return Home*

⁵⁶Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months
and then returned home.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 005 – The Annunciation to Mary and Visit to Elizabeth



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives:

- Angels are real.
- God’s way is not always the same as man’s way.
- Sex outside of marriage is wrong!
- Marriage is an institution ordained by God.
- Nothing is impossible with God.
- God keeps His word!

Lesson Commentary

Read *Luke 1:26-56*

(Your Notes Here!)

This event takes place somewhere 4-6 B.C. — Our dating system that was computed around 532 A.D. missed 4-5 years in computing the actual birth year of Jesus. By the time the error was discovered, it was determined that it would be too difficult to change all of the calendars, so it has been left as it is to this day. We are looking at the humanity, the life of Jesus. As a Greek (Gentile) ask yourself, “Who is this man?” In lesson 002, we looked at the lineage in Matthew through Joseph and in Luke through Mary. In the last lesson, we looked at the annunciation to Zechariah that he and Elizabeth were going to be the parents of John the Baptist who is a fore-teller that the Messiah is coming. Now a young woman named Mary is about to receive a very special visit from an angel. That’s two angelic visitations in about six months! This is quite a change from the four hundred years of silence. It sounds exciting! Let’s look into “Getting To Know Jesus.”

Something is Coming — Something is about to happen!

Lk. 1:26 – It is a typical day in Nazareth. In Elizabeth’s sixth month of pregnancy, an angel stops by to talk to a young girl named Mary. Mary, probably only 15 or 16 years old, is working around the house taking life for granted as most of us do. She’s engaged to a man named Joseph, so she is probably much absorbed in wedding plans and preparing for married life and wondering when he is going to come and take her to be his wife.

God is not willing for His Son to be raised in a single parent home. She will soon be married and Jesus will have an earthly father.

Lk. 1:27 – The Greek word, “parthenon”, means she is a “virgin,” one who has never had sexual relations. She is a descendant of the house of David, which qualifies her as royalty, even though she is poor. Luke reminds us of the lineage of

Joseph (likewise of the house of David) to establish the lineage of Jesus. To be betrothed is a much stronger bond than what we know as being engaged. It is almost the same as being married, but not yet living together or having sexual relations. A betrothal can last up to a year and it can only be broken by a divorce.

Lk. 1:28 – Suddenly, an angel appears and says, “Greetings, You are highly favored. The Lord is with you.” The actual Greek says, “Grace, O favored one. The Lord is with you.” The grace of God is being bestowed on Mary because God has a special purpose for her. Mary does not consider herself a “favored one,” so this greeting is also a strong statement of her value in the eyes of God. She is just a simple Jewish girl living in Nazareth, thinking and doing what any girl her age is thinking and doing. That God is with her is a most reassuring comment, considering the unusual phenomenon that is occurring. **How would you feel if you were working around the house or watching television and an angel appeared and said, “Grace to you, you are favored by God?”**

Lk. 1:29 – What is going through Mary’s mind? The Bible says she is afraid – When was the last time that an angel greeted you? How often does such a phenomenon occur? The Bible says that angels are working all around us, but seldom, if ever, are we actually “visited by an angel.”

Lk. 1:30 – For Mary to “find favor (the Greek word is “charos” which means “grace”) with God” is a very special comment. Whoever she is and whatever she has done, God is well pleased with her! This speaks volumes about Mary’s character. Imagine that God trusts her to be the mother (and her fiance, Joseph, to be the earthly father) of His only Son.

Lk. 1:31 – The angel explains to Mary that she will become pregnant. She is told that she is going to have a baby boy (long before ultrasound would tell her) and she is to give Him the name, Jesus.

Lk. 1:32 – The angel said that the father of this child is the Holy Spirit. The baby, Jesus, will be the Son of God. What does that mean – “Son of God?” Many others had claimed to be the “Messiah.” Jesus will be the real thing. “Not a want-a-be.”

Five things are said of Jesus in the *Luke 1:32-33*.

1. He will be great.
2. He will be the Son of the Most High. This will not escape Mary’s understanding. The angel is telling her that He will be equal to, and carry the qualities of Yahweh, GOD. Her child will be God in a human body.
3. He will be given the throne of His father, David. Jesus will reign forever in the millennium kingdom of David.
4. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever. His reign will be for eternity.
5. His kingdom is spiritual and unending.

Elizabeth (and John the Baptist) Greet Mary

Lk. 1:41 – Elizabeth’s unborn baby, John, responds in a dynamic way when he hears Mary’s greeting to Elizabeth. He knows that the Spirit of God is mightily involved in this event. Reference *Luke 1:15*

Lk. 1:42 – Elizabeth is moved, by her baby’s reaction, to praise God in a loud voice and bless Mary because of what the Holy Spirit has revealed in her. Elizabeth didn’t even know that Mary was coming. Therefore, she most likely does not know the nature of Mary’s visit except as the Lord has chosen to reveal it to her. Prior to this moment she does not know that Mary is pregnant with God’s own Son.

Lk. 1:43 – What does Elizabeth know from the Lord, and what is she told by Mary? They don’t have telephones, newspapers, radio or television to send the word ahead. However, she immediately knows via the Holy Spirit’s revelation that Mary has been chosen to be the mother of the Messiah.

Lk. 1:44 – John also knows of Mary’s joy. This is an indication that he is filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. **Mothers, has the kicking of your child ever revealed a “special” message to you?**

Lk. 1:45 – Mary is blessed because she has acted in faithful obedience to God’s instructions. We too are blessed when we act in faithful obedience to God.

Mary’s Magnificent

Lk. 1:46 – Mary’s response is to praise God. What she sees and hears from Elizabeth blesses her and she expands on it even more. If she had any doubts, this is a real encouragement to her. She is also overjoyed in her love for God. If she thought highly of God before, she does even more so now. This is an outward expression of an inward feeling. **How do you feel about God?**

Lk. 1:47 – Are soul and spirit parallel or different? Hebrew poetic style is to say something and then repeat it in different words. Like being redundant with each phrase of the poem.

(Note—Mary is called “blessed,” not “Savior.” God (Jesus) is our Savior. **Salvation and grace are on those who fear God, (not Mary).** She calls God (Jesus) her Savior, but she is not yet aware of the cross and the resurrection and God’s plan for the forgiveness of sin.)

Lk. 1:48 – Mary does have some understanding that what is happening to her is awesome, and of great significance. However, she does not know what is yet to come. She is indeed blessed, but she is not to be the object of worship. She is not God. She is only the person whom God is using to generate a body for His Son to inhabit while on earth.

Lk. 1:49 – Mary recognizes that, by human terms, she isn’t as worthy of this honor as most other women might be. Yet God

has chosen her for His divine birth. Her greatest response is to praise His name. Her humility shows that she is not to be exalted

(Your Notes Here!)

Lk. 1:50 – God does not regard political, social or financial status important in His kingdom or in the life of His only Son. Often He has honored the humble and humbled the haughty. The source of favor with God is to fear Him and keep His commandments (see *Ecclesiastics 12:13-14*).

Lk. 1:51 – The most immediate mighty deed of God is what Elizabeth and Mary are experiencing at this very moment in their lives. God’s presence is being manifested to them in a very powerful way. **Can you imagine the emotions they are experiencing?**

Lk. 1:52 – Mankind has a tendency to put its trust in rulers. God can bring a ruler down in the blink of an eye. He can build up someone who is humble and lowly just as quickly.

Lk. 1:53 – Mary is recognizing her status as poor in comparison to the religious and political leaders of her day who are wealthy. **Financial or social status means nothing in our relationship to God.**

Lk. 1:54 – **God keeps His word** to Abraham (compare *Genesis 12:1-3*). Two thousand years later, Jesus is the final fulfillment of that promise. He will bring salvation to all nations, not just the Jews. We will eventually learn that most Jews are looking for deliverance from Rome, not from sin.

Lk. 1:55 – God had promised Abraham four things: 1. a son, 2. a great nation, 3. possession of a land, 4. and that through his seed all nations will be blessed. Abraham lived to see only the first promise. **Could you trust and believe God to accomplish such a promise to you?**

Lk. 1:56 – Mary stays about three months, which would be the time for Elizabeth to deliver. Was Mary there for John’s birth? This text also suggests that when she returns home, she will already be three months pregnant with God’s Son.

Something exciting is coming! What does this all mean? Remember that Mary, Elizabeth and those around them don’t know the end of the story like you and I do.

Next Week — Mary still has to address the issue with her fiance, Joseph. How is he going to react when he finds out she is pregnant? Come back next week as we continue an adventure into the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Read *Matthew 1:18-25*; *Luke 1:57-80* and join us again, we are just starting in our journey of “Getting to Know Jesus.”





LOC – 005 – The Annunciation to Mary and Visit to Elizabeth Questions for Thought, Discussion and Application

1. What does it mean to find favor with God?
2. If you were Mary, what might you have been thinking following the angel's visit?
3. In v. 47, what does Mary mean about, "...God my Savior...?" (Remember, she is a simple Jewish girl who does not know about what Jesus is going to do.)
4. What does "... nothing is impossible with God," mean? Apply that to Elizabeth and to Mary. Apply it to yourself.
5. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 005 – The Annunciation to Mary and Visit to Elizabeth

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. What did the Mosaic Law say about persons pregnant outside of marriage?
2. What is the significance of the Holy Spirit as the father of Jesus instead of Joseph?
3. What is Mary's role in the lineage of Jesus?
4. What are the occasions when the Holy Spirit has visited one or more individuals? What can we learn about the "receiving of the Holy Spirit" from that?
5. Do a word study on the Greek word - parthenos (virgin) used in *Luke 1:26*. What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 006
Bible Study Text and Questions
Birth of John the Baptist

Written by
GLEN M. COPPLE



The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ
from Annunciation to Ascension

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3. The Annunciation to Joseph (Matthew 1:18-25)



The betrothal and the discovery ¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. (Luke 1:35)

Joseph's perplexity ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

An angel's explanation and instructions ²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. (v.18) ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

An Ancient Prophecy Fulfilled ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: (Isaiah 7:14) ²³"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel"-- which means, "God with us."

Joseph's Obedience ²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Galilee of



Map showing Nazareth in the hills between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee.

Map courtesy of Logos Bible Atlas

"Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, NIV, Copyright C 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House."



4. The Birth and Early Life of John the Baptist (Luke 1:57-80)

John Is Born	<p>⁵⁷When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son.</p>
The Friends Rejoice	<p>⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.</p>
He Is Circumcised	<p>⁵⁹On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah,</p> <p>⁶⁰but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.” (v. 63)</p> <p>⁶¹They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.”</p>
He Is Named	<p>⁶²Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child.</p>
As The Angel Had Commanded	<p>⁶³He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone’s astonishment he wrote, “His name is John.” (v. 13)</p>
Zechariah's Speech is Restored	<p>⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak, (v. 20) praising God.</p>
The People Are Awed Zechariah's	<p>⁶⁵The neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things.</p> <p>⁶⁶Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, “What then is this child going to be?” For the Lord’s hand was with him.</p>
Hymn of Praise For God's Great Salvation Is at Hand It Fulfills Ancient Prophecies	<p>⁶⁷His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: (v. 41)</p> <p>⁶⁸“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.</p> <p>⁶⁹He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David</p> <p>⁷⁰(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),</p> <p>⁷¹salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us--</p> <p>⁷²to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant,</p>



⁷³the oath he swore to our father Abraham: (v. 55)

It Will enable us to
Serve God More
Fully

⁷⁴to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and
to enable us to serve him without fear
⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness before him all
our days.

This Child Will Prepare
The Way For The
Messiah And His Great
Salvation

⁷⁶And you, my child, will be called a prophet of
the Most High; (*Matthew 11:10*) for you will go on before
the Lord to prepare the way for him,
⁷⁷to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸because of the tender mercy of our God, by
which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
⁷⁹to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow
of death, (*Matthew 4:16*) to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

The Early Life of John

He Develops Normally In
Body and Spirit
He Lives In Obscurity

⁸⁰And the child grew and became strong in spirit;
and he lived in the desert until he appeared
publicly to Israel. (*Luke 3:2*)



Judean countryside somewhere in the region near where John the Baptist grew up.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 006 – The Birth of John the Baptist



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

- We must seek and be listening to God.
- God is still inter-active in His relationship with man.
- God can do what we find impossible.
- Obedience to God is more important than giving in to man's pressures.
- Angels are real.

Lesson Commentary

Read *Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:57-80* (Your Notes Here!)

The account of the birth of Jesus isn't so important for historical information as it is to interpret the role a child is destined to play in salvation history and to emphasize that God initiates the role. He is God, yet He is also a man. The events around His birth will confirm that truth.

Well, Mary and Elizabeth are going to give birth. But wait a minute, Mary is not married, she is only engaged. Joseph, her fiancé, has not had sexual relations with her. They wait until after they are married (and after Jesus is born) to have sexual relations. How did she become pregnant? And now she has gone off to her cousin's for three months. What is going to happen when she gets back?

Matthew wrote to the Jews. He addresses the Joseph side of the issue just as *Luke* addresses Mary's story. Jesus being adopted by Joseph will be just as acceptable to Jewish lineage as Him being the actual son of Joseph.

Annunciation of Jesus' Birth to Joseph

Mt. 1:18 – Before the marriage ceremony, Joseph finds out that Mary is pregnant. Who told him? What has he been told? Did Mary confide in him before she left or after she got back? Did someone else “tattle?” Most women don't know they are pregnant until about a month after the fact. Mary has already left to visit Elizabeth. We are not given any information about how Joseph finds out about his fiancé's pregnancy.

Mt. 1:19 – The fact that Mary is pregnant out of wedlock makes her liable to stoning by Mosaical Law. Joseph has the right and authority to expose Mary and have her situation made public. But Joseph, a person of righteousness and mercy, loves Mary, but he is not willing to marry a woman who is pregnant by someone else. Rather than subject her to public ridicule, he is going to break off the engagement quietly by divorcing her by Jewish custom. Betrothal is equal to marriage. It can last as

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long as a year before the actual wedding ceremony. Breaking a betrothal takes a writing of a divorce. **How would you feel, men, if you found out that the woman you are engaged to is pregnant and you have not had sexual relations with her and she has not been raped?**

Mt. 1:20 – An angel (Gabriel?) intervenes on Mary and God’s behalf. There are several places where angels announced the birth of a child in the Old Testament in that respect; there is nothing out of the ordinary. Being conceived by the Holy Spirit means that Jesus is the “Child or Seed of God”. Sometimes God has to wait until we are quiet before He can talk to us. Gabriel appeared to Mary directly, but God waits until Joseph is asleep and speaks to him through a dream. **How has God spoken to you in your Christian walk?**

Mt. 1:21 – This angel not only tells Joseph that Mary is going to have God’s baby, but he also tells him what to name the child. Jesus means “Yahweh is Salvation”. God makes a promise to Joseph. Jesus is going to be the Savior that Israel has been looking for, the Messiah! What goes through a father or mother’s mind when they find out they are to have a child? **Did you ever think about it? Did you worry about; “Will our baby be healthy? What will our child grow up to become? Will he have a successful life?”**

God tells Joseph, as He told Mary, that Jesus will be born, that He will grow up and be someone that will be a blessing to them. The fact that Jesus will save the people from their sins is probably beyond Joseph’s comprehension.

Mt. 1:22 – Matthew is going to point out how Jesus fulfilled many Jewish prophecies. (This is from *Isaiah 7:14*). Virgin – Mary would not have qualified had she been married first! **God makes a very important statement here about marriage.** Mary was not going to be a single parent. That is not the best or adequate way to raise a healthy child. God makes a strong statement about Joseph. He trusts him to be the earthly stepfather of His only Son! “Fulfill” is used eleven times in Matthew. That is more than the other three Gospels combined. Matthew is writing to the Jews to convince them that Jesus is the Messiah that is prophesied in the Old Testament.

Mt. 1:23 – Emmanuel means “God living among man in human flesh with all it’s limitations and problems.” He knows what we endure as humans. Matthew mentions that a virgin will conceive, but his emphasis is more on the words “God with us.”

Mt. 1:24 – Joseph, like Mary, is obedient to the Lord – an act of faith and trust. Joseph is willing to accept a child that is not his as his own. **How many of you men today would be willing to adopt a child that your wife had conceived through someone else whether by previous marriage, rape, or an immoral affair?**

Mt. 1:25 – Joseph marries Mary, but does not consummate the marriage until after Jesus is born. Some have even tried to suggest that they had no sexual relations even after Jesus was born. This is not true, because we will later see that Joseph and Mary have other children. Jesus is not an only child in His earthly family. He is the oldest child in the home.

Birth of John the Baptist

Lk. 1:57-80 – Birth of John the Baptist – Back to the Human side of the Life of Christ. Mary stays until time for Elizabeth to deliver. We do not know whether she stays there for the birth., It is likely, that she did, but only implied at best.

Lk. 1:57 – God keeps His promises to us. Elizabeth gives birth as God said she would, in the fullness of His time. In her older years, she has an uncomplicated pregnancy and gives birth to a healthy son. **What a miracle!!!**

Lk. 1:58 – “Have you heard the news? Elizabeth has had a baby boy. We’re so happy for her!” Everyone nearby who knows Zechariah and Elizabeth, will rejoice with them at the event of their good news. This is something phenomenal. **Older women, how would you feel to give birth to a child at your current age?** Can you similarly imagine how Sarah felt when she gave birth to Isaac?

Lk. 1:59 – Zechariah is careful to circumcise John on the eighth day. This Jewish custom was climatic to introducing a male child into the Jewish community. It is even performed on a Sabbath if that is the eighth day. (See *Genesis 17:10-12*). This is when the child is also “officially” named. Zechariah is careful to follow the law. It is a common Jewish custom to name the child after someone in the family. Therefore, the people want to name John after his father, but Elizabeth insists on obeying God. John’s name means “God is gracious.” That applies to Zechariah and Elizabeth, and to us also.

Lk. 1:60 – When the people propose to name the baby after his father, a common custom, Elizabeth intervenes and says he is to be named John. God has given a specific instruction. Zechariah and Elizabeth are God fearing and loving people. They will want to follow God’s instructions. John means “gracious.” Certainly God will show His grace through John’s preaching and Jesus providing for our salvation. **What instruction from God are you having a struggle with?**

Lk. 1:61 – The family and friends are well meaning, but they do not know the will of God. Their efforts to intervene and manipulate are not successful with Elizabeth.

Lk. 1:62 – They turn to Zechariah to try to get their way over Elizabeth. Surely, he will be honored to have a son named after him, especially after these many years of waiting, but he has heard from God’s angel. They petition Zechariah to see what he wanted. He also insists on obeying God.

Lk. 1:63 – Zechariah settles the matter by writing, “His name is John.” Case closed! **Obedience to God is more important than pleasing your fellow man.**

Lk. 1:64 – As a result of God's promise to him, Zechariah's speech problem is resolved. The angel's promise is fulfilled. This is a clear testimony from God that Zechariah's dumbness is directly connected to John's conception and birth. The first words out of Zechariah's mouth are praises to God for His mighty works. He takes God's discipline in a correct manner! **How do you react when God disciplines you?**

Lk. 1:65 – Awe means reverential respect. They realize the intervention of God in causing this to happen. This story will make the local news, even in Jerusalem.

Lk. 1:66 – It also causes those who know Zechariah and Elizabeth to marvel what kind of man John will grow to become. They definitely recognize God's hand in this matter. Something about this baby keeps them in remembrance that God is in charge in his life. Zechariah, filled with the Spirit, prophecies concerning Christ, in **Luke 1:68-75**, and John the Baptist in **Luke 1:76-79**. Mary's words were spoken in the style of the Psalms. Zechariah's words are spoken in the style of the prophets.

Zechariah Prophecies Concerning Jesus the Christ

Lk. 1:67 – The following verses are known as the “Benedictus.” The first part of the “Benedictus” is definitely Jewish in nature. It is filled with Old Testament references and allusions. Zechariah is led in these words by the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is God speaking through the mouthpiece of Zechariah. Not only has God forgiven him of his earlier doubt or unbelief, but He has also rewarded him with the words of this prophecy.

Lk. 1:68 – Zechariah praises God and tells us why. The words prophecy of the Messiah. Nothing is said of the immediate family situation that has just been experienced. He speaks of God's redemption even before seeing what it is and understanding what it fully means. Indeed, redemption is the reason God's Son came to earth to live among men.

Lk. 1:69 – The “horn of salvation” can be compared to Joshua's horn causing the walls of Jericho to tumble and Gideon's horn causing the enemy to fight one another and flee. It means victory to Israel. Horns symbolize an animal's power. The power of this horn comes from the house of David. Jesus is a direct descendant of David on both sides of His parents. **As David was a symbol of salvation from Israel's enemies, Jesus is our salvation from Satan's power and control.**

Lk. 1:70 – We are reminded that the prophets in the Old Testament have spoken of a “horn of salvation” for some time. There is a high degree of expectation among the Jews that the Messiah is coming very soon.

Lk. 1:71 – For most Jews, their perceived enemy is the Romans. They are so burdened and frustrated by the Romans that they are looking forward to salvation from Roman oppression, more than salvation from sin. **Our real enemy is the devil. Our real salvation is from the entrapment of sin, not from any government entity.**

Lk. 1:72-74 – God is a covenant keeping God. He turns His blessing to His Son – “...a prophet of the Most High...” From the Garden of Eden, and many times since, God has promised a Messiah, who will save the world from the consequences of sin. Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise.

Lk. 1:73 – Jesus is the fulfillment of the fourth promise that God made to Abraham. (See *Genesis 12:1-3*). Through Jesus, all nations of the earth now have the opportunity to be saved from sin.

Lk. 1:74-75 – Our real enemy is not another human being or nation. The only real enemy that we have to fight against is Satan and the demons that try to tempt us to sin. **What a tragedy when Christians attack other Christians because of differences of belief, instead of attacking the sin in our society. We would be better spent focusing our energies on evangelism than on trying to make other believers conform to our denominational opinions!**

Zechariah Prophecies Concerning John the Baptist

Lk. 1:76 – Now Zechariah turns his focus towards John. He describes a prophetic ministry of John that will be similar to the life of Elijah. He will be a new revelation to Israel after several hundred years of prophetic silence from God. As Aaron spoke for Moses, so John will speak for Jesus Christ.

Lk. 1:77 – Though most people are looking for salvation from the Romans (see *v. 69* above), some do realize that sin is the real enemy. This reference is not to a political salvation, but **spiritual salvation**. John is to help the people realize that they need to be forgiven of their sins. They need someone to pay the price for them so that they can enter into a real and personal relationship with God.

Lk. 1:78 – When we least deserve it, God shows a mercy unequalled by anything man has yet to experience. God doesn't give us what we deserve, but shows mercy and grace by allowing us opportunity and means to repent and be forgiven of our sins. **We may repeatedly rebel against Him, yet God loves us and withholds punishing us to put it all on His own SON.**

Lk. 1:79 – Jesus is the Light of the World. Sin is the darkness, and the shadow of death is the wages of sin. Peace is the result of Jesus' promise residing in your life, not a cessation of hostilities. As the SON light shines in us, we discover God's will all around us. We are also rescued from the darkness of sin.

Lk. 1:80 – The child grows spiritually as God said he would. His strength of character and spirit are evident as he grows to maturity. He lives in the desert, away from public attention. This is the last we will hear of him until he starts preaching when he is thirty years of age. Cf. *Luke 3:2b*.

Next week, we are going to celebrate the real Christmas. Only this time, you don't have to go shopping for presents. Just bring the gift of your heart of love to the Lord. And be prepared to receive the gift of God's Son come to earth to live among men and give you eternal life. Join us for "Getting To Know Jesus."

Read *Luke 2:1-20* and we will see you for "Getting To Know Jesus."

(Your Notes Here!)





LOC – 006 – The Birth of John the Baptist
Questions for Thought, Discussion and Application

1. Guys, how would you feel if you found out that your fiance was pregnant by the Holy Spirit?
2. Parents, what thoughts did you have about your baby before it was born?
3. Often we have situations when we are not clear what obedience to God would entail. The Bible does not give us “black and white” choices for these cases. Describe a spiritually “gray area” in your life and how you are being obedient to God.
4. What does John the Baptist’s birth tell you about the promises of God?
5. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 006 – The Birth of John the Baptist

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. What is the main difference between the angel appearing to Joseph and how he appeared to Mary? To Zechariah?
2. Do a study of Angelic appearances in the Bible. Note the similarities and differences.
3. List some others who the Bible foretold would be great before the Lord. Show the Scripture reference with the name of the individual.
4. Do a word study on the Greek word - gennao (beget) used in *Matthew 1:20*. What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 007
Bible Study Text and Questions
Birth of Jesus

Written by
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5. THE BIRTH OF JESUS (Luke 2:1-20)



(1) The Introduction
Caesar Decrees an Enrollment

¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

It was The First

²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

The People Everywhere Respond

³And everyone went to his own town to register.

(2) The Birth
Joseph and Mary Go to Bethlehem
Their Ancestral Home, To Be
Enrolled*

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

Jesus is Born in Bethlehem

⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,

He Is Dressed In Baby Clothes
Then Laid In a Manger**

⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

(3) The Angels and The Shepherds

While Shepherds Are Keeping
Watch

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

Over Their Flocks
An Angel Appears
To Them

⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

They Are Overawed
The Angel Speaks;

¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

I bring You Good News,

¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

The Messiah Is Born.

¹² “This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.cc

This is The Sign.
Many Angels Come Singing
In Heaven - Glory
On Earth - Peace
When Men please God

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.cc^a

^aOr whereby the dayspring will visit us. Many ancient authorities read the dayspring has visited. *This was what we call a “census.” We take them every ten years, the Roman took them every fourteen years. Some of the census blanks used in Egypt have been found, all filled in, including women and children; and they were taken according to tribal descent, as here. A second enrollment is mentioned in *Acts 5:37*. ** “manger” in Palestine is a feeding trough about 30 inches long and half that wide. Half filled with chaff or cut straw and lined with some baby things, it made a fine bassinette. It stood on the ground at the head of a stall.

“Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, NIV, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.”



The Angels Return to Heaven

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven,

The Shepherds
Decide to Go And See
The Child

the shepherds said to one another,
“Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that
has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

(4) The Shepherds and the Child

They Go Eagerly
They Find The Babe

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph,
and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

They Tell What the Angels
had told them

¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word
concerning what had been told them about this child,

Everyone Marvels

¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the
shepherds said to them.

Mary Mediates
Reverently

¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and
pondered them in her heart.

As The Shepherds Return
They Are Praising God

²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and
praising God for all the things they had heard
and seen, which were just as they had been told.



Shepherds fields outside of Bethlehem
Copyright April 1999, Glen M. Copple

This is a time in this monarchy that has surpassed all of those before it. It is now at its peak and this event is taking place. It spans from Britain to Parthia and is considered the empire of the whole earth. Judea has now become a full province of Rome. This is the first taxation of the Jews as a Roman province. The prophecy that is given in *Genesis 49:10* stated that the Messiah will come before the scepter departs from Judah. This is also a time of world peace. Wouldn't it be great if the Prince of Peace were born now?

Herod the Great started rebuilding the Temple about thirty years ago. It appears that he is trying to buy some favor with the Jews. They've been working on it for so long, and it doesn't look like they are even half-finished yet. The way things are between the Jews and Rome, it will be destroyed before the end of the century because of some Jewish rebellion. Some of the Jews are angry with Roman rule. They are praying that the Messiah will come soon and rescue them from this Roman tyrant. It would be great to live under a Jewish king, especially one who is sent from God.

Lk 2:2-3 – Jews have been told to come from where they had been scattered to their city of origin for the census. Citizens from all other nations under Roman rule have to return to their home for this census and taxation. Quirinius is governor of Syria around 6-5 BC.



Bethlehem - Where it all began.
Map courtesy of Logos Bible Atlas

Lk 2:4 – Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem, about six miles south of Jerusalem. Bethlehem means “House of Bread.” (Jesus will be later called the “Bread of the Life” that came down from Heaven.) Bethlehem is also the city in which David was born. It is fitting that his descendant to the Throne of God will also begin His earthly life there in that royal city.

Joseph and his wife, Mary are newlyweds from Nazareth, and are too poor to afford a trip to Bethlehem on their own. The census “forced” them to go to Bethlehem so the prophecy concerning the Messiah could be fulfilled. Both of them are of

the lineage of David. That is important because the Messiah is to be a descendant of David and born in Bethlehem.

(Your Notes Here!)

Lk 2:5 – They are “pledged to be married” – **Marriage isn’t complete until the sexual union (but sex does not make one married until after the marriage ceremony.)** Joseph and Mary are married in the sight of the law, but they do not have sexual relations until after the birth of Jesus. Mary came with Joseph because they know that she is due. **Micah 5:2** says that the Messiah (the Christ) will be born in Bethlehem. They know that their baby is supposed to be the Messiah, but do they realize their trip to Bethlehem is important to His birth?

Lk 2:6 – The trip takes its toll. It is pretty exhausting to walk over sixty miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem via the east side of the Jordan River. And if Mary rides on the donkey, it will be a very bumpy ride. We don’t know how soon she delivered after her arrival, but the text implies that it was the same night. He is the firstborn, but there will be more siblings to follow. In the Jewish culture, the firstborn equates to a position of honor, which is another reason for Jesus being the oldest child in the family.

Lk 2:7 – Joseph and Mary find out that there is “No room in the inn.” The town is crowded with descendants of David. The inn is also noisy, crowded, and no place for a woman about to give birth. It is considered that the innkeeper is doing Joseph and Mary a great service putting them in the stable.

It seems an unusual place for a King to be born. *Luke* does not say He is born in a stable, but only that Mary “placed Him in a manger.” Since mangers are common to stables and there is no room in the inn, it is logical to presume that He is born in a stable. Not the cleanest place for a baby to be born by our standards, but definitely more private than a crowded noisy inn with no vacancy.

It is so tragically fitting that God becoming man should be born in a place of dishonor rather than a palace. What a contrast to heaven; in that even the lowest stable in heaven is greater than the greatest palace on earth! If Joseph and Mary were not so poor, it is likely that accommodations in a more appropriate place might have been provided. It is a comment on the humbleness of God and the all-powerful providence of God in protecting His Son in such a low environment. **As we seek our fine houses and fancy cars, don’t forget what Jesus gave up to come to earth to die for your sins.**

“Strips of cloth” or “swaddling clothes” refers to cloth without any seams. They usually wrap babies up real tight to straighten out their bodies so they will grow straight. I guess they are afraid that if they don’t, the baby will be hunch backed. They use a feeding trough for a crib. I wonder what the animals in the stable think about this. Note – Nothing is said about a doctor, nurse, or midwife being present. Did Joseph help deliver Jesus?

Men, what part did you play when your wives gave birth to your children? What did you feel about that moment?

Here the everlasting Father becomes a servant of time. **He who is spirit became physical so the He could redeem us who are physical and make us spiritual. We who are born of time can now become spirits of eternity.**

The Annunciation to the Shepherds

Lk 2:8 – Some shepherds are watching their flocks when some angels appeared to tell them about the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Shepherds are looked down on in Jewish society as lower class citizens. Jesus often associated with “undesirables.” It is interesting that God chooses the poor shepherds to be the first hearers of His Good News. Several of the patriarchs were shepherds including Abraham, Moses and David. Shepherds were also the descendants of David vocationally. To “shepherd” is also a phrase associating with ruling. In the *23rd Psalm*, God is called our Shepherd. **Often times, we will see that what man dishonors or looks down on is the very thing that God honors.**

The angels do not appear to the priests in the Temple who are the rulers of the Jews. They are not capable of accepting and appreciating what God is doing. The angels appear to shepherds who have less of a problem accepting a King being born in a stable. Shepherds will also be one of the first and best sources for spreading of news. They often see things coming in the surrounding area and will rush into the city to tell others.

Lk 2:9 – Here’s another angelic appearance. That makes four within the past year and a half after four hundred years of “silence” from God. It says, “...the Glory of the Lord shone around them...” **God’s presence is always an awesome experience that can often be felt.** They are “terrified.” The Greek says that they “feared a great fear.” Angelic visitations and appearances are not a natural phenomenon. **How would you feel if an angel from heaven appeared to you in the middle of a winter night?**

Lk 2:10 – “Good News” comes from the Greek word “Eunaggelion,” from which we get “Gospel.” Any news about Jesus is “Good News.” Compare this verse to the comments to Mary in *Luke 1:26, 30-38*. Remember God’s promise to Abraham – “Ta ethne” (which means “all ethnics” or “all nations”)? The history of the Old Testament has been Kings, prophets, captivity, and then silence. Now the Messiah is being born, which is really GOOD NEWS! And to think that shepherds were the first to be told about this world-changing event. “All the people” refers to the Jews, and Gentiles. Up until now, the Old Covenant was with only Jews (and those proselyted into Judaism). Gentiles (non-Jews) were not included in the Old Covenant.

Lk 2:11 – “A Savior,” who is “Christ the Lord” is definitely a reason for rejoicing. This is announced to shepherds first. Three titles are used for Jesus in this one verse. “Lord” in the Old Testament will be a strong reference to Jehovah. Jesus is being announced as nothing less than God in human form. He is born in the city of David in fulfillment of prophecy.

Lk 2:12 – How will they find Him who is born Christ the Lord in a town crowded with visitors? A baby in a manger is not a normal sight. They will know where all of the stables are around Bethlehem. He won’t be that hard to find. Surely they are being told of something out of the ordinary.

Lk 2:13 – Who says nothing “spectacular” happened at the birth of Jesus. It only happened to shepherds, not to the “rich and famous”. We don’t know if the first angel appeared as a man standing in front of the shepherds or suspended in the air above them. Either way, the accompanying host is definitely suspended in the air in angelic flight and praising God. Here we have angels, who have nothing to gain by Christ’s birth, yet they are praising God for what He is doing in the lives of humanity.

What are you praising God for?

Lk 2:14 – **The “peace” that is God’s gift to man, is the peace of freedom from sin, and the burdens of this life**, not necessarily a peace from war or the strife. It is available to everyone who is willing to receive it. “Good will” is God’s grace on an entire sinful race. He seeks our good will and makes it possible through the birth of His only Son who is to die for our sins. **God seeks to restore us into an eternal relationship with Him through the birth (and death) of His Son.** That should give all of us a real peaceful feeling about our eternal security. **Do you feel God’s peace in your life?**

“...On whom His favor rests.” (Revised Standard Version) means that **God’s pleasure is not based on what we have done, but on a promise He made to Abraham two thousand years before the birth of Christ.** For that reason we have the opportunity to enter into this eternal fellowship with Him.

Lk 2:15 – The angelic visitation is short as with all angelic visits. As soon as the angels have left, the shepherds discuss whether they should “Go to Bethlehem.” The shepherds are curious about what they have heard. They aren’t questioning whether it is true, but rather they want to see what they have been told. **Consider their emotions** for a moment. First, they are **terrified**. Then they are **interested**, then they get **excited**. “Thing” refers to the word or event that was spoken of by the prophets for ages. Some “Thing”, huh! **Our system of the dating of all events in the history of mankind is based on this “Thing!” Nothing has changed the course of the world as much as the life of Jesus!**

Lk 2:16 – The shepherds go immediately, the same hour of the night. This is “an event!” They find the manger with out any

trouble. Being poor themselves, they will have no problem accepting Joseph and Mary in such a degrading situation, but will readily accept them as the angels have directed them. The angelic visit is sufficient confirmation to them that this is indeed the Messiah that the Jews have been waiting for.

Lk 2:17 – When the shepherds see what God has done, they have something to talk about. They share the story of God’s revelation with Joseph and Mary, and then to the community on the next day. This is the second supernatural event to happen within the past few months. (The birth of John the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth is the first time we have seen something from God in hundreds of years.) God has become man, confined to the body of a baby and entrusted to the care of Joseph and his young wife named Mary (who had no previous child raising experience.) **How would you feel if you were in their place?**

Lk 2:18 – The shepherds aren’t silent about the news God has shared with them. This is too awesome, too overwhelming to keep to themselves. They are honest men, so there is no reason to doubt what they have seen and heard.

Lk 2:19 – “Mary pondered these things...” Can you imagine what Mary is thinking? **Have you ever wondered about your baby, child, or teenager?** Have you ever seen things in them



Shrine of the Nativity marking the place of Christ's Birth in Bethlehem.

that caused you to ponder their future? Remember, Mary has heard from God. Put that together with the visit of the shepherds. **Now what do you think is going through her mind?**

Lk 2:20 – Morning news item in the Shepherds Gazette. Shepherds tell of a visit by angels who tell of the birth of Messiah in Bethlehem. They visited the baby and find that it is true and then go and excitedly tell others. **Who are you going to tell about the birth of Jesus?**

Next week, we are going to hear more about the events surrounding the Birth of Jesus (Part II). There are some others who are going to know who this baby is because God has revealed it to them through the Holy Spirit. Stay tuned for further details.

Read *Matthew 1:25b; Luke 2:21-39a* and join us for “Getting To Know Jesus.”



(Your Notes Here!)



LOC – 007 – The Birth of Jesus

Questions for Thought, Discussion and Application

1. What were the advantages and disadvantages of Jesus being born in a stable?
2. Put yourself in the place of the shepherds? How do you think they felt about being chosen to hear of the Messiah. What would you do? How are you responding to the news of the Messiah now?
3. Discuss the reputation of shepherds at the time when Jesus was born. Compare and contrast this to what shepherds mean to you today.
4. What do you think Mary's thoughts were regarding the shepherds coming to visit her baby after hearing the news announced by angels?
5. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 007 – The Birth of Jesus

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. How did the New Testament census bring about the fulfilling of the Old Testament prophecies? Reference *Micah 5:2*.
2. Name another shepherd who became a King. _____. Where in the Bible does it tell about his life and reign? _____. Compare and contrast him as king to Jesus as King.
3. Look up and write about the shepherds who became leaders in the Old Testament?
4. Do a word study on the Greek word - doxa (glory) used in *Luke 2:14*. What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 008
Bible Study Text and Questions
Jesus is Presented at the Temple

Written by
GLEN M. COPPLE



The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ
from Annunciation to Ascension

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6. THE CIRCUMCISION AND NAMING OF JESUS (Matthew 1:25b; Luke 2:21)



Matthew 1:25^b

Luke 2:21

*On the eighth day,
Jesus is circumcised
and named.*

^{25b}And he gave Him the name Jesus

(Matthew 1:21; Luke.1:31)

²¹On the eighth day,
when it was time to circumcise Him,
He was named Jesus,
the name the angel had given Him
before He had been conceived.

7. THE CONSECRATION OF JESUS (Luke 2:22-39a)

(1) He Is Dedicated

Luke 2:22-39^a

*When He was
40 days old
they brought Him
to Jerusalem.*

²²When the time of their purification
according to the Law of Moses
had been completed, (*Leviticus 12:1-8*)
Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem
to present Him to the Lord

*a. To consecrate Him
and*

²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, (*Exodus 13:2-16*)
“Every firstborn male
is to be consecrated to the Lord”)

*b. To remove
ceremonial
uncleanness
from the mother.*

²⁴and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is
said in Law of the Lord:
“a pair of doves or two young pigeons.” (*Leviticus 12:1-8*)

(2) He Is Received by Simeon, A Prophet

*Simeon is
characterized
as righteous,
expectant,
Spiritual.*

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon,
who was righteous and devout.
He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, (*Luke 1:6*)
and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

*He had
a revelation.*

²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit ^a
that he would not die
before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.

*He comes to the
Temple.
The parents
bring Jesus in.*

²⁷Moved by the Spirit ^a he went into the temple courts.
When the parents brought in the child Jesus
to do for Him what the custom of the Law required,

*Simeon sees Him
He takes the Child
in his arms
He praises God
for His
Great Salvation*

²⁸Simeon took Him in his arms and praised God,
saying:
²⁹“Sovereign Lord, as You have promised,
You now dismiss Your servant in peace.
³⁰For my eyes have seen your salvation, (*v.26*)
³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all peoples.

*Which Will Be
World Wide*

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

^a or in the spirit.



Luke 2:22-39^a

The parents marvel.

³³The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

Simeon blesses them.

³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother:

(Acts 13:47: Isaiah. 49:6)

He prophesies about the child.

“This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against,

He forewarns the mother of piercing sorrow.

³⁵so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

(3) He Is Received by Anna, A Prophetess

Annais described. She is old, was married 7 years, is a widow.

³⁶There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

She worshiped constantly in the Temple.

³⁷and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

She comes up just then, She gives thanks. She prophesies about the child.

³⁸Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

(4) The Parents Go Home

*The parents return to Bethlehem and *later to Nazareth*

³⁹When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned

[to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.]*

* For this return to Nazareth, see page 16. It took place after the residence in Egypt.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 008 – Jesus First Visit to the Temple



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

God keeps His promises!

God does, on occasion, make specific revelations or promises to certain individuals.

Prayer and righteousness go hand in hand in being close to God.

Lesson Commentary

Read *Matthew 1:25b, Luke 2:21-39*

(Your Notes Here!)

There is really much more to the Christmas story than what happened in Bethlehem late one night. Especially if you realize that the wise men don't visit until sometime later when Joseph and Mary have found a house to live in. (We will talk about that in Lesson 008.) In between the birth and the visit of the shepherds, we have Jesus being presented in the Temple in Jerusalem according to the Mosaical Law. Some very special events happen at this occasion that we do not want to miss. Luke is explaining these events to reach the Greeks so they will better understand this man who is GOD! Let's do some more "Getting To Know Jesus."

Jesus is Dedicated at the Temple

Mt. 1:25b; Lk. 2:21 – This story begins on the eighth day, when all Hebrew children are named and all boys are circumcised. This is a command of God for all descendants of Abraham (see *Genesis 17:9-14*.) Jesus is circumcised and named while in Bethlehem. The name "Jesus" is the Greek version of the Hebrew name "Joshua" which means "Yahweh is Salvation." Jesus is not only a descendant of Adam physically, but He is also a descendant of Adam according to Mosaical Law. Jesus is taking on a heavy yoke to bear as He comes to earth, and He will bear it faithfully all the way to the Cross.

Lk. 2:22 – When Jesus is forty days old, a "redemption ceremony" is held to consecrate Him, and yet another ceremony to remove all "ceremonial uncleanness" from His mother. This is obedience to God's laws in the Old Testament (see *Leviticus 12:1-8*). Bethlehem is much closer to Jerusalem than Nazareth, so it is very practical for them to stay there before returning to Nazareth. Since they are going to be there a month at the very least, they now have time to find better lodging until time to leave. It is also possible that they have decided to stay in Bethlehem and establish their home there. Moving and travel can be costly, even in Jesus' day.

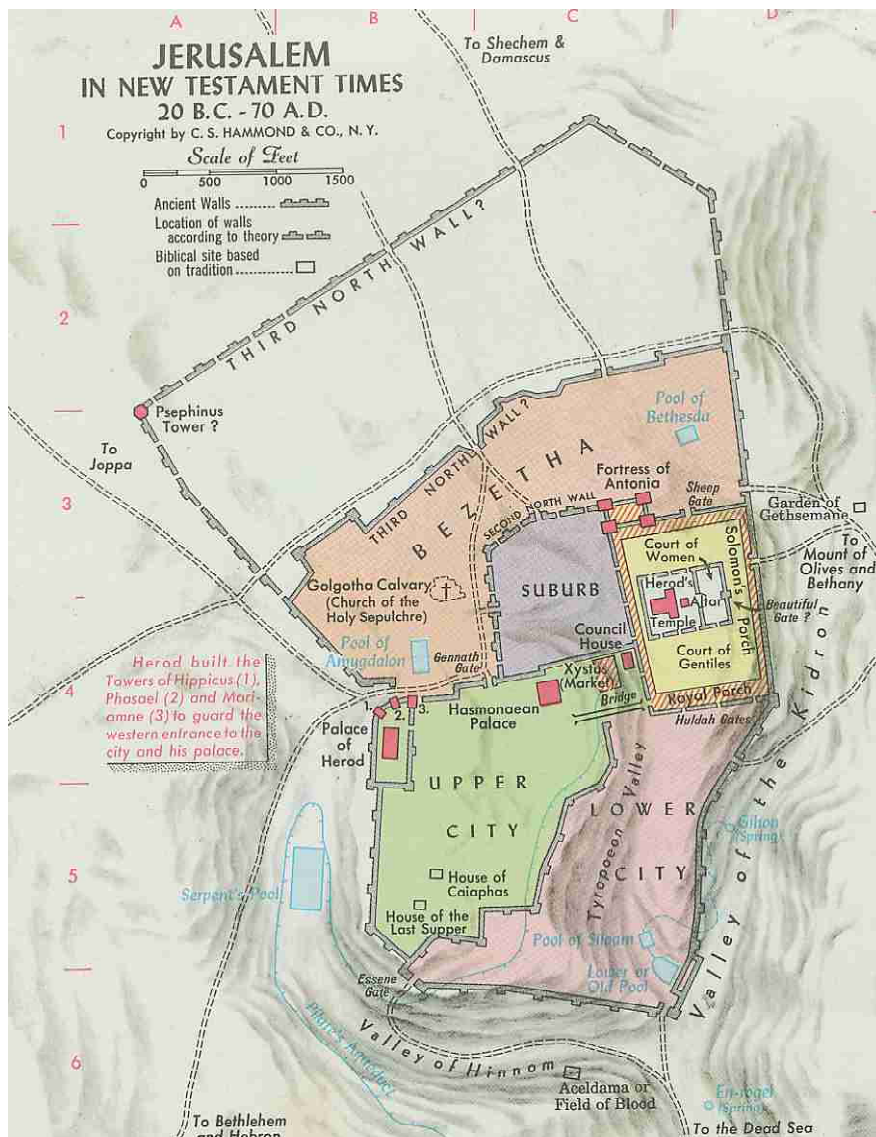
Lk. 2:23 – Jesus isn't unclean, but from His birth and through His parents, He follows the Laws of Moses (see *Exodus 13:2*,

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12-16). As King, Jesus could have been exempted from all of the rituals required of the King's subjects. But in order that He might identify with us more fully, it is necessary that He comply with all laws pertaining to man on this earth. Because He is made under the Law, He obeys it. The Mosaical Law is like our laws today, only it also includes regulations regarding religious practice. It is a "Federal Covenant" that one is born into and expected to live up to, without any choice.

Lk. 2:24 – Mosaical Law specifies a lamb to be offered for a child born into the home. Families that are poor are to sacrifice two turtledoves as their offering (see *Leviticus 12:1-8*.) This is evidence of the financial status of the home that Jesus is born into. One is to be for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering.

The phrasing that *Luke* uses here makes it clear that Jesus' parents are poor people. He will not grow up in a home of affluence and means, but one of poverty, yet God never fails to provide them with food and shelter, but they aren't given wealth



Map of Jerusalem as it looked in Jesus' day.

Map courtesy of Baker's Bible Atlas

beyond measure either. **God does not promise wealth to His followers, but He will take care of us.** This is an unpaid “vacation” or move to Bethlehem. Did Joseph have an established business or is he just starting out? Either way, finances were short for taking leisurely trips to other places. **God is not as concerned about your wealth as He is about your heart.**

(Your Notes Here!)

Simeon, A Prophet Receives Jesus

Lk. 2:25 – Simeon is “righteous” and devoted to God. Righteousness is something that we work to understand and apply. It is determined by God, not man. Yet God has seen fit to inspire the writers to declare Simeon as “righteous.” Righteousness is an attitude (imputed by God) as compared to an action (lived by man). Our efforts at being righteous often fall short of God's standard and meet with failure.

The text suggests that Simeon is nearing the end of his life. He is probably not able to work anymore and spends much time considering spiritual matters and worshipping God. God has promised him, via the Holy Spirit, that he will see the Messiah whom God had promised to Abraham nearly two thousand years earlier. Many Jews recognize that, according to the prophecies of Daniel, the time is right for this to be completed.

The “consolation” that most of Israel is looking for is that they will be rescued from their Roman oppressors. They could also be looking for deliverance from their sinful state, but few are consciously aware of “eternal life” that Jesus came to give us.

Lk. 2:26 – The Holy Spirit had made a promise to him. **God (the Holy Spirit) keeps His word.** (Compare Solomon’s Temple to Herod’s Temple.) Herod’s temple is still being built. It was started about thirty years before Jesus was born and finished about AD sixty-two, only six to eight years before the Romans conquered Jerusalem and tore it all down. (Compare Herod’s Jerusalem to Nehemiah’s.) **We want to keep our priorities in order. There is no building or thing on this earth that is as important as your relationship with Jesus Christ.**

Lk. 2:27 – The Holy Spirit motivated Simeon to go to the Temple courts about the same time that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were arriving. This is forty days after birth for a boy. Simeon immediately knows who this child is. It is interesting that out of all of the years he has been waiting and all of the children and people that have come through the Temple grounds, he knows that this baby is the Messiah. This is a true testimony of the presence of the Holy Spirit in Simeon. **If we want to see Jesus, we must likewise go to where Jesus can be found.**

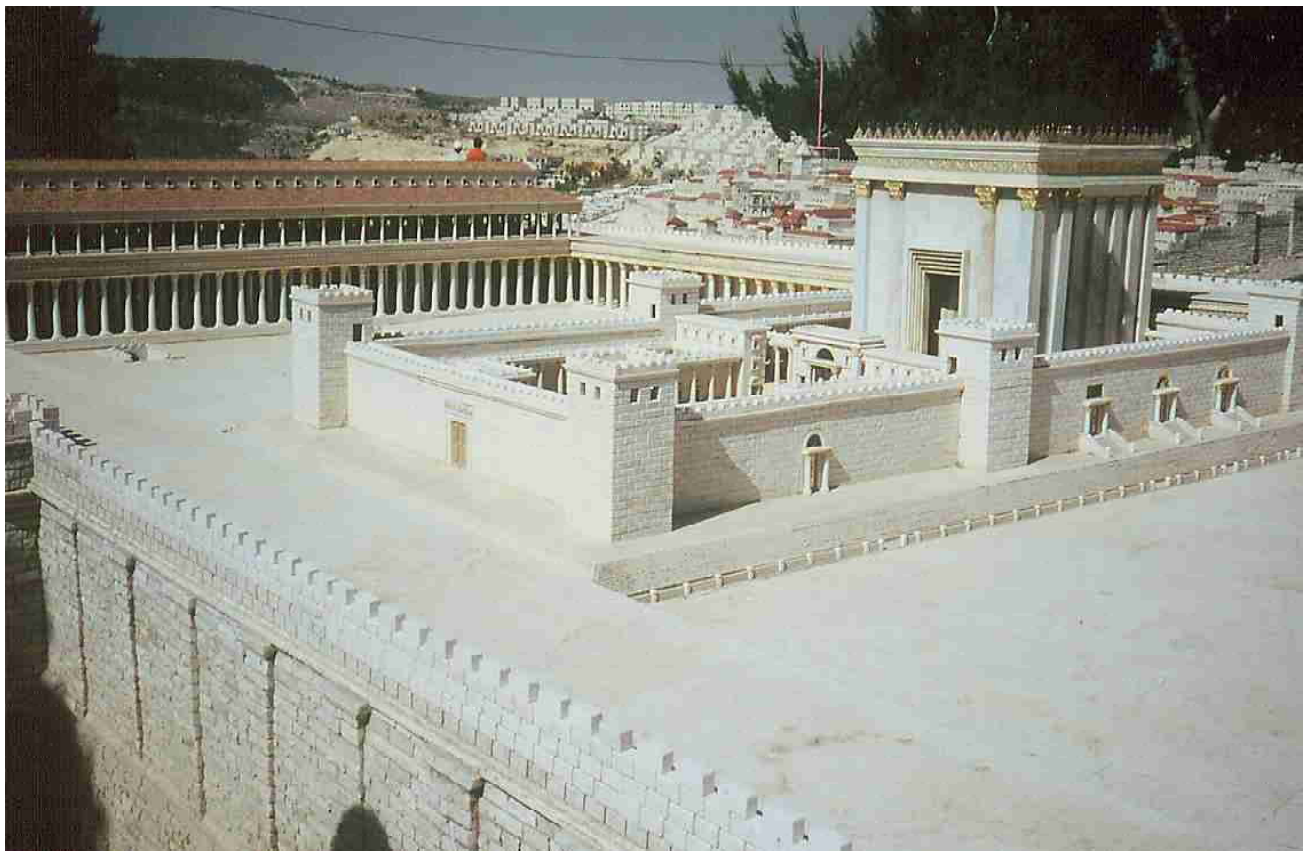
The Court of Women is as far as Mary is allowed to go. It is located on the east side of the Temple itself. Luke is alone among the Gospels in portraying the Temple in a positive light. When he sees the Christ child, his immediate response is praise

to God. This is the response of all godly people toward the Christ throughout *Luke's Gospel*.

Lk. 2:28 – When Simeon sees the baby Jesus, he takes the child in his own arms and praises God for keeping His word. A Rabbi normally takes a child into his arms before pronouncing a blessing. So Simeon is either a Rabbi, or happens to take the stance as a Rabbi, who is blessing a new child. Simeon is ready to die now because God has kept His promise to him. To many Jews, salvation is more “physical” oriented in saving from the Romans, than “spiritual” in saving from eternal punishment in Hell. Simeon, however appears to have the spiritual salvation from sin in perspective, even though he will not live to see it instituted.

Lk. 2:29 – “Lord” refers to a master/slave relationship. God is Simeon’s master. Simeon is ready to go be with God. Death is not a problem to those who know the faithfulness of God’s promises and the beauty of eternity. Death truly has lost its sting. Simeon isn’t trying to hasten his death, but he is ready to pass through its shadow because he has seen what he has been waiting for. **God keeps His word!**

Lk. 2:30 – Simeon has now seen God’s Messiah, the Savior who will be a revelation of God to the Gentiles and a glory to Israel. Though many Jews think of “salvation” as deliverance from their Roman conquerors, there are some that realize that



Model Jerusalem showing the Temple as it looked when Jesus was presented as a baby.

the salvation they need and are seeking is from their sins. Through Jesus the Jews and the Gentiles can be saved from their sins.

(Your Notes Here!)

Lk. 2:31 – God’s salvation is for Gentiles also, not just Jews. It is presented in the sight of the whole world. At this time, Rome is in power and travel is easy. This will help the Good News to travel fast. The news of God’s direct interaction with man and salvation from the consequences of his sin will soon spread all over the world. **God is no longer a God of just the Jews, but to all people.** This is another declaration that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham two thousand years earlier (see *Genesis 12:1-3*.)

Lk. 2:32 – There are three hymns of thanksgiving and praise recorded by *Luke* in his first two chapters (*Luke 1:46-55, 68-79; 2:29-32*.) There is a deep significance regarding the births of John and Jesus for the salvation of Israel and the world expressed in these hymns. Simeon notes that the Messiah is to be for the Gentiles as well as for Israel. *Luke* speaks of the truth of salvation for the Gentiles many times. God’s SON is not merely a light in the Jewish candlestick, but the light of the whole world.

Lk. 2:33 – Joseph and Mary marvel at these words from a “stranger.” How does he know so much about this baby? No one had told Simeon anything about baby Jesus. Simeon sees more in the baby than Israel will see in the man. Joseph and Mary are not yet fully aware of what Jesus is going to do. Simeon’s words are beyond their immediate understanding.

Lk. 2:34 – Simeon turns to address Joseph and Mary. First he expresses a blessing to them. God has done a great thing in entrusting His only Son to their care for raising. Israel is going to receive much salvation because of Jesus. Even though he does not understand all of what Jesus will do, he knows that God’s Son will cause some to repent and some to rebel (See *Isaiah 8:14-15*.) Jesus will be a sanctuary to some and a snare to others.

Lk. 2:35 – God’s people will be more easily distinguished. He will cause the thoughts and hearts of all to be exposed. Mary will suffer greatly as she sees how others treat Him and see her (and God’s) Son crucified. How does Joseph feel to hear these words of warning about his wife and stepson? **How would you feel if someone said this about your baby?**

Anna, A Prophetess, Receives Jesus

Lk. 2:36 – OK, ladies, your turn. Simeon represents God’s revelation to the men, and Anna represents God’s announcement to the women. **Jesus came for us all!** Anna is a prophetess in Jerusalem. Do Anna and Simeon know each other? The nature of Anna’s prophecy is not clear. We cannot know clearly whether she is a teacher of younger women, or whether she received prophecies from God concerning other people. Most

prophets, however, do not foretell prophecies as far reaching as those of the Old Testament, but spoke to events that were more immediate. "...Daughter of Phanuel (which means "face of God"), of the tribe of Asher, (which means "good luck")." Asher is in Galilee where some say that no prophet has ever risen. *Luke* is careful to establish Anna's place in history for his Greek readers.

Lk. 2:37 – Like Simeon, she is very old. "...husband seven years..." Seven years from her virginity implies that she is only married seven years. Now she is eighty-four years old. She has spent her days fasting and praying and serving God. **More prayer equals more hearing from God.** It seems almost like she lives at the Temple. Being a widow with no husband, her only means of existence may well depend on the generosity of those whose lives she touches.

Lk. 2:38 – Like Simeon, she "happens" to be there when Joseph, Mary and Jesus are there. The Spirit of the Lord in her guides her to speak of Jesus as the Messiah. Like Simeon, she gives thanks to God and tells those around her who this child is. What did the crowd think of Joseph and Mary and their baby? **How would you feel if a stranger prophesied these words about your baby?**

Lk. 2:39 – A concluding remark – Joseph and Mary fulfill their obligations to God and return to Bethlehem where they are staying. It is probably less expensive and easier (especially on Mary and Jesus) to wait in Bethlehem until the eight days were past for consecrating the baby before returning home. To give Mary more time to recover and because of her "uncleanness," they stay an additional thirty-three days (forty days total). Somewhere before returning to Nazareth, the wise men visit and Joseph, Mary, and Jesus take an extended journey to Egypt. Then they return to Nazareth. *Luke* doesn't choose to cover this point so we are uncertain as to when it fits into the chain of events.

Next week – The wise men haven't visited the baby Jesus yet. We have no knowledge as to when they arrived on the scene except it is before Joseph and Mary return to Nazareth. We will see you next week as Christmas continues – Events surrounding the Birth of Christ (Part III.)

Read *Matthew 2:1-18* and join us for "Getting To Know Jesus."





LOC – 008 – Jesus First Visit To The Temple – Consecration
Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Application

1. What does it mean to be “consecrated” to God? Have you personally considered consecrating yourself to serve God?
2. If time and money were not an issue, how would you like to express your devotion to God?
3. Share an experience in which you sincerely felt that God had spoken to you. Was He making a promise or giving reassurance?
4. What did Simeon mean “...the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed”?
5. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 008 – Jesus First Visit To The Temple – Consecration Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. What information can you find about the post partum ceremony of purification?

2. How were widows provided for in the time of Christ? (an early form of Social Security)

3. List some prophets found in the New Testament. What do you know about them?

4. Do a word study on the Greek word - thusian (sacrifice) used in *Luke 2:24*. What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 009
Bible Study Text and Questions
Visit of the Magi and Flight to Egypt

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8. THE VISIT OF THE MAGI * (*Matthew 2:1-12*)



*When Jesus is born
Magi in the East*
see His star (v.2)
They come to Jerusalem
[At the Eastern Gate]
They inquire for
the new-born King of the Jews.*

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea,
during the time of King Herod,

Magi * from the east ** came to Jerusalem

² and asked,
“Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews?
We saw His star in the east **
and have come to worship Him.”

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed,
and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests
and teachers of the law,
he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,”
they replied,
“for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ “ ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will be the shepherd of My people Israel.’ ”

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly
and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said,
“Go and make a careful search for the child.
As soon as you find Him, report to me,
so that I too may go and worship Him.”

⁹ After they had heard the king,
they went on their way,
and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them
until it stopped over the place where the child was.

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

[YOU CAN REMEMBER]
[How to remember a story:
First divide it into scenes.

Then see how scene one
merges into scene two and
that into the next. In other
words, make a moving
picture of your story.
Note how the story is
printed in the scenes.

Then visualize each scene
and see it move on into the
next. With a little review-
ing, both oral, and written,
you can repeat the story
either forward or backward.
In this way, you can
memorize this story.]

*The news is brought
to Herod the King
He and Jerusalem
are worried.
Herod assembles
the Jewish Rulers
He inquires of them.*

*In reply, they quote
a startling prophecy.*

*The Messiah
is to be born
in Bethlehem.
He will be the Ruler
of God’s people.*

*Then Herod
confers secretly
with the Magi.*

*He send them
in search of
the Child.*

*The Magi leave,
They go on
to Bethlehem.
When they get near that city
the Star reappears
to guide them.*

*Then they rejoice
exceedingly*

* For this use of “Magi” see *Daniel 5:7b-8a*.

** “The East” is a geographical term in the Bible, designating Mesopotamia (i.e. Babylon and Assyria).

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*Then they rejoice
exceedingly*

*Following the Star,
they go on.
They find the Child.*

*They worship Him.
They present
their royal gifts.*

*At night,
God warns them
of Herod's treachery.
So they go home
another way.*

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child
with His mother Mary,
and they bowed down and worshiped Him.
Then they opened their treasures
and presented Him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

¹² And having been warned in a dream
not to go back to Herod,
they returned to their country by another route.

9. THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT (*Matthew 2:13-18*)

*After the Magi
are gone,
An Angel
warns Joseph
of Herod's plot
and tells him
to flee to Egypt.*

*Joseph obeys
They go to Egypt.*

*They stay
in Egypt
till Herod's death.*

*But when the Magi
fail to return
to Jerusalem
Herod is furious.
He sends soldiers
and massacres
the children
of Bethlehem
and its environs.*

*In this way
an ancient prophecy
comes true.*

¹³ When they had gone,
an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.
“Get up,”
He said,
“take the child and His mother and escape to Egypt.
Stay there until I tell you,
for Herod is going to search for the child to kill Him.”

¹⁴ So he got up,
took the child and His mother during the night and left for Egypt,

¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod.
And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet:
“Out of Egypt I called My Son.”

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi,
he was furious,
and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem
and its vicinity who were two years old and under,
in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more.”

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 009 – Visit of the Magi & Flight to Egypt



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

Even pagans recognize the King of the Jews.

God will protect Jesus in His infancy.

Prayer and righteousness go hand in hand in being close to God.

Lesson Commentary

(Your Notes Here!)

Read *Matthew 2:1-18*

The Christmas story isn't over yet. Most Christmas traditions include the wise men coming to visit the Christ Child, so we are still in the “Christmas” story. Eight days after the birth of Jesus, He is circumcised and then, when He is forty days old, He is to be presented in the Temple. Scripture implies that it is not until after this event that the wise men arrive to recognize this newborn King of the Jews. Matthew will put the gentiles first and the Jews second in recognizing and adoring the Messiah. This will be repeated throughout his Gospel. We continue our look at the events surrounding the birth and infancy of Jesus as we are “Getting To Know Jesus.”

The Visit of the Magi

Mt. 2:1 – Herod the King is Herod the Great who, according to history, dies around 4 BC. *Magi* = “magos” – sorcerer, magician, astrologer. (The same word is used in *Acts 13:6, 8*.) How many wise men come to see Jesus is unknown and we have no specific time reference to indicate when they arrive in Bethlehem in relation to these other events. How do they know the prophecy concerning the star? These men are pagan (i.e. non-Jewish, not knowing the God, but believe in cultic gods.) However, they know that there is something significant about this star. *From the “East”* refers to Mesopotamia (i.e. Babylon or Assyria). This could involve a distance of around 300-500 miles. The journey will take a minimum of 12-25 days averaging twenty-five miles per day. This is not impossible, especially if they ride camels as is often suggested. However if they travel on foot, it will be harder to cover twenty-five miles per day. There is no mention of their actual mode of travel. This is a testimony to how important the Birth of Christ is, even though they have no idea of the nature of His ministry – dying on the cross for their sins. **Knowing what you know today, how far would you be willing to go to see a baby who is to be your Messiah?**

Mt. 2:2 – “King of the Jews” – Their source of prophecy has revealed this to them, a very special King is being born who will

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rule over the Jewish people. So what is that to them? The “One” is better translated “child.” As far as they know, Jesus is past newborn and so they refer to him as the “child.” “Star in the East” – They are in the region of Mesopotamia, but there is no indication as to where the star was in the sky. The only thing we can deduce from this text is that they see a star that is a sign to them of great significance. They want to worship a King that has no apparent or known direct bearing on them. Do they perhaps see that His kingdom is going to be greater than just to the Jews? Is this a sign from God that Jesus is for Gentiles also? Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham. His death on the cross is for all men – Jew and Gentile alike. **How many are coming and seeking Him today? What are you doing to help them find Him?**

Mt. 2:3 – Herod is “disturbed” – mentally! Remember that he has already murdered members of his own family in fear that they will take the throne from him. When Herod is troubled, all of Jerusalem has reason to be troubled. He is an Edomite, a descendant of Esau, and though a descendant of Abraham, he has no claim to being King of the Jews. He is, therefore, jealous of anyone who might rise up among the Jews and threaten his throne. He is so jealous of his throne that he will even have one of his sons killed just five days before his own death. He has reigned for thirty-five years and probably thinks he will reign forever. Jesus will definitely pose a threat to his power, but not for several years yet. **Pray for those Christians who live in nations where they have to fear the government!**

Mt. 2:4 – Herod is alarmed at the news of another “King” being born and seeks more information regarding the birth of this “King of the Jews.” He believes that his kingship is in jeopardy! So he seeks information regarding this King under the pretense of honoring him. He calls the chief priests, and scribes leaders to inquire about where this threat to his throne might be born. I wonder how many people see through the ruse?

Mt. 2:5 – *Micah 5:2* says the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem of Judea. God chose Bethlehem several centuries earlier to be the birthplace of the descendant of David who is to be called the “King of the Jews.”

Mt. 2:6 – *Matthew* quotes the passage from *Micah* for his Jewish readers. **Again, God has chosen what is small or insignificant in man’s eyes to reveal or accomplish great things.** Instead of being born in Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish nation, God’s Son, the King of the Jews, is born in an obscure, insignificant village. It is utterly surprising, with all of the high expectation of the coming of the Messiah, that the Jewish leaders appear to pass this inquiry off without a moment’s thought. One would think that they would want to investigate this report for themselves and go to Bethlehem to see the Messiah.

(Your Notes Here!)

Mt. 2:7 – Herod starts plying his nature. He meets “secretly” with the Magi not wanting to give any hint of his evil plan to the Jews. They will know his nature and will see through the lie that he presents to the Magi. Herod’s inquiry implies that the star appeared at the time of Jesus’ birth, not before. So by that determination, he will later figure that Jesus is less than two years old and will have all of those children in Bethlehem killed.

Mt. 2:8 – Herod now encourages the Magi to continue on their journey under the pretense of best wishes. He wants them to find the Christ child for him so it will be easier for him to have the child killed. Notice how deceitful Herod is to the Magi? Satan is often subtle in his attacks on Christians! **Beware of people who will disguise their intentions with a false front!**

Mt. 2:9 – As the wise men leave, they see the star again. It is close enough to earth and distinguishable enough to point them to the place in Bethlehem, the house, where Jesus is. This is significant because stars naturally travel from east to west. Bethlehem is five to six miles south of Jerusalem. That means that this star draws them south, right to the house where Jesus is. Does any one else notice the star or regard its significance? Surely other people see it besides the Magi, but they simply do not know what it means. Remember how God led Israel through the wilderness with the fire and the cloud about 1,600 years earlier?

Mt. 2:10 – Do these wise men see the star the entire time on their journey or only before they leave? This suggests that it may not be visible all of the time through their trip, especially if they travel by day. Since they know that the star is significant of the birth of the King of the Jews, they naturally go to the Jewish capital, which is Jerusalem. They do not need the star to point them that far. After leaving Jerusalem, they see the star again and are overjoyed. They are greatly reassured when they see the star again and it guides them on to Bethlehem. This denotes that this part of their journey occurs after dark. God causes a phenomenon in the sky that these astrologers affirm is the sign of the birth of a King to the Jews.

Mt. 2:11 – Joseph and Mary have found housing for the duration of their stay in Bethlehem. Did they simply decide to move to Bethlehem and stay? How does Joseph earn a living while they are there? “*Child*” – The Greek text reads “*padion*” which is usually translated “child.” It is used of an infant child recently born as well as an older child. This does not adequately imply that Jesus was “older” as some have suggested. He could still be a “newborn.”

The Magi express their worship of Jesus by bowing down before Him, which is a symbol in which a person renders himself in a defenseless position in the presence of another. It shows submission and also regard, as they are lessors to the

greater. When the magi were in Jerusalem, they did not bow down to Herod. They also gave Jesus gifts that were products from their own country. (They didn't give any gifts to Herod.)

Gold is a gift designating royalty, a King. It speaks to the "mental" kingship of Jesus. This honors Jesus as a King who collects gold as a symbol of His power and wealth.

Frankincense is a gift designating divinity, a Priest. It speaks to the "spiritual" side of Jesus. Incense is offered as a fragrance to God as a part of worship. Here, it is offered to Jesus in an act of worship.

Myrrh is a gift designating humanity (especially in suffering), a prophet. At this event, it is a reference to the "physical" side of Jesus, recognizing that He is going to die.

Mt. 2:12 – The Magi are warned in a dream to not go back to Jerusalem and to not tell Herod about this baby. God will also speak to non-Jews in order to accomplish His divine plan. The Magi return home by avoiding Jerusalem completely. We do not know which way they go to return home. They may have gone around the south end of the Dead Sea in order to avoid going near Jerusalem.



The road from Bethlehem to Egypt.
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The Flight to Egypt

(Your Notes Here!)

Mt. 2:13 – God doesn't waste time. As soon as the wise men have left, He warns Joseph, again in a dream, to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt as soon as possible. This is the second (of four occurrences) that an angel appears to Joseph in a dream. When the angel appeared to Mary, it was direct, but to Joseph, the angel appears only by dreams. **How would you feel if you were being told to flee for the life of your family?**

Mt. 2:14 – Joseph obeys immediately without question. They leave and travel during the night. We do not know how soon after the Magi left that Joseph receives this dream. We also do not know how soon after they leave before Herod's soldiers come and murder the infants in Bethlehem. The flow of the text will allow that the murder of the infants could easily have occurred the next day after the Magi visited the night before. That will make it imperative that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus get out of town fast. **When we hear from God, obedience should likewise be our greatest desire.** This does succeed in getting Jesus into Egypt to fulfill the prophecy in *Hosea 11:1* and *Exodus 4:22*.

Mt. 2:15 – Current dating shows that Herod died around 4 BC. (Dionysius made some miscalculations when he sought to determine the exact year of Jesus' birth.) We see Jesus' early life following the life travels of all Israel. He goes from birth in the Promised Land (like Isaac through Jacob,) to Egypt (like Joseph and his brothers,) then to deliverance to Israel (to become a mighty nation.) There He will establish the founda-



This map will give you a rough idea of the route that Joseph and Mary would have taken to Egypt. The roads that they would have taken would have most likely been close to this route. We have no idea where they stayed in Egypt, whether it was Alexandria where there was a large concentration of displaced Jews or somewhere else where it would be impossible for Herod to find them.

Map courtesy of Logos Bible Atlas software
 Copyright April 1999 Glen M. Copple

tion of His kingdom. Though Joseph and Mary are far from the Temple of the Lord, the Lord of the Temple is very near to them.

Mt. 2:16 – We do not know how long it will take for Herod to find out that the magi have not followed his request for them to report to him about the Christ child. In his mental madness he orders the death of all male children in Bethlehem, and the surrounding vicinity, ages two and younger. This does not mean that Jesus is two years old (He could well be less than one year old.) It only means that Herod intends to be certain he gets this child that the Magi told him about. There were probably less than twenty children in this age range in the vicinity around Bethlehem.

Mt. 2:17 – We do not know how long Joseph and Mary have been gone on their journey to Egypt when the soldiers arrive. They are more than likely still a long way from Bethlehem, but not yet in Egypt (see – *Jeremiah 31:15*). It will take a few days to get to Egypt, a journey of at least 155 miles. With a wife and newborn baby, they will only be able to cover about ten to fifteen miles per day. It will take them at least ten days to actually arrive on Egyptian soil. Nothing is said about where they stay while in Egypt.

Mt. 2:18 – *Jeremiah* prophesied about the slaughter of the babies in Bethlehem in *Jeremiah 31:15*. There are several places named “Ramah.” This most likely refers to a region about five miles north of Jerusalem. *Matthew* points out to his Jewish brethren several prophecies that are fulfilled by Jesus. This is important to prove to them that Jesus is the Messiah that they have been waiting for. He wasn’t just another “want-a-be” like so many others.

Next week, we are going to hear more about the youth of Jesus (Part II). Meanwhile, think about all the memories you have of your own childhood. We’ll see you then for more “Getting To Know Jesus.”

Read *Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 2:39b-52* and join us as we gather again for “Getting To Know Jesus.”





LOC – 009 – Visit of the Magi and Flight to Egypt
Questions for Thought, Discussion and Application

1. Is it possible that God could use “pagans” (non-Christians) to accomplish His good? Discuss some current situations in which this has happened or is appearing to happen to you.
2. What is the significance of the gifts given by the Magi to Jesus?
3. Discuss the Lord selecting Gentiles to visit the Baby Jesus, King of the Jews, in reference to salvation for all men.
4. Have you ever felt a sense of danger when in a certain situation or place? Did you obey God’s warning? Explain.
5. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 009 – Visit of the Magi and Flight to Egypt

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. Where else do the Old and New Testaments tell about Gentiles playing a part in the life of Christ? (In the Old Testament, discover people who were not Jews, but were part of the ancestry of Jesus. In the New Testament, research Jesus' ministry to non-Jews.)
2. Trace the word "Magi" using a concordance. How do other verses in the Bible use this word. You might need to use a Bible dictionary for assistance.
3. Look up and discuss the prophecies that were fulfilled concerning the visit of the Magi?
4. Do a word study on the Greek word - proskuneo (worship) used in *Matthew 2:2*. What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 010
Bible Study Text and Questions
The Childhood of Jesus

Written by
GLEN M. COPPLE



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from Annunciation to Ascension

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II. THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS (4 B.C. TO 7 A.D.)

A. His Nazareth Home (Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 2:39b)

(The Return from Egypt to Nazareth)



Matthew. 2:19-23

*An Angel
Comes to Joseph
In a Dream
He Tells Him
To Return Home
For Herod Is Dead*

¹⁹ After Herod died,
an angel of the Lord appeared
in a dream to Joseph in Egypt
²⁰ and said,
“Get up, take the Child
and His mother
and go to the land of Israel,
for those
who were trying to take
the Child’s life are dead.”

*Joseph obeys,
Returning
To Palestine,*

²¹ So he got up,
took the Child and His mother
and went to the land of Israel.

*And There Hears
That Herod's Son
Is Reigning There
He is Afraid*

²² But when he heard that Archelaus
was reigning in Judea in place
of his father Herod,
he was afraid to go there.

Then Instructed by God,

Having been warned in a dream,
he withdrew to the district of Galilee,
²³ and he went and lived
in a town called Nazareth.

*He Returns
to Nazareth.
In This Way
Another Prophecy
Comes true*

So was fulfilled what was said
through the prophets:
“He will be called a Nazarene.”

B. His Normal Growth (Luke 2:40)

*Throughout Childhood
He develops normally
Physical Growth
Mental Growth
Spiritual Growth*

Luke.2:40

⁴⁰ And the Child grew and became strong;
He was filled with wisdom,
and the grace of God was upon Him.

YOU CAN REMEMBER --

Any story in the Gospels is accurately, and confidently for expository preaching, or writing.

Now try memorizing this story. Then the first story in the N.T., that of the Annunciation to Zechariah and Elizabeth.

First note the division into scenes.

Then visualize the first scene, and the second, and see each scene into the next, to the end of the story.

Review occasionally

Luke. 2:39b

They returned to Galilee
to their own town of Nazareth.



III. THE YOUTH OF JESUS (8 A.D. to 25 A.D.)

A. The Inquiring Boy (Luke 2:41-50)

*They Go To Passover
Annually:
When Jesus Is Twelve
He Goes Along*

*After The Festival
When They
Leave Jerusalem
Jesus Unwittingly
Is Left Behind*

*His Parents Hunt For
The Lost Boy*

They Find Him

*He Was In The
Temple School*

*The Parents
Are Surprised*

*They
Rebuke Him*

*He Replies
Naturally Enough*

*But
They Do Not Understand*

Luke.2:41-50

⁴¹ Every year His parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

⁴² When He was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom.

⁴³ After the Feast was over, while His parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.

⁴⁴ Thinking He was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for Him among their relatives and friends.

⁴⁵ When they did not find Him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for Him.

⁴⁶ After three days they found Him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

⁴⁷ Everyone who heard Him was amazed at His understanding and His answers.

⁴⁸ When His parents saw Him, they were astonished. His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for You."

⁴⁹ **"Why were you searching for Me?"** He asked.

"Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?"

⁵⁰ But they did not understand what He was saying to them.

³or years.

* At this temple School the Rabbis were educated. It was the Jewish "Theological Seminary." Its great teachers were famous as far as Jews were scattered. Here Paul had been sent from Tarsus to be "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel." Before him had been the Great Hillel and Shammi. No wonder that Jesus was fascinated, for during the Passover festival, these great Rabbis taught all who were interested, from the temple steps.

** These are the very first words of Jesus which have come down to us. Do they mean, "Didn't you know that, I would be here- -in my Father's house- -in this temple school where His Word is taught?"

B. THE OBEDIENT SON (Luke 2:51)



(The Return from Egypt to Nazareth)

*He Returns Home
He Is Obedient*

*His Mother Ponders
Events*

⁵¹ Then He went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

3. THE DEVELOPING YOUTH (Luke 2:52)

*His normal development
Mentally
Physically
Spiritually
and
Socially*

⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.



Egyptian pyramids at sunset. These go back before the time of Moses. I wonder if he saw them?

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 010 – The Childhood of Jesus



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

God is in full charge of Jesus life.
Jesus grows up just like any other human being.
Jesus exhibits extraordinary wisdom when He is only twelve years old.
Jesus is a role model in obedience to His parents.

Lesson Commentary

Read *Matthew 2:19-23*; *Luke 2:39-52*

(Your Notes Here!)

Before we can get to the teaching ministry part of Jesus’ life, it is helpful to have a bit of an understanding of His beginning and significant events that prepare Him for His work. In this lesson, we are going to take Jesus from around two-four years old through age twelve. God is setting the final touches to the stage for the start of Jesus’ ministry. Something quite astounding happens when He is twelve years old. Let’s observe.

In the last lesson, three scenes were bound together by several factors. First, each move of the Christ child is undertaken by Joseph as the result of the appearance of an angel in a dream. Second, each section includes a fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy. Third, the whole narrative is governed by a certain correspondence with the story of Moses and the Exodus. These points help to build *Matthew’s* premise that **Jesus is the Messiah** that the Jews have been looking for.

The Childhood of Jesus

Mt. 2:19 – Herod died about 4 B.C. in agony from diseases (if not also from his own madness.) Josephus describes the diseases as ulcerated bowels, maggots, putrid odors, convulsions, and foul breath. The smell was so bad that no one could stand to be around him. A somewhat fitting end for such an evil man. About five days before he died, he had another one of his sons killed in fear that this son would take the throne away from him. **Pray that you never become obsessed with power or money as to be so ruthless with people.**

Mt. 2:20 – Joseph is advised, for the third of four times by an angel in a dream. The angel tells him that it is time for them to return to his homeland. Herod the Great, who had sought Jesus’ life, is now dead. After Herod dies, his kingdom is divided by Caesar Augustus into four parts. These parts are distributed to three of Herod’s sons, and one other, who manages not to be murdered by their father. Archelaus rules over Judea, Samaria,

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About AD 7, His kingdom is taken over by Herod Antipas, a brother of Archelaus.

This is the fourth time that God has spoken to Joseph, through an angel, in a dream. The angel advises Joseph not to return to Bethlehem, so Joseph and Mary go to Nazareth, which is out of Archelaus' jurisdiction. Herod Antipas, who thirty-three years later will hear the Pharisees and Jewish Priests accuse Jesus of crimes in an effort to get Him crucified. God could have told Joseph where to go in the third dream, but that wasn't important at that time. **God often reveals His will to us on a "need to know" basis. That should be sufficient for us to obey.**

Mt. 2:23; Lk. 2:39b – Nazareth, the city from which they had originally come – they have come full circle and returned to from their pilgrimage to Bethlehem some years before. *Matthew* references several prophecies. No specific prophecy is found anywhere in the Old Testament, but several prophecies appear to make inference to the fact. Nazareth houses a Roman garrison for the northern regions of Galilee. Many other Jews consider those from Nazareth to be compromisers who assist the Romans. The city is also known for its crude and violent ways. It is not a good neighborhood to be "from." For a person to be called "a Nazarene" is considered a statement of contempt to the average Jew. This contempt will face Jesus later in His ministry. To some extent, *Matthew* portrays Jesus throughout the Gospel as a new Moses, the founder and lawgiver of the true Israel who in his career recapitulates the story of Moses and the Exodus. **Who you are and who you can become has nothing to do with the reputation of the city you come from, the occupation of your parents or any event from your past!**

The Youth of Jesus

Luke 2:40ff – Jesus has to grow up just like anybody else. He has to be potty trained, told not to play with the hot fire, or touch something that is hot that could burn Him. He has to be told to put a coat on when it is cold. He plays the same games and with the same toys that other Jewish boys play with. He has to go to school and learn to read, write and do arithmetic just like everyone else. He has to learn how to care for Himself more and more as He gets older. Doctor Luke tells us that He grew up strong, which is a reference to his physical health, filled with wisdom, a reference to His mental growth, and in the grace of God, which refers to Jesus' spiritual development.

The Feast of the Passover When Jesus is Twelve Years Old

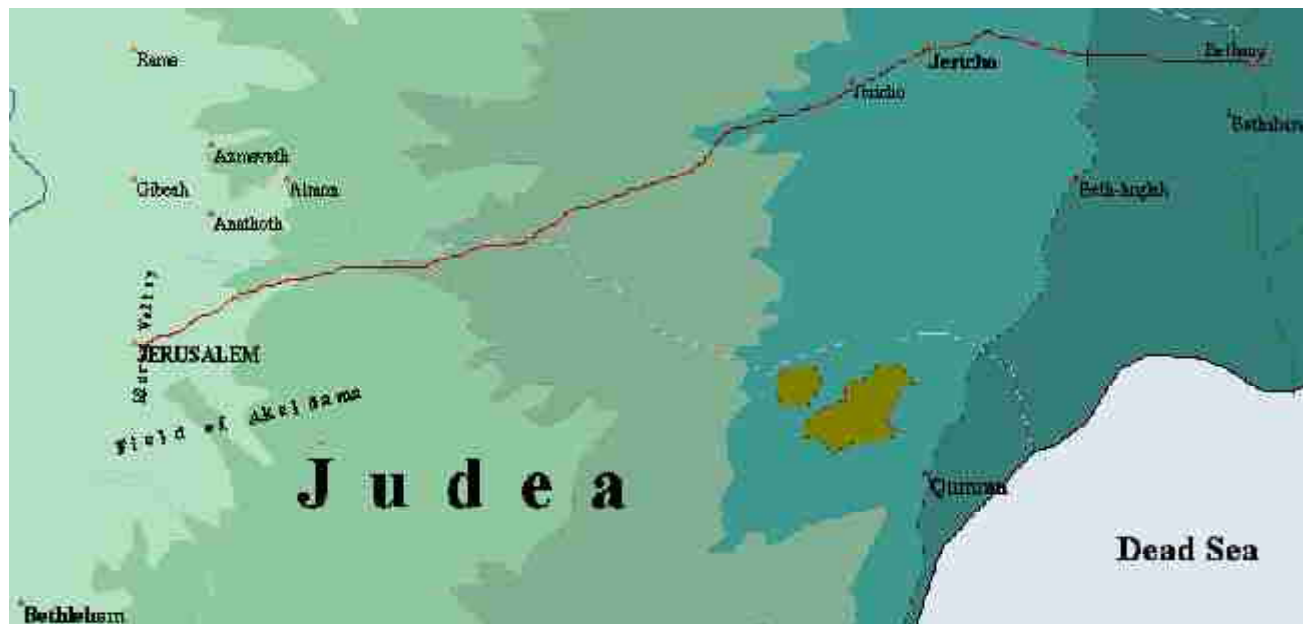
One incident in the childhood of Jesus, from the Gospel of *Luke*, is all we have about His growing up. Only Luke considers mentioning it. This is significant in showing to the Greeks that Jesus is 1) human and 2) Godly minded (Spiritual).

Lk. 2:41 – Attending the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem is a command God requires of every Jewish male after they reach the age of twelve (see *Deuteronomy 16:1, 16*). Surely Jesus

looks forward to these trips as do Joseph and Mary. The one-day Passover is followed by a seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Exodus 23:15; Leviticus 23:4-8; Deuteronomy 16:1-8*). The entire eight-day festival is called the Passover. **There is nothing in Jesus' childhood that is any different than any other Jewish boy.**

Lk. 2:42 – Jesus is twelve years old. Jewish boys become “Sons of the Law” at age twelve. Jesus will accompany His father to the Temple for the customs according to the Law of Moses. There are three feasts every year that Jews are expected to make 1) Passover, 2) Pentecost and 3) Tabernacles. Jesus is obeying the law that He will later do away with (He will replace the Old law with a New one.) There is some debate among Jewish scholars of Jesus' day as to whether women and children are required to attend. After age twelve, Jesus will have to go because of the Law and because of the desire of His own heart to learn the ways of God more fully! **Why do you attend Bible study and Worship services at your church?**

Lk. 2:43 – The feast ends at sundown. We have no knowledge whether Jesus stays behind intentionally, or is simply inadvertently left behind. Does He miss the group leaving because he is involved in an important discussion and lost track of time or because His parents assumed He is with the group and left without Him? Whole villages will caravan together to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. Joseph and Mary will be with a rather large group and can easily and mistakenly assume their children (especially Jesus) are present and protected. The traffic out of Jerusalem will be somewhat like the crowds leaving a major sporting or entertainment event of today. Using public transportation, one can easily loose track of a child until they were a ways down the road. Jesus will not have knowingly and will-



Map showing how far Joseph and Mary travel from Jerusalem to Bethany and then back to Jerusalem in search of a missing twelve year old son.

Map courtesy of Logos Bible Atlas

ingly disobeyed His parents. He is trustworthy, dependable and obedient. Either way, His parents aren't aware of his absence until a day's journey down the road towards home.

Joseph and Mary Search for Jesus

Lk. 2:44 – Joseph and Mary think Jesus is in the crowd and don't worry about Him, because He is a well-behaved and trustworthy son. He's just running and playing with some of the other children in the caravan. They are probably close to Jericho before they realized He isn't with them. They cross the Jordan River before going north and then will cross it again just below the Sea of Galilee to head back west to Nazareth. (Jericho is about thirteen miles northeast of Jerusalem.) Here they are, responsible for the parenting of God the Son, and they lose Him on a simple human oversight. **How would you feel if you had driven all day on a trip back home only to find out that your child was left behind?**

Lk. 2:45 – Joseph and Mary search through all of the people that they are traveling with, trying to find their Son. It is late, now, so they will rest for the night and then return to Jerusalem on the following morning (day 2).

Joseph and Mary Find Jesus in the Temple

Lk. 2:46 – It is late when Joseph and Mary arrive in Jerusalem, and they may do some preliminary looking for Jesus, but it is not until the third day that they find Him in the Temple grounds. Is there some significance with this event and the three days that Jesus will be in the tomb? Jesus was involved in an intellectual/theological discussion with the teachers (priests). The temple courts are often full of every persuasion of Jewish (and non-Jewish) thought. They spend hours debating one another on philosophical differences. Now they are centered around a twelve year old child who is questioning and teaching them.

Lk. 2:47 – Others are evidently listening in and all were amazed at Jesus' understanding and answers in this dialogue. (They aren't as impressed with His questions as with His answers to their questions.) It's like He was teaching them. **Imagine the reactions of the priests in the Temple, and of Joseph and Mary to see their son teaching them.**

Lk. 2:48 – Joseph and Mary are astonished. They are extremely relieved at finding their son (the one GOD entrusted unto them to raise!). They are also in awe at where He is at and what He is doing. They are astonished at His ability to understand these "educated" theologians and at how He is teaching them. The text implies that Jesus is both student and teacher. Jesus is presented as the teacher at the center of a circle. Jesus has been taught the Torah and understands its interpretations; in no way is He in opposition to Jewish Law and practice.

Joseph and Mary confront Jesus for not being with them when they left and express their great anxiety over Him. "Anxiously"

is an understatement. **Can you begin to imagine the trauma that a parent might go through if a child is missing?** Has the child been kidnapped, molested, abused, or killed? One would think that God would spare the parents of His own Son of any anxieties of this world. No wrong was actually done, but a lot of worry was had over the situation. **How would you feel if this were your child?**

Lk. 2:49 – A better translation is “...I must be about my Father’s business.” Where else would you expect a child to be? Jesus says, in essence, not to worry, this is what I am supposed to be doing. His parents probably have instilled much of the Law of Moses in Him and much of the importance of learning and obeying that Law. Most children taking such training seriously might be inclined to linger with the teachers in order to learn more about the Law. Is Jesus beginning to realize who He is and maybe develop some understanding of His life’s mission?

It is hard for us to understand the humanity of Jesus. This is partly because we so tightly equate “human” with sin that we have difficulty seeing one without the other. *Luke* is trying to help us realize that Jesus is human, but He does not sin.

Lk. 2:50 – Joseph and Mary don’t understand their son’s words and behavior. Up to now, Joseph has had the title “Father”. Now Jesus is using it in reference to God. How does that make Joseph feel towards his stepson? Is this the beginning of the “cutting of the apron strings?”

(Your Notes Here!)



Schoolboys playing in a Nazareth School yard.

Lk. 2:51 – Jesus isn't a person of disobedience. Obeying your parents is the first of the Ten Commandments with a promise – (See *Deuteronomy 5:16*). “Mary ponders these things in her heart.” Something a mother would be more inclined to, especially when Joseph is technically only the stepfather. Mary finds Jesus at His work. He is not simply her son, but also God's Son. He has been sent on a mission in which she finds Him totally involved. This probably causes her some sorrow or mixed emotions, for it means their relationship won't be like that of other children and their mother or father. This is the last reference to Joseph in the Gospels. It is a tribute to him as a father who is caring for Jesus; who, in turn, is obedient to him as His (earthly) father. **How are you helping your children to learn the vital importance of learning to obey you?**

Lk. 2:52 – Again, we have a statement on Jesus' growth. He grows in wisdom – mentally, - wiser and smarter! He grows in stature – physically, to that of a mature adult male. And He grows in favor with God – spiritually, and man – socially!

In the next couple of lessons, we are going to look into events surrounding the life and ministry of John the Baptist. Then it will be time to look into the actual ministry and teachings of Jesus. Lets see how God is preparing the world for His Son and how that impacts our lives!

Read *Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18* and join us for “Getting To Know Jesus.”





LOC – 010 – The Childhood of Jesus
Questions for Thought, Discussion and Application

1. Consider what God subjected Himself to in coming into the world as a man, limited by a human body.
2. How would you feel if you lost a child for three days?
3. What was the significance of Jesus' reply to His parents, "I must be about My Father's business"?
4. What might parents do to help their children be more like Jesus, obedient and committed to God?
5. How did the Holy Spirit participate in the development of Jesus' wisdom?
6. What have you learned from this lesson that has or will change your life?



LOC – 010 – The Childhood of Jesus

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. Check a Bible dictionary or some other reference works for information on Herod the Great and his son, Archelaus. Contrast their relationship to that of Joseph and Jesus.
2. What does the Bible tell us about the Passover? (You'll need a concordance to look up all of the references to the "Passover.")
3. Search the Scriptures and compare Jesus' humanity to our humanity. (A couple of places you might consider are: *Philippians 2:6-8*; *Isaiah 50:4*; *Psalm 119:97-104*.)
4. Do a word study on the Greek word - ekplesso (amazed) used of Jesus' parents in *Luke 2:48*. What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?

Lesson 011
Bible Study Text and Questions
The Ministry of John the Baptist

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IV. THE YOUNG MANHOOD OF JESUS (36 A.D. to 27 A.D.) (THE MESSIAH IS CONSECRATED AND INITIATED)

1. JOHN IS PREACHING AND BAPTIZING (Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18; cf. John 1:33)

Luke 3:1-2



(1) The Time of John's Coming and The Ruler of That Time

The Date ¹In the fifteenth year of the

The Rulers

The Roman Emperor
The Roman Governor
of Judea-Samaria
The Tetrarchs
Herod Antipas
Herod Philip
Lysanias

reign of Tiberius Caesar—
when Pontius Pilate
was governor of Judea,
Herod tetrarch of Galilee,
his brother Philip
tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis,
and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene

The Jewish
High Priests

²during the high priesthood
of Annas and Caiaphas,
the word of God came to John son
of Zechariah
in the desert.

Cf. John 1:33b

[³³...except that the one who sent me
to baptize with** water told me,

(2) John's Coming and Mission

'The Man on whom you see
the Spirit come down and
remain
is He Who will baptize
with** the Holy Spirit.']

Matthew. 3:1-6

Mark. 1:2-6

Luke 3:3-6

John is called ¹In those days
by God and a sign John the Baptist came,
is promised him.

⁴And so John came,
baptizing in the desert region
and preaching

³He went into all the country
around the Jordan,
preaching

John preaches
repentance,
and forgiveness
preaching
in the Desert of Judea
²and saying,
"Repent,

a baptism of repentance
for the forgiveness of sins.

a baptism of repentance
for the forgiveness of sins.

(Cf. Matthew 4:17)

and that the
Messiah
is at hand.
for the kingdom
of heaven is near."

*This section is sometimes called, "The Opening Events of Christ's Ministry." These events are introductory and transitional in character--of a semi-private nature. But the real public ministry of Jesus begins at Jerusalem, at Passover time, with "The Cleansing of The Temple." ** Greek in.

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Matthew. 3:1-6

Mark. 1:2-6

(3) John’s work had been foretold by the prophets.

John's mission was foretold by the ancient prophets Malachi

³ This is He who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

and Isaiah

He was to get the people ready for the Messiah. The Messiah will bring God's great

Salvation to all mankind

“A voice of one calling in the desert, (*Isaiah 40:3ff*)
‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him.’”

² It is written

in Isaiah the prophet: ^{a*}

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—

³“a voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

⁴ As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

(*Malachi 3:1 Cf. Luke 7:27*)

“A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

⁵ Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low.

The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth.

⁶ And all mankind will see God’s salvation.”

a Some ancient authorities read “in the prophets.”*



River Jordan where Jesus was probably baptized.



(4) John's Dress and Personal Habits Were Like That of The Prophets

<i>John wore prophetic dress* and ate desert food.</i>	<p>⁴ John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist.* His food was locusts and wild honey.</p>	<p>⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt* around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.</p>
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(5) The Enormous Effectiveness of John's Preaching

<i>John was most effective stirring the country from circumference to center.</i>	<p>⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan.</p>	<p>⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.</p>
<i>John deals uncompromisingly with sin.</i>	<p>⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.</p>	<p>Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.</p>

* John wore the regular Prophetic dress. See *II Kings 1:8, Zechariah 13:4* speaks of false prophets who wore the prophetic dress so as to deceive people. See also Christ's allusion to John's stern habits, *Luke 7:25-26*.



A typical view of the "wilderness". It is rugged, dry and lonely.

Photo courtesy of Corel Corporation Photo CD-ROM

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 011 – The Ministry of John the Baptist



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

The writers place the history of Jesus with the history of the world.
 John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus.
 People aren't afraid of being told they are sinners if God sends the source.

Messiah is coming! Are you ready?

Repentance is an important part of coming into a relationship with God.

Lesson Commentary

Read *Matthew 3:1-6; Mark 1:2-5; Luke 3:1-6* (Your Notes Here!)

Christmas is over. Jesus is now a grown man, and according to *Mark 6:3*, He is working in the carpentry business (with His step-father, Joseph.) He will soon be thirty years old and will embark on that ministry that we have come to learn about and praise God for. Unlike the Jewish tradition of the Talmud, He will soon start telling people how God really wants us to live, and how we can be saved from the consequences of our sins. We are now going to begin the study of the adult life (and teachings) of Jesus.

Before we get into Jesus' ministry, lets find out what has happened to John the Baptist. He has been given the responsibility of introducing Jesus as our Messiah and Savior. He gets to set the stage for Jesus. What does “Getting To Know Jesus” have to tell us about him?

John's Time Is Established In History

Lk. 3:1 – Tiberius Caesar will reign from A.D. 14-37. He isn't as kind a ruler as his father, Augustus. His reign is marked with covetousness, drunkenness, and cruelty. Luke first identifies John by time (*Luke 3:1-2a*), place (*Luke 3:2b-3a*), and function (*Luke 3:3b-6*). Luke provides the best clear date for the ministry of John and therefore of Jesus: the fifteenth year of Tiberius would be A.D. 28-29. Pontius Pilate is “Prefect” (technically not “governor”) of Judea from 26 to 36. In addition Luke mentions three Tetrarchs (a Tetrarch rules one fourth of a region): Herod Antipas and Philip are sons of Herod the Great and rule Galilee, Perea, and the northeast areas of Ituraea and Trachonitus. Lysanias is one of several by that name who ruled Abilene, still farther to the north of Galilee. (See Map of Herod's Divided Kingdoms.) Pilate is also not well liked by the Jews and vice versa. He has little conscience and is much influenced by his wife. Philip is the “best” of the sons of Herod the Great. Under his rule, the Jews suffer little and life is considerably more tolerable.

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Lk. 3:2a – The principal religious authorities are high priests. Their office is for life but the Romans appoint them to office, as they will. Annas serves between **A.D. 6** and **15** by legal succession. His son-in-law, Caiaphas replaces him, but apparently most of the Jews still regard him as the High Priest. Caiaphas will hold the office between **A.D. 18** and **36**.

(Your Notes Here!)

A point to remember: Jesus is an established point in history, not a mythical allusion. Even Josephus, a Jewish historian of Jesus' day mentions Jesus and that His followers "exist to this day." Into this established point in history comes John the Baptist, Jesus cousin, preaching to the people to repent and make ready for the coming Messiah. Our story has already been going on, but to those of Jesus' day, it is just beginning. Most of them are oblivious to Jesus and are still looking for God to break this three hundred year period of silence. They remember nothing of the events of Bethlehem some thirty years prior and have forgotten if they knew anything at all about them, of



Map showing the territories of the four Rulers. Herod Antipas ruled Galilee and Perea. Philip rules Iturea and Trachonitus, north and east of the Sea of Galilee. Pilate rules Judea and Samaria. Lysannias rules the area around Abilene, north of Iturea.

Map courtesy of "Great People of the Bible and How They Lived"

the events only eighteen years earlier in the Temple during the Feast of the Passover. However, there is a great expectancy that opens the door of curiosity regarding John’s message. **It is by the foolishness of “preaching,” not the power of an armed rebellion and force, that God chooses to change the hearts of man.** That speaks to the greater power of the spoken word in the process of persuading people to change their lives. **Are you proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ as the Savior from our sins?**

John Is Established In Place

Lk. 3:2b – The “desert” is located near the Jordan River just north of the Dead Sea. (Compare Luke’s comments to those of Matthew and Mark for a clearer understanding.) It is believed that John grew up in the hill country around Hebron (south of Jerusalem.) He migrates over to the Jordan River for his ministry so that those who repent may be baptized. John is probably preaching close to where the Jericho road crosses over the Jordan River. This is a major route for Jews going between Galilee and Judea. That will attract a lot of passersby, who will spread the news and draw others to travel to hear what John has to say. The desert is also spiritually symbolical of Israel’s coming out of the desert to the Promised Land. Now, John is calling them out of a “spiritual” desert to the “Promised Land” of eternal life. **How many people do you know today that are wandering around in their spiritual desert of sin? What are you doing to introduce them to Jesus?**

Mt. 3:1; Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3 – Luke offers no explanation as to how the “*Word of the Lord*” comes to John. God can reveal His word/will to us in several ways. **We can experience God speaking to us today by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the Church to reveal Himself, His purposes and His ways.** John is now thirty years old and, by Jewish custom, it is now time for him to enter into the service of the Temple. However, due to the call of God, He has a different Ministry to do. After Malachi there has been no prophet, nor any pretender to prophecy, until John the Baptist, to whom the prophet Malachi points more directly than any of the other Old Testament prophets have done (see *Malachi 3:1*). Couple with this, the hatred the Jews have for being under the Roman rule and you have a volatile bunch of Jews waiting for a leader to come and free them from their oppression. **What is it that you are seeking from God, physical deliverance or spiritual salvation?**

John Is Established In Function

Mt. 3:2 – Mark and Luke mention to their Roman and Gentile readers that John baptizes followers as a sign that they have repented of their sinful behavior. This is an act of their acknowledging that they are sinners and need a Savior. **It is for our salvation that Jesus has been born and He will soon resolve the sin problem by His death on the cross for our**

sins. (Compare this to *Acts 2:38* when Peter tells the first converts to be immersed.) Matthew clearly avoids saying that this baptism offers any release from sin. It merely acknowledges that the person is guilty as charged and is trying to change their life. Matthew will make it clear that forgiveness is only through Jesus death on the cross and subsequent resurrection (see *Matthew 26:28*.)

Baptism is not an unfamiliar rite to the Jews. In Jesus' day it is an accepted initiation of a proselyte into Judaism. The Qumran community used immersion as a rite for several activities. (The Qumran community is comprised mostly of Essene Jews who live in the desert on the west side of the Dead Sea.) They avoid the Romans and seek to be more of a community of religious worshippers all to themselves. John's baptism differs from this Jewish proselyte baptism in that John's baptism is administered to Israelites. It differs from Qumran baptism of purification in that it is given once for all time to soldiers, to publicans, and to sinners, who are not usually accepted in full communion with God's people.

John is calling the Jews to repent of their sin, to admit that they are sinners. He reminds them that they have not kept the Mosaic Law according to God's standards. Repentance involves a change of mind/heart to "turn around." **If you change the mind, you change the behavior.** It means that the person is going to change how they live from doing sin to doing what is right in God's eyes. Baptism is an outward symbol of an inward change – an initiation rite signifying their allegiance to God. It marks the Jew as one who is preparing for the coming Messiah. Matthew gives a reason to repent – "the Kingdom of Heaven is very near." **How much closer are we to the "Kingdom of Heaven" today?**

John's listeners are submitting to baptism as a symbolical sign of acknowledging that forgiveness is something they need and are undone without. This involves repentance before God and acknowledgement of their sinfulness and a desire to change their lives. They don't ask if they are forgiven before they are baptized or after. They only act in obedience to what John has told them to do. The Greek text implies that this baptism leads to or is in reference to the remission of sins, as opposed to being a result or on account of the removal of sins.

Mt. 3:3; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 3:4 – Mark includes a quote from *Malachi 3:1* and *4:5*. Luke goes into greater detail in quoting Isaiah than the others, although all three quote the passage, which Isaiah wrote some seven hundred years before John's day. Malachi was written some three hundred years ago. When God makes a prophetic statement, it is often many, sometimes hundreds of, years before it is fulfilled, but it is always fulfilled. Clearly, John the Baptist has been foretold in the Old Testament. **How long has mankind been expecting the immediate**

Second Coming of Jesus? We know that it will happen, but we have been actively waiting for nearly two thousand years.

Mk. 1:3 – John has been sent before Jesus to do a specific job. He is telling others that the Messiah is coming. He is introducing Jesus to the Jewish world. Isaiah is the most evangelical of the Old Testament Prophets. He speaks more for the salvation from sin than any of the other Old Testament prophets. Luke includes more of Isaiah’s quote than the other Gospel writers do (See *Isaiah 40:3-5*.) **Are you telling anyone about Jesus’ coming?**

Lk. 3:5 – After about four hundred years of silence, the voice of one crying in the wilderness with a message not unlike that of the prophet Isaiah draws the attention of many in Judea. John is offering something in his message that the people want. They want to be saved (from their Roman oppressors.) It takes a full day to walk from Jerusalem downhill to the Jordan River. Word spreads by word-of-mouth and more people flock to hear John preach. John will straighten the affections and thoughts of the people to look for the promised Messiah. John’s preaching is the beginning of the Gospel ordinances of preaching and baptizing.

John’s Physical Identity

Mt. 3:4; Mk. 1:6 – Matthew and Mark describe John’s appearance and the impact of his message. John’s appearance bears a semblance to his predecessors – Elijah, Isaiah and other Old Testament prophets. Camel’s hair garments are very uncomfortable, but they are the typical attire of prophets according to *Zechariah 13:4*. John’s attire and message, as that of a prophet, has a great impact. John does not enjoy the delicacies of the “modern” life, but subjects himself to the lifestyle of the Old Testament Prophets before him. His diet consists primarily of locusts, which can be readily found in the countryside around where he is preaching. Wild honey will also be natural to the area, so these become the staple in John’s diet. He very seldom, if ever, goes to Jerusalem or any nearby city for food and other provisions. If it weren’t for the fact that he does seek to interact with others, John could almost be described as a hermit. His dress, diet and general manner are quite a contrast to the Pharisees, other religious leaders and priests of the Jews.

Mt. 3:5; Mk 1:5 – Judea is the area around, south and west of Jerusalem that is occupied by the last descendants of Benjamin and Judah. The people of Judea have desired to hear from a prophet for about four hundred years. When John appears, they want to see and hear what he has to say. Many will travel for days to hear him speak and to repent and be baptized by him in the Jordan River. **How far are you willing to go to hear someone tell you that you are a sinner and need to live a more Godly life?**

Mt. 3:6 – John’s message is getting through to the people. They are repenting of their sins in large numbers and are being immersed in the Jordan River as a symbol of their repentance. This symbol of immersion in water makes their repentance more of a process and not merely a passing verbal expression.

Next week, we are going to look into the preaching of John the Baptist. What kind of man is this that will get people to walk for days just to hear him tell them that they are sinners and that they better repent or else? How can John help us improve our influence in the world? Come and see!

Meanwhile, read *Matthew 3:7-12; Mark 1:6-8; Lk. 3:7-18* and we will see you again as we continue “Getting To Know Jesus.”



(Your Notes Here!)



LOC – 011 – The Ministry of John the Baptist
Questions for Thought, Discussion and Application

1. Consider how the Jews of Jesus' day felt about not having any direct revelation from a prophet for three hundred years.
2. Compare and contrast Matthew, Mark, and Luke's accounts of the ministry of John. Notice how each writer contributes to the overall story.
3. What was the purpose and significance of John's rite of baptism?
4. What does repentance imply and require of the individual?
5. What have you learned from this lesson that has or will change your life?



LOC – 011 – The Ministry of John the Baptist

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. What were some of the other significant world events that were happening around the time of the beginning of Jesus' Ministry?

2. Check out the ministries, styles, and messages of Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and Malachi. Compare the information we have on the ministry of John the Baptist. Do any other prophets come to mind?

3. Why do you think there was a four hundred year Period when Israel was in captivity. And why didn't God speak to them through the prophets for three hundred years?

4. Do a word study on the Greek word - kerusso (preaching) used in *Matthew 3:1, Mark 1:4, Luke 3:3*. What does it mean and how is it used in the Bible?



Most of John the Baptists life is spend at the Jordan River around Aenon, where He was baptizing.

Map courtesy of ROHR Productions, LTD. 1999

Lesson 012
Bible Study Text and Questions
The Preaching of John the Baptist

Written by
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The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ
from Annunciation to Ascension

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IV. THE YOUNG MANHOOD OF JESUS (25 A.D. to 27 A.D.) (THE MESSIAH IS CONSECRATED AND INITIATED)

A. JOHN IS PREACHING AND BAPTIZING (*Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18; Cf. John 1:33*) (continued)

Matthew. 3:7-12

Luke. 3:7-18



The Messiah Will

(6) Concrete Illustrations Of John's Preaching

*Rulers and the
crowds alike*

⁷ But when he saw many of the
Pharisees and Sadducees

*He warned
of judgment*

coming to where he was baptizing,
he said to them:

“You brood of vipers!
Who warned you to flee
from the coming wrath?”

*He urged
true
repentance.*

⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

⁹ And do not think
you can say to yourselves,

*He demolished
excuses.*

“We have Abraham as our father.”

I tell you that out of these stones
God can raise up children for Abraham.

*He insisted
that every
individual
must either
repent
or perish.*

¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees,
and every tree

that does not produce good fruit
will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

⁷ John said
to the crowds
coming out to be baptized by him,

“You brood of vipers!
Who warned you to flee
from the coming wrath?”

⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

And do not begin
to say to yourselves,

“We have Abraham as our father.”

For I tell you that out of these stones
God can raise up children for Abraham.

⁹ The ax is already at the root of the trees,
and every tree

that does not produce good fruit
will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

(7) John's Personal Dealing With Inquirers

*a. With the
multitudes.*

¹⁰ “What should we do then?”
the crowd asked.

¹¹ John answered,
“The man with two tunics
should share with him who has none,
and the one who has food should do the same.”

*b. With the
publicans.*

¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized.

“Teacher,”
they asked,
“what should we do?”

*c. With the
Soldiers.*

¹³ “Don't collect any more
than you are required to,”
he told them.

¹⁴ Then some soldiers
asked him,
“And what should we do?”

He replied,
“Don't extort money
and don't accuse people falsely—
be content with your pay.”

Abraham's relationship with God was one of faith proved by obedience.

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Matthew. 3:7-12

Mark. 1:7-8

Luke. 3:7-18

The great expectancy.

¹⁵ The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ.

(8) John's Message About the Messiah's Coming

When the Psychologic moment had come, He announced the Messiah's coming.

¹¹ "I baptize you with ^{*} water for repentance. But after me will come One who is more powerful than I,

⁷ And this was his message:

"After me will come one more powerful than I,

¹⁶ John answered them all, "I baptize you with ^{**} water.

But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.

The Messiah's incomparable greatness.

whose sandals I am not fit to carry.

the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.

⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

His unique work.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

His cleansing judgment.

¹² His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will clear His threshing floor, gathering His wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in His hand to clear His threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

A concluding general statement.

¹⁸ And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 012 – The Preaching of John the Baptist



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives

Sinners must become aware of their sins in order for them to be dealt with.
 John tells us to “Get ready, the Messiah is coming.”
 John compares his baptism for repentance to Jesus’ baptism for forgiveness.

Lesson Commentary

Read *Matthew 3:7-12; Mark 1:7-8; Luke 3:7-18* (Your Notes Here!)

In the last lesson, we looked into the character and behavior of John the Baptist. By most people’s standards, he could be described like a wild man or a hermit, or even a “mountain” man. He lives alone in the wilderness close to the Jordan River, wears strange clothes, and eats bugs and wild honey. Though he is inline for the priesthood by birth, he foregoes that calling to live in the desert and preach to people as they pass by. Hey, there’s this wild looking man out in the country close to the Jordan River that is really preaching up a storm. Let’s do some more “Getting To Know Jesus” and find out what he’s about and what he is preaching!

John the Baptist is Preaching

John Preaches Repentance

Mt. 3:7; Lk. 3:7 – Matthew specifies which sects of the Jews (the Pharisees and the Sadducees) John targets in this message. Many Jews look up to the Pharisees as those who are the most “spiritual” of the Jews. The Pharisees make a parade of their religion while the Sadducees argue against it. The Sadducees are the more “liberal” of the Jews, but they have greater control of the Temple in Jerusalem (See the attached article on the Pharisees and Sadducees at the end of this lesson.) They are coming to John to investigate whether he might indeed be a prophet. Both parties will be interested in how they can take over John’s operation and use it for their own political advantage. Though they are politically and spiritually opposed in many of their views, John lumps them together because of the similarities in their hypocrisies. Before they can be saved, they need to be shown that they are lost. Even though his baptism isn’t unto salvation, it is important as an initiation rite stamping a statement of the person that they are going to change their behavior.

John does not use any tact in calling the Pharisees a “Brood of Vipers” (snakes). Calling them “vipers” is intended as an affront to them. Vipers are small and sometimes mistaken for a stick or branch. Their “venom” is poisonous and usually fatal. John

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compares the bite of the Pharisees and Sadducees like poison to their own countrymen. It is destroying their faith and allegiance to God, instead of building it. Most Jews take special pride in their race, religion and government (Mosaical.) John does not give them titles or recognition of status, but reprimands them because of their hypocrisy. John takes the most "pious" and the most "liberal" and calls them all sinners! Calling them vipers identifies them with the serpent who deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Matthew is using this text to hold the "religious leaders" accountable for rejecting the Messiah. Luke points out that they have such hatred for others of different views that they strike with a venomous blow on anyone who crosses their traditions. John warns them of the "wrath to come" to warn that they are in danger of damnation. They need to bear the fruits of repentance or they will find themselves outside of God's Kingdom when the Messiah comes. This is a statement dealing with the end of this world referring to the final judgment when Jesus comes to take us to be with Him. **There is a "wrath to come" upon any and all who refuse to accept and obey God's will for their lives! Have you truly repented of the sins in your life?**



The Jordan River near where John the Baptist was baptizing. He didn't have the modern steps and railings that are pictured here.

John Deals With Inquirers

Lk. 3:10 – Many people that come to listen to John will believe his message and want to do what was right. Most people, in any time and culture, want to do what is right; they just need someone to tell them what to do or how to go about it.

Lk. 3:11 – John gives them some samples of “good fruits” in action. This is an act of caring and sharing God’s love. We cannot simply ignore the needs of others. (We may sometimes have to limit how we go about helping those in need or how much we can help. If your “boat” is sinking, you can’t do much to help others even though they are tossing in the sea without even a life preserver.) On the other hand, to deny help when you can provide it is not exhibiting the love and presence of God in your life.

Lk. 3:12 – Matthew is a tax collector who is despised by his fellow Jews as a traitor. Did he hear this message? (This is long before Jesus calls him to be an Apostle.) **Honesty in our business dealings with others is of utmost importance.** Don’t take advantage of others when it isn’t also fair to them.

Lk. 3:14 – Men serving in the army (Romans?) are also instructed in how to practice right behavior. Evidently, these soldiers are not showing morality and respect for others. John tells them no to conduct “shakedowns” or hassle those they are protecting or conquering. Don’t be unkind or ruthless. Don’t be cruel to those around them, but be kind to those who are providing for their living needs. Save their fighting for the enemy. God never condemns those who fight to defend their country. Armies are necessary for any nation’s freedom, but remember that those who live by the sword will die by the sword.

Lk 3:15 – The people are so impressed by John’s preaching that they wonder if he might be the Messiah. This is a case of mistaken identity. This does demonstrate how much the Jews are looking for the Messiah to deliver them from Roman oppression. There is a high expectation among the Jews that the Messiah is here or near. They see prophecies in Daniel and other Old Testament books being fulfilled.

John Tells Them the Messiah Is Coming

Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:7; Lk. 3:16 – Mark summarizes John’s message in order to direct the focus to Jesus, who is more “powerful” or greater than John. *Matthew* and *Luke* go into more detail about John’s message. Even though John the Baptist comes as a symbol of the power of Elijah and is the first prophet these people have had in over three hundred years, he compares himself as lower than a slave in relation to the greatness of Jesus Christ. The “lowest” task that a slave could do would be to remove a man’s sandals and wash his feet. The master could not even force a slave to do that against his will.

What is your feeling of “greatness” in comparison to Jesus?
Any great leader or celebrity always has someone who goes

before to prepare the way for his or her coming. This is true of entertainers, sports figures, political figures, religious leaders, etc. John has come to prepare the way for Jesus!

(Your Notes Here!)

John's baptizing (immersion) in water is an act to symbolize a repentance of heart. Matthew notes that John's baptizing does not remove sin, but simply is the candidate acknowledging that he is a sinner who is changing his behavior to be more mindful of God's way. John administers an outward sign of an inward repentance, whereas Jesus is administering a life-giving spirit.

Mk. 1:8 – John's baptizing pertained only to the admitting of sin. Jesus' baptizing with the Holy Spirit will deal with the removing of sin. The power in baptism is not in the candidate or in the person who is administering the rite. It is in Christ's choosing to give recognition to those who obey His instructions. We will look further into the Holy Spirit's place in the Christian's life later in our study on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Mt. 3:12; Lk. 3:17 – John's application of the baptism of fire is a burning of the chaff (the unsaved) in a never-ending fire. Matthew references the process of harvesting grain to compare God's separating the penitent followers from the rebellious and disobedient fallen. Fire is used in the Bible to illustrate many lessons. Examples include providing warmth, cooking food, refining metals, burning rubbish, destroying waste, purification of a substance by melting or burning impurities, etc. For that reason, we must interpret the use of fire in its immediate context and not say what it does not say. The text clarifies that the "Baptism of fire" here is different than a refiner's fire. The baptism of fire is to destroy the chaff (i.e. the lost; those who refuse to acknowledge Jesus as Lord.) This baptism is not a fire that I want to be baptized with! Wheat is a reference the Christian. The chaff (the hulls and stems) refers to the sinner who has refused to accept Jesus Christ as Lord. Both are allowed to grow together until the harvest. The Wheat (Christians) will be gathered into the granary (heaven.) The "chaff" (sinners) will be burned in an eternal hell fire.

Lk. 3:18 – John's preaching is: 1) **affectionate** because he speaks kindly to his audience. 2) **practical** in ways that relate to their daily lives. 3) **popular** by the fact that he is well received. 4) **evangelical** in trying to change them to God's ways. 5) **plentiful** on occasions and on many topics.

Next week, Jesus is coming to be baptized by John. This is a monumental event in His coming to identify with you and me. Think about it. How does it relate to your baptism?

Read *Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 4:1-13* and come back because we are still "Getting To Know Jesus."



The Pharisees and The Sadducees Compared

The Pharisees

The **Pharisees** were a great contrast to the Essenes. They were equally, if not more, exclusive, but were found for the most part in the larger cities such as Jerusalem. They were an association much in the mainstream of Jewish life and made a point of being noticed and admired. Jesus exposed them as doing “all their deeds to be noticed by men ... and they loved the place of honor at banquets, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called by men, “Rabbi” (*Matthew 23:5-7*; Cf. *6:2, 5*).

We have no specific documentation as to exactly how or when the Pharisee sect began, but it is likely that it developed out of a former group called the Hasidim, whose name means “pious ones” or “saints.” The Hasidim came into being in the second century B.C., during the inter-testament period. Palestine had been under the Hellenistic (Greek) rule of the Seleucid Syrian kings for many years. Jewish patriots, under the leadership of Judas Maccabaeus, revolted when Antiochus Epiphanes tried to force his pagan culture and religion on the Jews. That despicable tyrant even profaned the Temple by sacrificing a pig on the altar and forcing the sacrificed meat down the throats of the priests—a double abomination to Jews, because the Law of Moses forbade them to eat pork (*Leviticus 11:4-8*; *Deuteronomy 14:7-8*). The Hasidim were among the strongest supporters of the revolt, until its leaders began to become worldly and politicized.

Many scholars believe that the **Pharisees**, and likely the Essenes also, descended from the Hasidim. The word *Pharisee* means “separated ones,” and members of the sect diligently tried to live up to their name. Admission to the group was strictly controlled by periods of probation lasting up to one year, during which the applicant had to prove his ability to follow ritual law. They separated themselves not only from Gentiles but from tax collectors and any others whom they considered to be base “sinners” (*Luke 7:39*). They even looked with disdain on the common Jewish people, whom a group of Pharisees in Jerusalem once referred to as “accursed” (*John 7:49*). After leaving the marketplace or any public gathering, they would as soon as possible perform ceremonial washings to purify themselves of possible contamination from touching some unclean person.

The Pharisees formed a self-righteous, “holy” community within the community; they were legalistic isolationists who had no regard or respect for those outside their sect. They believed strongly in God’s sovereignty and in divine destiny and that they alone were the true Israel. They considered themselves to be superspiritual, but their “spirituality” was entirely external, consisting of the pursuit of meticulous observance of a multitude of religious rituals and taboos, most of which they and various other religious leaders had devised over the previous several centuries as supplements to the Law of Moses. These were known collectively as “the tradition of the elders,” concerning which Jesus gave the Pharisees one of His strongest rebukes, charging them with “teaching as doctrines the precepts of men” (*Matthew 15:2-9*).

By the time of Christ, the **Pharisees** had lost most of whatever nationalism they may earlier have had. Another sect, the Zealots, had become the association for those whose primary concern was Jewish independence. The Pharisees’ single loyalty was to themselves, to their traditions and to their own influence and prestige. By their strict adherence to those traditions they expected to reap great reward in heaven. But they were the epitome of religious emptiness and hypocrisy, as Jesus often pointed out (*Matthew 15:7; 22:18; 23:13, 23, 25*; etc.). The Pharisees “outwardly [appeared] righteous to men, but inwardly [were] full of hypocrisy and lawlessness” (*Matthew 23:28*).

THE SADDUCEES

The **Sadducees** were at the other end of the Jewish religious spectrum—the ultraliberals. The origin of their name is uncertain, but many modern scholars believe it is derived from Zadok (Sadok in the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament), the name of a man who was priest under David (*2 Samuel 8:17*) and chief priest under Solomon (*1 Kings 1:32*). This sect also arose during the intertestamental period, but from among the priestly aristocracy. They were compromisers, both religiously and politically. They cared little for Greek culture, with its emphasis on philosophy and intellectualism, but were greatly attracted to the pragmatic, practical Romans.

The Sadducees claimed to accept the Law of Moses as the supreme and only religious authority, and they scorned the legalistic traditions of their antagonists, the Pharisees. In New Testament times they were still closely associated with the priestly class (see *Acts 5:17*), to the extent that the terms *chief priest* and *Sadducee* were used almost synonymously (as were the terms *scribe* and *Pharisee*.) But they cared little for religion, especially doctrine, and denied the existence of angels, the resurrection, and most things supernatural (*Acts 23:6-8*). Consequently, they lived only for the present, getting everything they could from whomever they could—Gentiles and fellow Jews alike. They believed in extreme human autonomy and in the unlimited freedom of the will. They considered themselves masters of their own destinies.

The Sadducees were much fewer in number than the Pharisees and were extremely wealthy. Among other things, under the leadership of Annas they ran the Temple franchises—the money exchanging and the sale of sacrificial animals—and charged exorbitantly for those services. It was therefore the Sadducees' business that Jesus damaged when he drove the moneychangers and sacrifice sellers out of the Temple (*Matthew 21:12-13*).

Because of their great wealth, Temple racketeering, and affiliation with the Romans, the Sadducees were much less popular with their fellow Jews than were the Pharisees, who were strongly religious and had some measure of national loyalty.

Religiously, politically, and socially the Pharisees and Sadducees had almost nothing in common. The Pharisees were ritualistic; the Sadducees were rationalistic. The Pharisees were strict separatists; the Sadducees comprising collaborators. The Pharisees were commoners (most of them had a trade,) while the Sadducees were aristocrats. Both groups had members among the scribes and were represented in the priesthood and in the Jewish high council, the Sanhedrin; yet they were in almost constant opposition to each other. During New Testament times about the only common ground they exhibited was opposition to Christ and His followers (*Matthew 22:15-16, 23, 34-35; Acts 4:1; 23:6*).

They had one other common religious and spiritual ground. The Pharisees expected their reward in heaven, while the Sadducees expected theirs in this life, but the trust of both groups was in personal works and self-effort. Both emphasized the superficial and nonessential, and had no concern for the genuine inner spiritual life or for the welfare of their fellow man. That was “the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees,” the hypocritical, self-serving, dead externalism about which Jesus warned His disciples (*Matthew 16:6*).

Throughout most of its history the church has had its own brands of Pharisees and Sadducees, its ritualists and its rationalists. The one looks for salvation and blessing through prescribed ceremonies and legalistic practices; the other finds religious meaning and purpose in private, existential beliefs and standards. One is conservative and the other is liberal, but the hope and trust of both groups is in themselves, in what they can perform or accomplish by their own actions and wills. ¹

¹ MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.



LOC – 012 – The Preaching of John the Baptist **Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Application**

1. What can we learn from the shortcomings of the Pharisees and Sadducees so that we might not become like them?

2. Name characteristics that all Christian denominations have in common.

3. How might you personally demonstrate your repentance from sin? (If you don't feel comfortable being this personal, you don't have to name a specific sin area in your life, but discuss ways you can demonstrate “turning around” from that behavior.)

4. How can you apply the instructions that John gave to his audience to our lives today?

5. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?

Lesson 013
Bible Study Text and Questions
Jesus Comes to be Baptized

Written by
GLEN M. COPPLE



The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ
from Annunciation to Ascension

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B. JESUS IS BAPTIZED BY JOHN (*Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23a*)

Matthew 3:13-17

Mark 1:9-11

Luke 3:21-23a



Jesus comes to be baptized.

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

⁹ At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee

He overcomes John's hesitation.

¹⁴ But John tried to deter Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"

¹⁵ Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." * Then John consented.

John consents. He baptizes Jesus.

and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

²¹ When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too.

Then

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.

¹⁰ As Jesus was coming up out of the water,

as Jesus is praying, He sees Heaven opened, and the Spirit descending

At that moment heaven was opened,^a and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him.

He saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove.

And as He was praying, heaven was opened

²² and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form like a dove.

A voice also speaks from Heaven

¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said,^b "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased."

¹¹ And a voice came from heaven:^b "You are My Son, whom I love; with You I am well pleased."

And a voice came from heaven:^b "You are My Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."^c

[After the 40 Days, Jesus returned again to John at the Jordan Jesus is thirty years old.]

²³ Now Jesus Himself was about thirty years old when He began His ministry.

^a Some ancient authorities add "to Him." ^bOr "My Son, My (or the) Beloved."

^c Some ancient authorities read "today have I begotten you."

* This is the second authentically recorded utterance of Jesus. It may likely mean, that His baptism here as always elsewhere, signifies His death for the sins of the world.

“GETTING TO KNOW JESUS”



LOC – 013 Jesus Comes to Be Baptized



Opening Prayer

Lesson Objectives:

It does not matter where you are from, but what you do.
 Obeying God is of utmost importance.
 Jesus identifies with us (sinners) in preparation for His crucifixion for our sins.
 God officially declares Jesus as His Son, and He’s a proud Father.

Lesson Commentary

Read *Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23a* (Your Notes Here!)

We are still laying the foundation for the good stuff. We are learning about Jesus’ early years and the events that happened prior to the actual start of His ministry. Are you receiving a blessing? I think the best is yet to come! There are many exciting experiences ahead as we continue “Getting To Know Jesus.” Let’s see what this lesson has in store for us!

Matthew has given us the King’s Ancestry (*Matthew 1:1-17*), Arrival (*Matthew 1:18-25*), Adoration (*Matthew 2:1-12*), Attestation (*Matthew 2:13-23*), and Announcement (*Matthew 3:1-12*). Now we see His Anointing, or His coronation. God is going to recognize Jesus as His Son. This lesson will deal with Jesus “coronation” as the King. Although this process will not be completed until His death and resurrection, it is a fitting statement to who he is. Prior to this, Jesus’ home was in Nazareth. Everything up to this point has been preparatory. Now Jesus claims no place His home, but focuses on His mission, the road to Calvary. Up to now, Jesus has lived in relative obscurity. Now it is time to come forth and be known.

Baptism of the Son

Mt. 3:13; Mk. 1:9 – In *Mark 1:7*, John the Baptist gives us an abrupt introduction to Jesus, and then gets down to business. Jesus comes alone from Nazareth, 50-60 miles, to the place on the Jordan River where John is baptizing. Nazareth is an obscure village that is never mentioned in the Old Testament, Talmud or even by the early Jewish historian Josephus. It is a town located in Galilee which is the northern most part of the three divisions of Palestine. Judea and Samaria comprise the other two. Galilee is about thirty miles east to west and sixty miles north to south. From there, Jesus arrives to be baptized by His cousin, John. This is a public event, unlike the private anointing of David in the Old Testament.

Matthew seeks to establish that Jesus is the Messiah that the Jews have been seeking. *Mark* spares a lot of the details. He only hits the action part and goes on. *Luke* seeks to identify

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Jesus with other humans who were coming to John for baptism as a sign of their repentance. This is Jesus' first appearance after years of quiet obscurity since the incident in Jerusalem when He was twelve years old, some eighteen years earlier.

Mt. 3:14 – John knows Jesus as his cousin. Joseph and Mary are devout and most likely travel often to Jerusalem for the feasts as does John's family. Jesus and John can get somewhat acquainted at these times. John also knows of Jesus' background even though they seldom, see each other except at the Feasts in Jerusalem. John knows enough of Jesus' origin (divinity) to know that he needs to be baptized by Jesus, the "Stronger One." John also knows that Jesus does not need his baptism because it is a baptism for repentance. John is aware, by instruction of his parents and/or by the Holy Spirit that Jesus is "greater" than him in regards to their relationship with God.



This map shows what is believed to be the location where John was baptizing at the Jordan River

Courtesy of Parsons Technologies

Mt. 3:15; Lk. 3:21 – Jesus is a proper and devout Jew and seeks to fulfill all that His Father desires of Him. **Can you show God that you are a "proper and devout" Christian?** His coming to be baptized by John suggests several things:

1. Jesus recognizes John as a prophet, and John's message needs to be heeded by everyone, even Jesus. **It sets an example for us to follow also.**

2. Jesus needs to identify with sinful humanity in order to set the stage to die for their sins. By being baptized by John for repentance, Jesus is telling us that He is like us in all things, yet without sin. This is important in order to establish that Jesus is human. It also brings up the point that man has a choice to sin or refrain from sin. **(That means that we cannot blame our**

sin on the Devil, Adam, or anyone else. We have to assume responsibility for our own actions and attitudes.) Otherwise, Jesus could not be human. If Jesus were not human, then His death on the cross was not valid since He was not one of us.

John feels that he isn't worthy to baptize Jesus, but instead needs to be baptized by Jesus. Jesus advises him that "worthiness" isn't an issue. **Obedience to God is what counts!** For Jesus to be baptized by John the Baptist will be a point of identifying with the rest of the humanity that He has come to save.

3. Jesus is obedient to His Father, even though He is the Heir to our Father's Kingdom! He takes upon Himself the identity of being a sinner, in order that He may identify with you and me. Though He is perfectly pure and unspotted, He is washed as if He had been polluted. Thus for our sakes He sanctifies himself, that we also might be sanctified, and be baptized with Him.

4. Jesus' baptism has a spiritual significance in inaugurating His Kingdom in an act of self-dedication and submission to the mission at hand. This declares His acceptance and the beginning of that mission.

Matthew makes this comment, omitted by *Mark* and *Luke*, to establish even further that Jesus is the Messiah that they have so long sought. The baptism marks the point at which Jesus publicly commits Himself to the role for which He has been destined since birth. The voice from heaven forms the climax of Part One. This baptism as a symbol of repentance is God's will for all Israelites. It was not for them to question its value or place, but to repent and obey.

Lk. 3:21 – In *Luke's* account, Jesus appears to wait until after all of the other people had left. Though the crowds may still be lingering, this is a "private" moment with His cousin. *Luke* does not mention John by name. He is probably seeking to focus the attention away from John and onto Jesus who is a man who is also GOD. *Luke* is also the only author to mention that Jesus prayed. *Luke* especially makes note of Jesus praying prior to many important occasions.

Anointing of the Spirit

Mt. 3:16; Mk. 1:10 – "At once" (RSV uses "Immediately") is used forty two times in the Gospel of *Mark*. This fast paced Gospel stresses the manner in which God steps forth to endorse His Son and inaugurate the mission to which Jesus has been assigned. *Mark* emphatically states that the "heavens were torn open," expressing God's forceful entry into the world to deliver humanity from sin through His Son. We will see the parallel of the Temple veil being torn open when Jesus is crucified, symbolizing God opening the door for man to have direct access to Him,

no longer through a priest or other agent. *Mark* writes to the Romans who understand POWER words like “torn.”

(Your Notes Here!)

Unlike *Matthew* and *Luke*, *Mark* recounts the theophany at Jesus’ baptism as an apocalyptic vision seen only by Jesus. The importance here is the validation from Heaven as to who Jesus is. That Jesus is immersed (the literal meaning of the word “baptize”) is evident in that Jesus “came up out of the water.” (The word “baptize” comes from the Greek word “baptizo” which means to dip, submerge or plunge under.) We mention this now because we will run into this word again from time to time through the life and teachings of Jesus.

The appearance of a “form like a dove” and God’s voice is God’s sign to John the Baptist that Jesus is the Son of God (See *John 1:32-34*.) Doves were used in the Old Testament as symbols of love and of Israel in extra-Biblical writings. Doves are also a symbol of purity, which is an appropriate sign for Jesus who had never sinned even though confined to a human body. This is a visualization of the prophecy in *Isaiah 11:2* that the Spirit of God would rest on the Messiah.



Here is an arial photograph of the Jordan River valley near where Aenon would be and where John the Baptist probably did most of his preaching and baptizing.

Photo courtesy of ROHR Productions, LTD. 1999.

All personalities of the Godhead are used here. The Son is baptized, the Holy Spirit manifests its presence in the likeness of a dove, and the Father speaks. Some explain the dove as a symbol of the Spirit. This symbolism is not explicitly present in the Bible but is found only in late rabbinic literature. Symbols communicate the hidden qualities of an impelling reality. That reality, in the baptism of Jesus, is the burning conviction that God impressed upon Jesus’ mind: that world salvation is under way and the final age imminent. In using the phrase, “dove in

bodily form,” *Luke* manifests that a spiritual being’s presence is sometimes best explained by a physical identity.

Confirmation of the Father

Mt. 3:17; Mk. 1:11 – God’s speaks to Jesus (with John over-hearing) “You are MY SON whom I love, and with You I am well pleased! I am very proud of You.” This text is based on *Isaiah 42:1*. God personally identifies Jesus as a descendant of Himself. He honors Jesus immediately upon His obedience in identifying with a sinful human race in order that He might one day atone for all of those sins. As a title, “beloved” (whom I love) signifies God’s intense love for His Son. As an adjective, “beloved” signifies the Old Testament sense of Jesus as God’s ONLY Son. The phrase “with You I am well pleased” is rendered in English in the present tense. The original Greek phrase is in the past tense. God’s delight never has a beginning or an end. **Have you made a forceful declaration as to who Jesus is in your life?**

Jesus’ baptism does not change His status. He did not “become” God’s Son, He always was, is and will be. His baptism shows the far-reaching significance of His acceptance of His messianic vocation as the suffering Servant of the Lord, as well as the Davidic Messiah. He is the Messiah because He is the Son of God, the One approved by the Father and empowered by the Spirit, not vice versa. This vision does not state Jesus as the royal conquering Messiah, but rather the one who serves and suffers. **Are you willing to serve and suffer for Jesus as He did for you?**

Lk. 3:23 – This verse gives the approximate Jesus’ age when He begins His ministry. This helps us to place all of these events forward and backward. This is the same age at which Joseph stood before Pharaoh and David became King, and priests would enter into their full election of office. It is also the same age that John the Baptist would have begun his service as a priest, but instead, began preaching the message of “repent, the Messiah is coming” near the Jordan River. Some scholars think that Jesus was just twenty-nine years old, entering upon His thirtieth year, in the month *Tisri (late September, earlier October)*; that He lived three and a half more years, and died when He was thirty-two and-a-half years old.

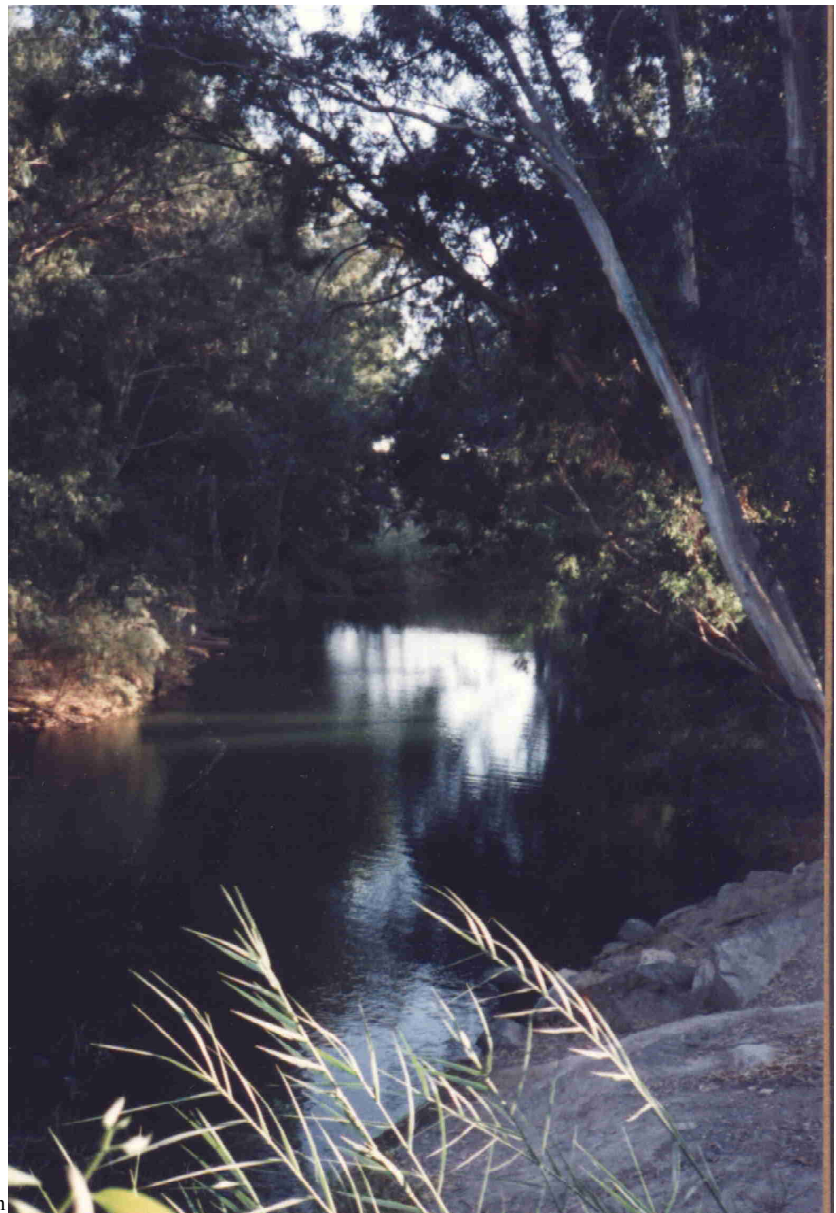
And so the fullness of the Trinity participated in the coronation ceremony of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. We will see that Jesus is no earthly King and His Kingdom is not of this earth. In this account, we see that no men crown Him, only God, who does this while men watch. This is strong evidence that His Kingdom is not of this earth. **Is Jesus YOUR KING? Are you a part of His Kingdom?**

Jesus is the fullest expression of God, above everyone and everything else that has ever been or ever will be. Now it is time for Him to start to build the foundation for His Kingdom. He has His work cut out for Him. In fact, in the next lesson, Jesus meets Satan face to face and is tempted by the devil. Even God's Son in the body of a man is not immune from temptation. Is He going to say "the devil made me do it?" We can learn much about how we can handle the devil when he tries to trap us through his lies and misrepresentations by seeing how Jesus deals with Satan.

In preparation, you will want to read *Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13* and we will see you for "Getting To Know Jesus."



(Your Notes Here!)



Jordan River near where Jesus might have been baptized by John

Photograph courtesy of Mary Vukovich



LOC – 013 – Jesus Comes to Be Baptized

Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Application

1. How does it make you feel that Jesus chose to identify with you?

2. Why did Jesus need to be immersed? How does that relate to our immersion into Christ (i.e. why do we need to be immersed?)

3. What does the dove symbolize to you? How does the Holy Spirit fit this symbolism?

4. How would you feel if Jesus asked you to immerse Him?

5. What have you learned from this study that has or will change your life?



LOC – 013 – Jesus Comes to Be Baptized

Questions for Homework

Homework is optional for those who want to study a little deeper or seek college credit.

(You will possibly need a concordance and other translations of the New Testament for this homework. Other study tools may be helpful but are not required.) You may have to write your answers on a separate sheet and insert it here in your book.

1. Look up “baptize” in the Bible. What can you learn about baptism?

2. Where else in the Bible are the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit mentioned in the same passage or manifested in the same place?

3. Where else are doves mentioned, and how are they used in the Bible?

4. Do a word study on the Greek word - pneuma (spirit) used in *Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22*. What can you do to see what it means and how is it used in the Bible?