

THE STORY

WORKBOOK

New Testament

INSTRUCTOR MANUAL

Mervin W. Tapsfield

(2024 VERSION)

Bible Basics

SOURCES:

MacArthur. *The MacArthur Study Bible*. Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2006.

McGee, J. Vernon. *Malachi: Thru The Bible Commentary Series-The Prophets*. Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1991.

Ryrie, Charles. *Ryrie Study Bible: Expanded Edition: New American Standard Bible*. Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1995.

The Story: The Bible as One Continuing Story of God and His People, Selections from the New International Version. Michigan: Zondervan, 2008.

Tucker, Kent. *Share Your Faith Ministries*. California.

“Scriptures taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.”

AUTHOR

Mervin W. Tapsfield

YouTube Page: Sword of the Spirit Studies

Web site: www.swordofthespiritstudies.com

Table # <hr/>

Biblical References According to the Chapters of “The Story”

Chapter

22-The Birth of the King: Page 5 Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2; John 1

23-Jesus’ Ministry Begins: Page 10 Matthew 3-4; 11; Mark 1-3; Luke 8; John 1-4

24-No Ordinary Man: Page 17 Matthew 5-7; 9; 14; Mark 4-6; Luke 10; 15; John 6

25-Jesus, the Son of God: Page 22 Matthew 17; 21; Mark 8-12; 14; Luke 9; 22; John 7-8; 11-12

26-The Hour of Darkness: Page 29 Matthew 26-27; Mark 14-15; Luke 22-23; John 13-14; 16-19

27-The Resurrection: Page 35 Matthew 27-28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 19-21

28-New Beginnings: Page 39 Acts 1-10;12

29-Paul’s Mission: Page 45 Acts 13-14; 16-20; Romans 1:3-6; 8; 12; 15; 1 Corinthians 1; 3; 5-6; 10; 12-13;15-16; Galatians 1; 3; 5-6; 1 Thessalonians 1-5

30-Paul’s Final Days: Page 53 Acts 20-23; 27-28; Ephesians 1-6; 2 Timothy 1-4

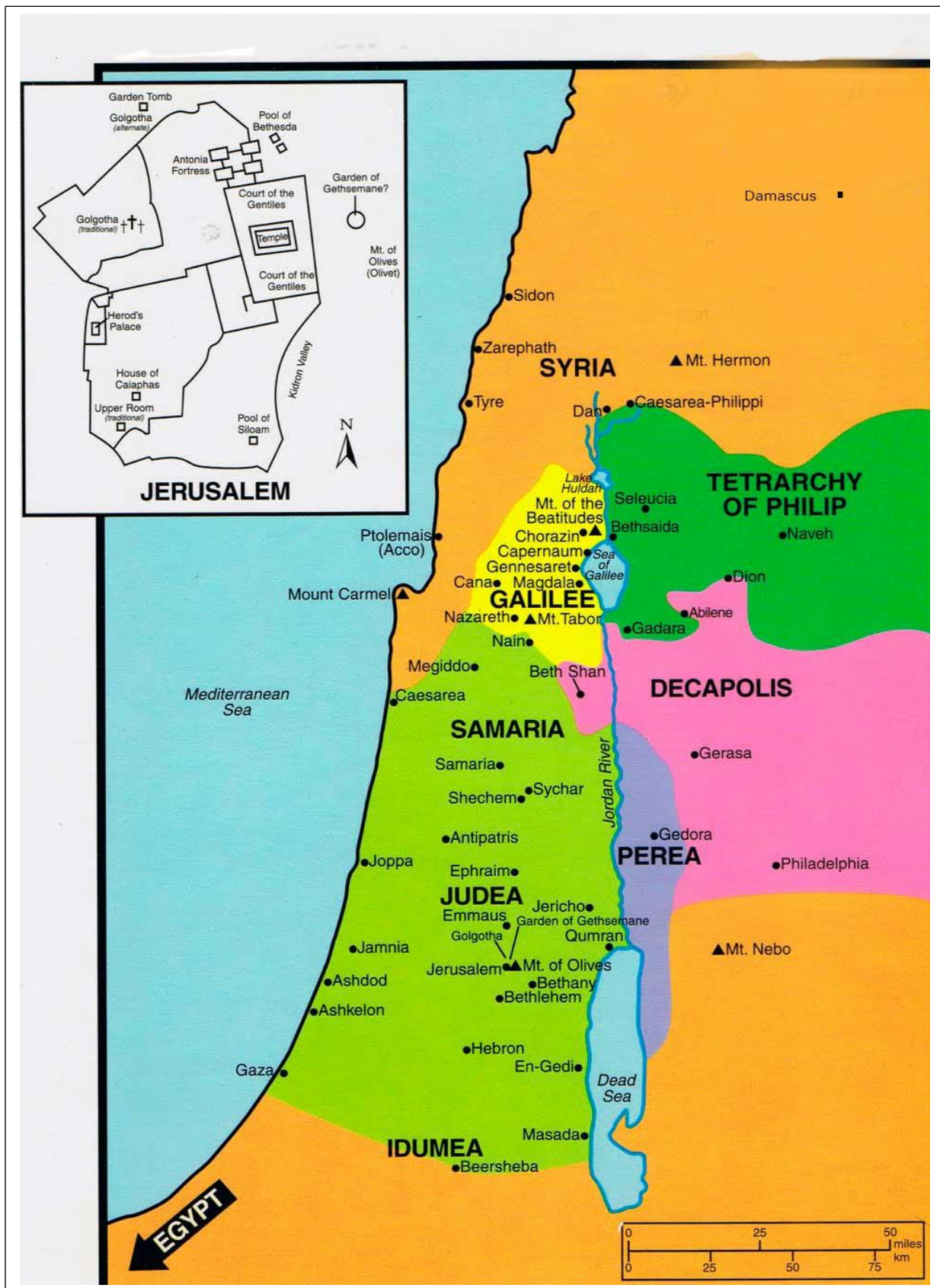
31-The End of Time: Page 57 Revelation 1-5; 19-22 [Seder celebration]

Middle East



802379 (R01077) 5-95

https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east.html



http://www.pinsdaddy.com/map-of-john-the-baptist-ministry_6IkIrvA6boFL7y2lfycrUDq59wxXpHuAWzaWidKdaBa/

The Birth of the King

Chapter 22-Matthew, Luke, John

The Gospel of John

Introduction:

- The Gospel of John's primary theme answers the question, "Who is **God**?" Jesus came into the world, incarnate (God in human form), to reveal the identity and purpose of God.
- God's identity is one of love (John 17:22-26). The purpose of God is to redeem mankind from the bondages and destruction of **sin**.
- John used seven specific miracles (*signs*) in his book to prove the divine qualities of Christ and to prove that Christ was God's messenger to the world.

Ch. 1-The Incarnation of the Son of God (God as man)

- Chapter 1 answers the important question, "Who is Jesus?" Verse 1 says that Jesus was the "**Word**." In the Old Testament, Jews were not permitted to say God's name *Yahweh*. The Word translates *logos*. Logos can be defined to mean intelligence, divine reason, mind, or wisdom. John translated this meaning into the person of Jesus. When John stated that Jesus was "the Word," he meant that Jesus was not only the messenger from God but was God.

Vs. 1-18 gives us some very interesting insights about Jesus. Jesus was/is:

- Vs. 1-never **created**; with God; God
- Vs. 2-before time with God
- Vs. 3-the creator of all things
- Vs. 4-life-only those who receive Christ will have **eternal** life with God; light-Christ illuminates the personage of God to mankind.
- Vs. 5-the illuminator of sin
- Vs. 9-revealed to **everyone**.
- Vs. 10-11-a man; the creator of everything; but people did not recognize Him. They crucified Him.
- Vs. 12-the one capable of making us children of God.
- Vs. 13-the one to give spiritual **birth**. The Jews believed that they were automatically going to heaven because they were Jews by physical birth. John states that one becomes a child of God by faith in Christ.
- Vs. 14-the revelation and personage of God (*the Word*). The Word became a man and lived among men. Jesus was the *only begotten* (**unique one**) from the Father. Christ was unique because He was man and God.
- Vs. 16 the **fullness** (all that God is) of God.
- Vs. 17-the fulfillment of the Law of the Old Testament; grace and truth were exposed through Jesus Christ.

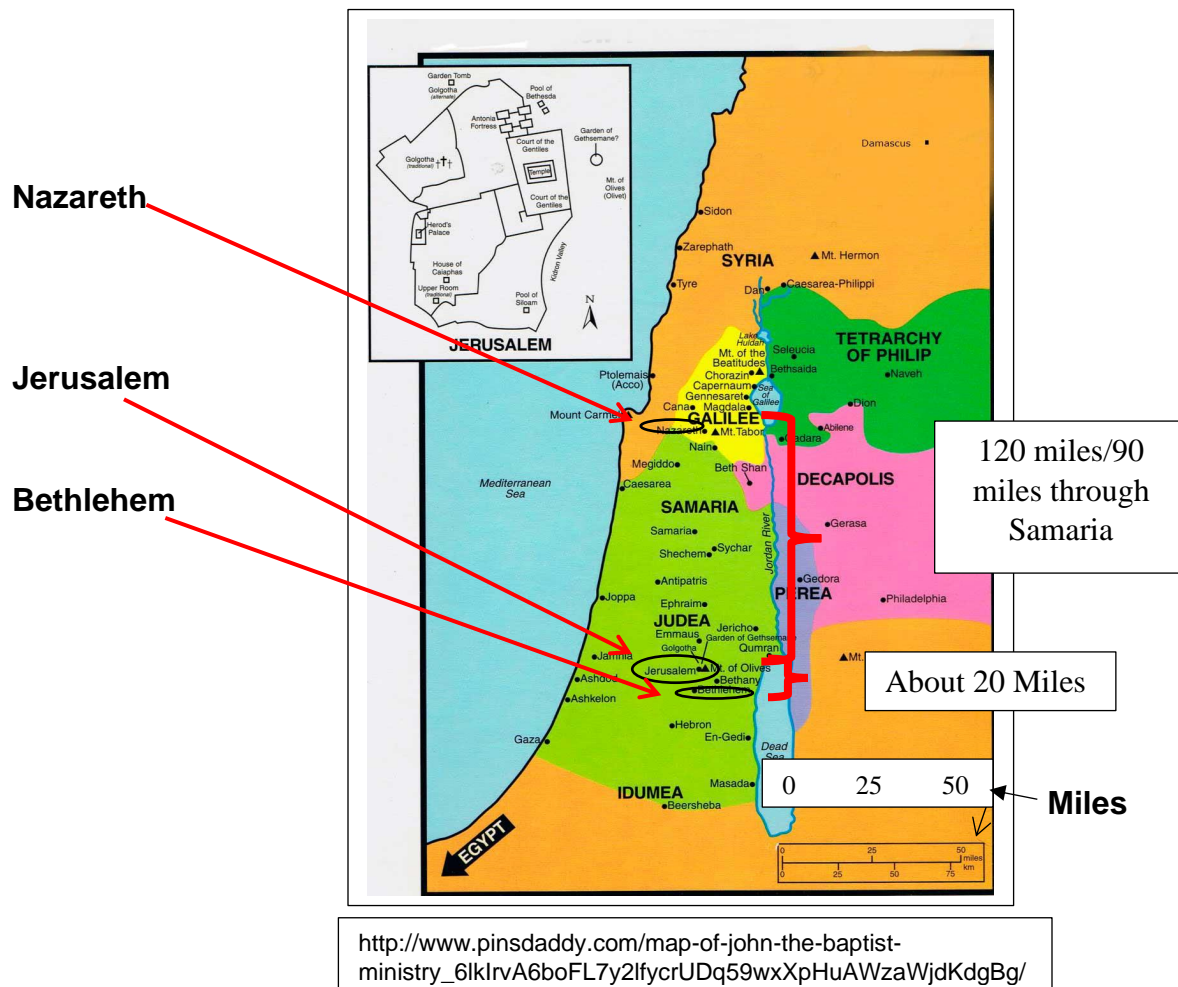
- Vs. 18-the unique one who has seen God and resides in God.

The Gospel of Luke-Jesus' Birth

Chapter 1

Vs. 26-55

- **Gabriel**, an angel of the Lord, was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to a man named Joseph.



- The angel told Mary that she would bear a son and His name would be Jesus. Mary's pregnancy would be divinely wrought by the **Holy Spirit**.
- Gabriel told Mary that the child would be called the Son of the Most High. The phrase "son of" means "the same as." In other words, Jesus would be God.
- Verses 45-55 is often referred to as the "**Magnificat**," which translates from Latin as "glorified."

- In the Magnificat, Mary gave praise to God and recited 15 discernible quotations from the Old Testament. This signified how much the Old Testament was relevant to those in Jesus' time.

The Gospel of Matthew-Jesus' Birth

Chapter 1

Vs. 18-25

- Mary became pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Joseph**, the one to whom she was engaged, did not know that Mary's pregnancy was divinely wrought so he decided to secretly send her away.
- An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him that he was to take Mary as his wife for the child had been conceived by the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus' birth was prophesized many years earlier by **Isaiah**:
 - Isaiah 7:14
 - Isaiah 9:6-7

The Gospel of Luke-Jesus' Birth

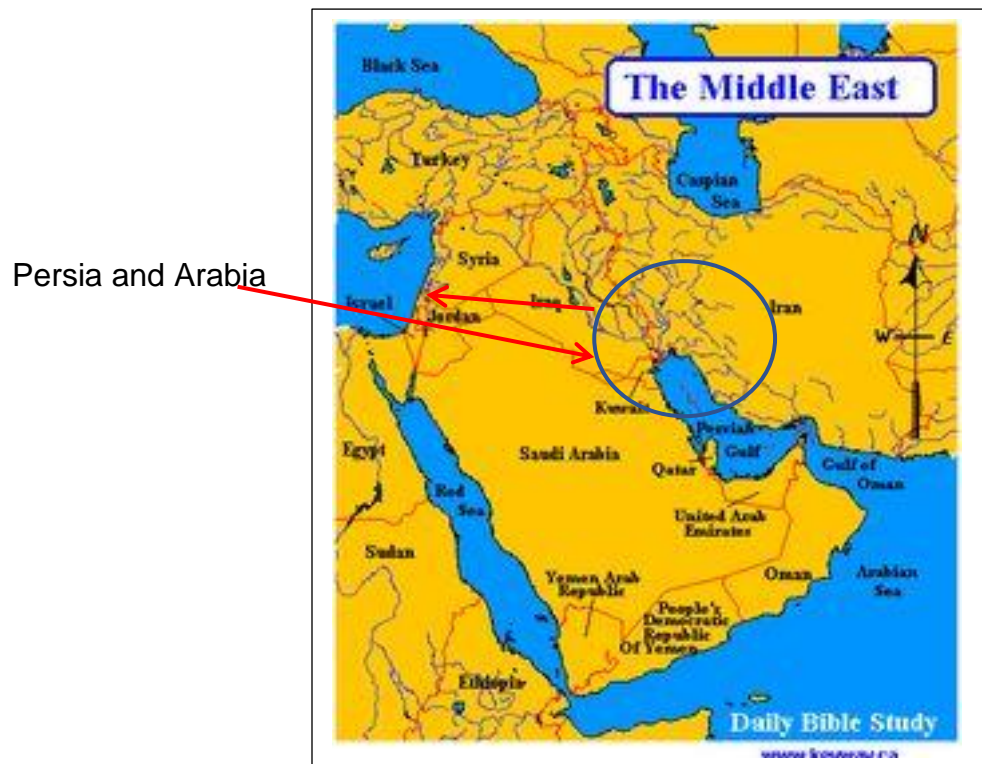
Vs. 2:1-20

- **Caesar August**, the Roman ruler (27 B.C.-14 A.D.), had decreed a tax be taken from all those within the Roman Empire. Joseph left Nazareth in Galilee and went to the city of Bethlehem. Bethlehem was the birthplace of King David from whom Joseph was a descendant. This fulfilled the prophecy of Micah 5:2.
- While in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to Jesus. Jesus' birth and childhood residence of **Nazareth** was apparently unknown to those later in Jesus' life. When Jesus called Nathanael as a disciple, Nathanael stated, "Can anything good come from Nazareth."
- The Pharisees were also confused about Jesus' birth (John 7:47-52).
- At the time of Jesus' birth, there were **shepherds** in the nearby fields watching over their flocks. Suddenly, an angel appeared to them and announced the birth of Jesus. After the angel's announcement, an entire host of angels appeared praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."
- The shepherds hurried away and found Jesus lying in a **manger**-just as the angel had said.

The Gospel of Matthew-Jesus' Birth

2:1-23

- After Jesus was born, some **Maji** (possibly astrologers from Persia or southern Arabia) came and asked King Herod about the King of the Jews. After finding Jesus, the Maji presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense (incense), and myrrh (anointing, embalming-Isaiah 60:6).



<https://www.pinterest.com/rosmv/bible-maps-and-illustrations/>

- King Herod sought to destroy all the babies from the ages of two years and under in **Bethlehem** and within the surrounding regions.
- An angel of the Lord had warned Joseph to take Mary and Jesus to **Egypt** until Herod was no longer a threat.
- After Herod's death, an angel told Joseph that it was safe to return to Israel. Judea, however, was no longer safe since Herod's son, Archelaus, was ruling. An angel appeared again to Joseph and warned him not to stay in Judea. Joseph returned to his hometown of Nazareth in the region of **Galilee**.

The Gospel of Luke-Jesus Accompanies His Parents to Jerusalem

2:41-52

- When Jesus was **12** years old, He accompanied His parents to Jerusalem to observe the Feast of the Passover. This feast was instituted 500 years prior when the Israelites left Egypt. On that night, they were instructed to put blood over the doorpost of their houses and on the two side posts. This sign would prevent the death angel from killing the first born.
- Little did anyone know that the **Passover Feast** was symbolizing Jesus ultimate death and sacrifice upon the cross. It makes one wonder how much Jesus', as a 12-year-old boy, understood the significance of this feast.
- Jesus apparently understood enough to stay in **Jerusalem** after His parents left for Nazareth. Realizing that Jesus was missing, His parents returned to Jerusalem to find Jesus sitting in the temple among the teachers. He was listening and asking the teachers questions.
- When His parents inquired as to why He did not return with them (for they had been very worried about His absence) He stated, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?"
- Jesus left Jerusalem with His parents and remained in **Nazareth** until He began His public ministry.

Summary

God had meticulously planned and proclaimed Jesus' birth many years prior through the prophets of the Old Testament. Little did anyone think the Messiah's birth would take place in a lonely manger. Years later Jesus stated, "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32). Jesus was born in humility and His death was among those most despised. God wanted the world to know that His love would reach out to those with the deepest need and to those with the vilest sin.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 22

1. The Bible has given us “signs” to prove the divine qualities of Christ and to prove that Christ was God’s messenger to the world.
 - a. What signs did God give in this chapter?
 - b. How did the recipients of these signs react to them?
 - c. Has God given us signs today proving His divine qualities? Explain.

2. Read Luke 2:8-14.
 - a. How many angels told the shepherds of Jesus birth?
 - b. When did the heavenly host appear to the shepherds?
 - c. Were the angels in the sky as depicted by artists?
 - d. In what ways does God speak to us today? Explain.

3. God kept Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus safe even though King Herod sought to kill the baby.
 - a. Have you ever experienced a time in your life when God protected you from harm or evil? Explain.
 - b. Innocent children died despite God protecting Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. How might you explain God’s reasoning for this?
 - c. How would you answer someone whose faith in God was shattered because of a tragedy?

4. When Jesus was 12 years old, He accompanied His parents to Jerusalem to observe the Feast of the Passover.
 - a. Looking at your map, how far was it from Nazareth to Jerusalem?
 - b. What hardships might have Mary and Joseph encountered while going to Jerusalem?
 - c. Have you ever found it difficult to serve God? Explain?

5. The Passover Feast was a time to reflect upon the death angel that passed over the homes of the Jews before they left Egypt. Before leaving Egypt, the Jews were told to apply blood to the three sides of the door post.
 - a. How did the Passover Feast symbolize Christ’s redemption?
 - b. Why don’t we observe the Passover Feast today?
 - c. Do you think Jesus understood the significance of the Passover Feast and His destiny while accompanying His parents to Jerusalem?

Jesus' Ministry Begins

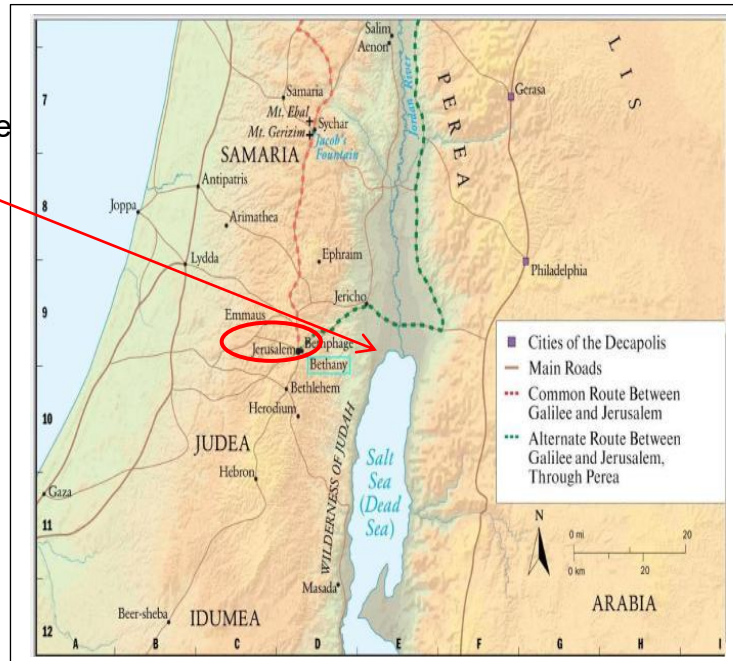
Chapter 23-Matthew, Mark, John

The Gospel of Matthew

Chapter 3-4-Jesus Baptism

- John was preaching repentance and **baptizing** in preparation for the coming Messiah.

John the Baptist-This was a full day's journey from Jerusalem.



<https://jameswheo.wordpress.com/2016/12/28/temple-water->

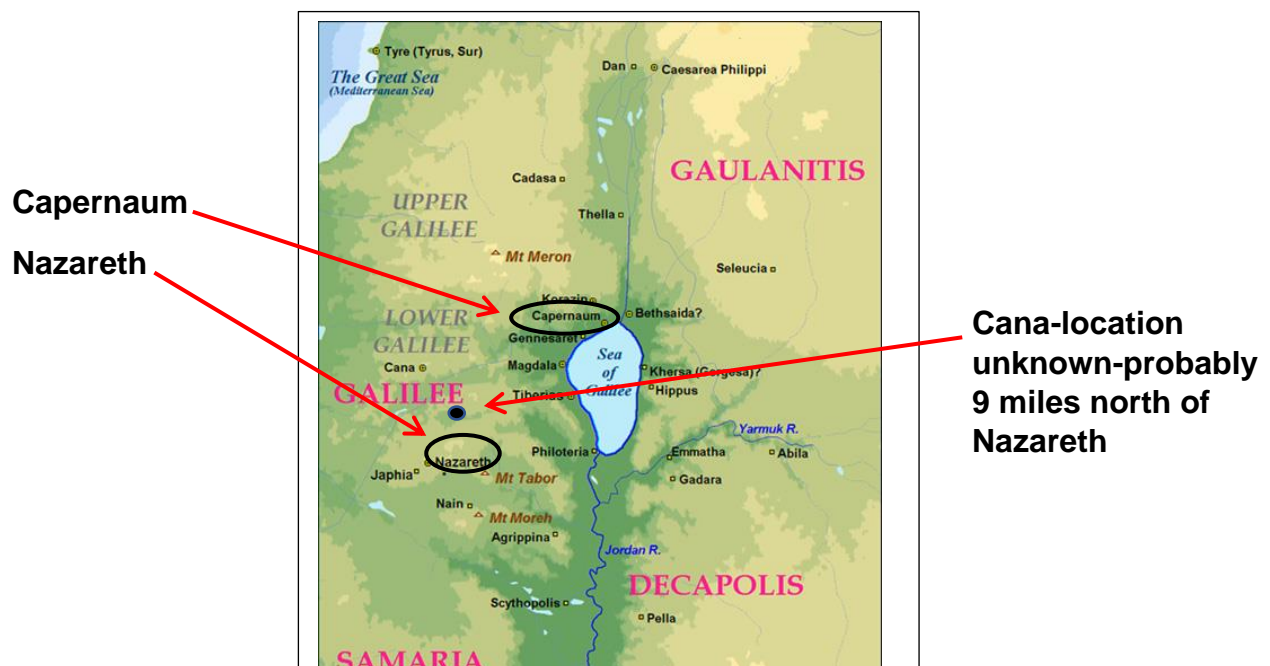
- Jesus came to John to be baptized.
- John's baptism had possible roots in Old Testament purification rituals (Leviticus 15:13).
- Jesus' baptism signified his identification with **sinner**s and it was a foreshadowing of His death, burial, and resurrection.
- We baptize believers today as a symbol of salvation and in obedience to Matthew 28:18-20
- When Jesus came out of the water, the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descend as a **dove** upon him. A voice came from Heaven that said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

- The identification as “**Son**” signified Jesus as one with the Father and the inheritor of all things.
- Jesus’ baptism experience was a clear expression of the Trinity: Father, Son, and **Holy Spirit**.
- After He was baptized, Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan.
- He was tempted and fasted 40 days and 40 nights (40 refers to testing, probation, trial. 40 days-Noah; 40 years-wandering in the wilderness; 40 days-Jesus fasting).
- Satan’s test was to **disqualify** Jesus as the Messiah.
- Jesus’ ability to resist all temptations showed that He was qualified to be the Messiah and that He was qualified to be the perfect sacrifice for humanity.

The Gospel of Mark

Chapter 2-3-Jesus’ Ministry

- After Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness, He returned to His hometown of **Nazareth** where He declared Himself as the Messiah. The crowds attempted to murder Him, but Jesus passed through unharmed.
- Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 but stopped in the middle of verse 2.
- From Nazareth, Jesus went to Capernaum. It appears that Jesus set up his **headquarters** in Capernaum. Capernaum was the hometown of Peter, Andrew, James, and John.



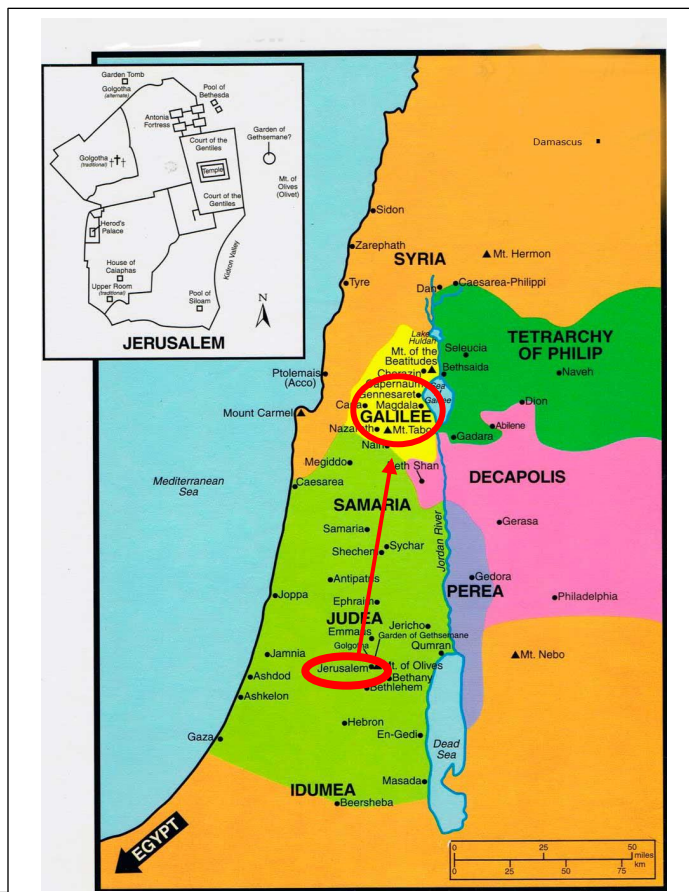
The Gospel of John

Chapter 2-The Wedding in Cana and Jesus Cleansing the Temple

Vs. 1-11-The Wedding at Cana

- It would have been very embarrassing for a host to run out of wine at a wedding (wine was a mixture of wine and water; 3:1 minimum).
- Mary, Jesus' mother, knew that He was the Messiah and was possibly asking for Him to **reveal** Himself by performing a miracle. Knowing this, Jesus stated that His hour had not yet come. The time for Jesus to reveal Himself was yet to happen. Jesus revealed Himself when He entered **Jerusalem** on the donkey prior to His death. The nation of Israel rejected Him.
- John referred to Jesus' miracles as "**signs**." There at least six words in Greek for miracles. This word, "sign", translates as *Semeion*. It means the miracle was an indication of some power with a meaning behind it.
- The sign of turning water into wine symbolized Christ **deity** (being God) and His power over nature. This miracle caused His disciples to put their faith in Him. The pure wine symbolized Christ's ultimate blood sacrifice as the perfect atonement for sin.

Vs. 12-25-Jesus Cleansing the Temple



- This **Passover Feast** was Jesus first Passover in Jerusalem since His ministry began. As Jesus entered the temple, He observed the moneychangers desecrating it by unscrupulously selling animals for sacrifice. This was a moneymaking business for the Jews since they probably were overcharging and selling blemished animals.
- Jesus demonstrated His **zeal** for God's house when He overturned the money tables and drove the sellers out from the temple.
- The Jews asked for a sign to show His authority. His response was prophetic which referred to His death and resurrection. The people, as well as His disciples, misunderstood what Jesus was saying.

Chapter 3-Nicodemus

- Nicodemus was a member of the **Sanhedrin** and a Pharisee. The fact that Nicodemus came to Jesus at night possibly indicated that he wanted to keep the meeting a secret.
- Jesus explained that a second **birth** was necessary to inherit the kingdom of God. Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus was saying. The Jews felt that they had automatically inherited the kingdom due to their physical Jewish birth.
- Jesus stated that birth by the flesh did not guarantee one's entrance into **heaven**. Only a spiritual birth would qualify one for heaven (Spiritual birth through faith in Christ).

Vs. 22-36-John's Disciples

- John's disciples were concerned that more people were coming to Jesus to be baptized than to John. John stated, "He must increase, but I must **decrease**." John also stated, "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."
- John knew that Jesus was the Messiah after he saw the Holy Spirit descend upon Him. It was foretold that John would know the Messiah when he saw the Spirit descend upon Him.

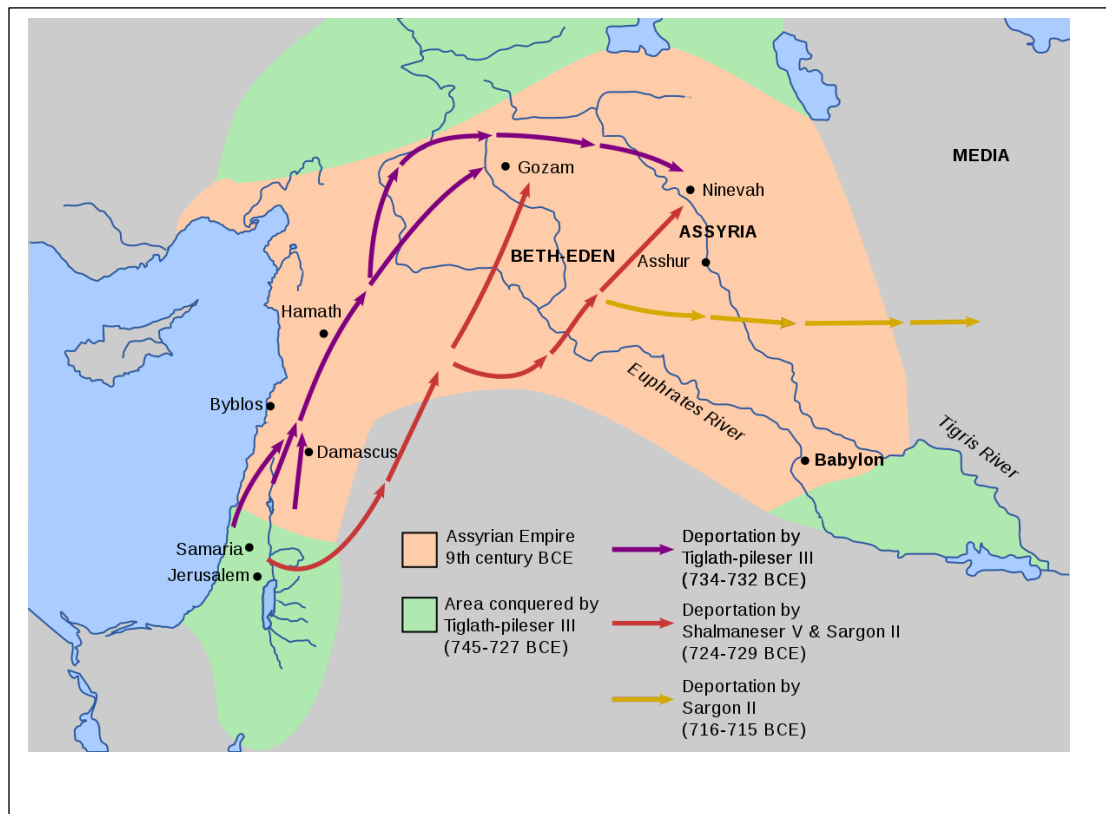
Chapter 4

Vs. 1-42-The Samaritan Woman

- The Pharisees were making trouble for Jesus, therefore, He left Judea (southern portion of Israel) and went toward Galilee (northern portion of Israel). To reach Galilee, Jesus had to go through **Samaria** (middle portion of Israel).
- The Samaritans were despised by the Jews and considered them defiled. The Samaritans were former Jews that lived in Israel (the northern Jewish kingdom).

They were captured by the Assyrians in **722 B.C.** The Assyrians took the Jews to the far east. However, they left a small population to intermarry with the Assyrians. The intent was to dissolve the Jewish heritage and make the Jews submissive to the Assyrian empire.

- The Jews of Jesus' day looked upon the Samaritans as being **half-breeds** thus, defiled people.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assyrian_captivity

- Jesus was in full control of His itinerary and deliberately went into Samaritan territory. Jesus was about to offer salvation to a rejected people.
- Jesus explained that he would give the woman "**living water**." Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit that would be available only by faith in Him.
- Jesus clearly presented Himself to the woman as the Christ (**Messiah**). The woman believed and spread the news about Him throughout her city. Many of the Samaritans came out and heard Jesus. Vs. 41 states that the Samaritans believed Jesus' words. The Samaritans did not ask for a **sign** but believed in their heart that Jesus was the Christ.

- This contrasted with the Pharisees who wanted Jesus to show them a “sign” (proof) that He was the Messiah. Those who sought after signs often displayed disbelief even after a sign was given.

Vs. 43-54-Jesus Heals a Royal Official’s Son

- Jesus continued His journey into Galilee (northern part of Israel). A royal official came to Jesus and asked that He heal his son. The official was from **Capernaum**. Jesus responded, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.” The people of Galilee did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah and wanted proof by performing “signs.” This was a contrast to the Samaritans who took Jesus at His word.
- Jesus told the official to go home that his son would be healed.
- It is interesting to note that the royal official believed Jesus and did not require a **sign** from Him. As the official approached Capernaum, his slaves met him and told of his son’s healing. The man and his entire household believed in Jesus.
- Jesus demonstrated that it was by faith in Him that would bring, not only physical life, but **spiritual** life.

The Gospel of Mark

The Paralytic-Mark 2:1-12

- This miracle apparently took place at Peter and Andrew’s **home** (Capernaum 1:29).
- Jesus proclaimed Himself as the Messiah and as God (2:5,10).
- Jesus used several names to identify Himself as the Messiah.
 - Son of God-Jesus’ **divine name** (heavenly name)
 - Son of David-His Jewish name
 - Son of Man-His **earthly name**
- The healing of the paralytic was important in that it demonstrated that Jesus could forgive sins.

Mark 2:13-20-The Tax Collector

- Jesus went out by the sea (probably near or at Capernaum) and encountered Levi-a **tax collector**.
 - Levi is Matthew, the writer of the Gospel of Matthew.
 - The Gospel of Mark and Luke used Matthew’s former name, Levi, when describing his sinful past.
- Matthew used his new name when referencing himself in his Gospel. Matthew demonstrated **humility** and spiritual transformation by directly identifying himself to his readers. (Matthew 9:9).
- Jesus uttered one of the most powerful phrases in the Bible, “**Follow Me**” (2:14).
- Jesus singled Matthew out from the crowd.

- His heart was **ready** for salvation.
- Jesus initiated the invitation.
- Jesus revealed his role as **Messiah**.
 - His first coming was to die for the sins of the world.
 - His second coming would be to rule as **King**.
 - Jesus proclaimed himself as the bridegroom. Who is the bride? The Church-(Ephesians 5:25-32).

Mark 2:23-3:6-Jesus Transformed the Meaning of the Sabbath

- The purpose of the Old Testament Sabbath was to demonstrate a need for restoration.
- God instituted the **Sabbath** in Genesis 2:2-3.
- Sabbath means to rest.
 - God was not weary and did not need to rest physically.
 - God rested because there was nothing more to do-everything was **complete**.
 - God's creation was perfect and there was nothing to add.
 - God saw what He had made, and it was **very good** (Genesis 1:31a)
 - God blessed this rest day to demonstrate perfection.
- God instituted the Sabbath under the **Law of Moses** (Deuteronomy 5:13-15).
 - The Jews were to stop all work on the seventh day.
 - This was a time of reflection as the Jews compared their Sabbath rest to God's Sabbath rest (Genesis 2:2-3).
 - The Jews could not rest on their Sabbath and say, "all was **very good**" because it wasn't.
 - The Sabbath was a day of reflection upon God's perfection and their **imperfection**. The only way for the Jews to deal with their spiritual imperfection was to obey the Law of Moses.
- God did away with the Law of Moses and instituted a new Sabbath rest through **Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 4:1-10).
 - This new Sabbath is not a **day** but is **Jesus Christ**. Jesus is our Sabbath, our perfection. He is our rest. When we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior we enter His rest of completeness. God looks upon us and declares us "very good."
- Jesus' healing of the man's hand on the Sabbath **foreshadowed** His intent to be the world's true Sabbath.

Summary

Jesus gave "signs" to reveal Himself to the Jewish nation. The Jews did not recognize the signs and as a result, rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Does Jesus give signs to us in our everyday life? Have we missed them? Do we recognize when Jesus works in our life and do we give Him praise for what He has done?

Jesus took residence in the home of a fisherman, he proclaimed to be God (Jehovah), he reached out to the worst of sinners, and he offered Himself as our eternal Sabbath-our eternal rest through faith in Him. As Christians, we need to trust and to rest in the knowledge that we are right with God through Jesus Christ. God looks at each Christian and says, "You are very good; you have entered into My rest!"

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and I ask that you forgive me of my sins. I invite you into my life and to take control of all that I am. I give myself into your hands and ask that the Holy Spirit will guide me each day. I pray this as sincerely as I know how in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 23

1. John's Baptism signified the repentance of sins.
 - a. How does John's Baptism differ from a believer's Baptism today?
 - b. How is the Trinity represented in Baptism?
 - c. Share your Baptism experience with those in your group.

2. Read Hebrews 4:15-16
 - a. In what ways do you think Satan tempted Jesus?
 - b. Can we have confidence that Jesus understands our temptations? How about our failures?
 - c. What does God promise if we draw near to Him?
 - d. Why is it difficult for many Christians to accept God's forgiveness?

3. Jesus performed His first miracle at Cana.
 - a. Was there any significance for this being Jesus' first miracle?
 - b. Why do you think so many people refused to recognize Jesus' miracles as "signs" during His ministry?
 - c. How do you think people would react if Jesus were to perform these signs today?
 - d. Does God work miracles today? Are they accepted/rejected?

4. After Jesus overturned the money tables and drove the sellers out of the temple, the Jews asked for a sign to prove His authority.
 - a. Do you find their request somewhat amusing? Explain.
 - b. Can we use Jesus' anger to justify the times when we get angry? Explain.
 - c. What did Jesus mean in John 2:18-19?

5. Find Samaria on your map. It was often necessary to pass through Samaria to get to Galilee. Since the Jews despised the Samaritans, they had very little to do with them. However, it is possible that travel necessitated interaction between both groups.
 - a. What was the distance from Jerusalem to Galilee (see map pg. 3)?
 - b. How do you think the Jews might have interacted with the Samaritans?
 - c. How did the Samaritans react to Jesus? Explain?

No Ordinary Man

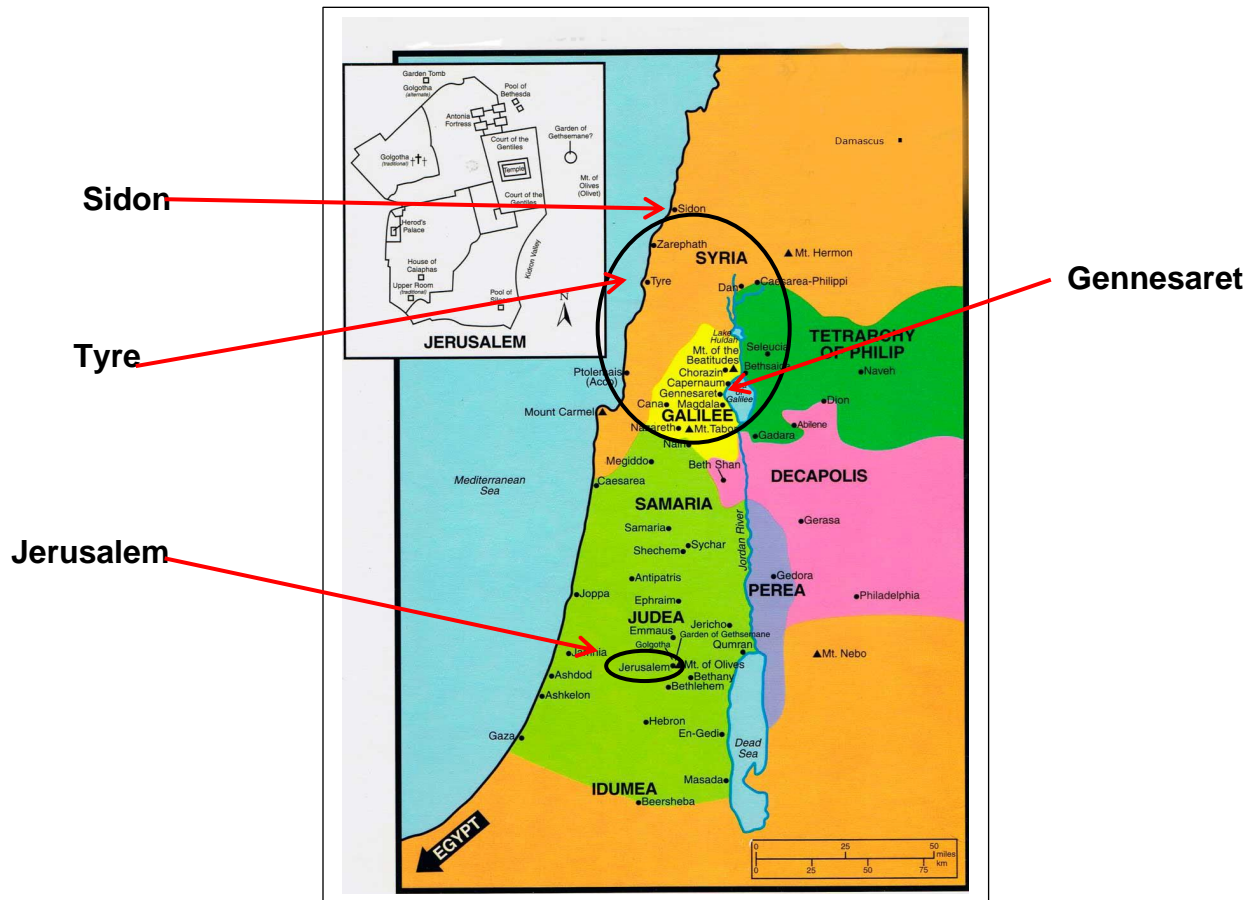
Chapter 24-Matthew, John, Mark

The Gospel of Matthew-Chapters 5-7-The Sermon on the Mount

Chapter 5-Beatitudes

Vs. 1-16-Those Poor in Spirit

- Jesus' sermon took place in Galilee.



http://www.pinsdaddy.com/map-of-john-the-baptist-ministry_6lklrvA6boFL7y2lfycrUDq59wxXpHuAWzaWjdKdgBg/

- Beatitude or blessed means “**happy**.”
- Jesus was speaking to a mixed crowd of people. Some of the people were commoners and some were Pharisees.
- Verses 1-12 spoke of those who were poor in spirit. In other words, these were the people whose spirits were **void** of God. Jesus responded to the fulfillment of a poor spirit in verse 6 by stating those hungry and thirsty for righteousness

would be satisfied. This righteousness was going to be fulfilled in Jesus' death on the cross and His ultimate resurrection.

Sermon on the Mount-Matthew 5:1-16

- Vs. 3-12 Jesus is talking to those whose hearts long for **Him** and are persecuted for Him.
- Vs 13-16 The Jewish nation-they were to be the **salt and light** of the earth. Unfortunately, they rejected Jesus as messiah.

The Law was Impossible to Keep-Matthew 5:17-48

- Vs. 17-48 The Law was impossible to accomplish and to cleanse sins, so Jesus came to fulfill it and make it possible to cleanse one from sin. Matthew 5:17-20
- Vs. 21-22 Saying the smallest word from an angry heart.
- Vs. 23-26 Even in sacrifice, it did not take care of all sins.
- Vs. 27-30 The smallest lustful look or thought.
- Vs. 31-32 Unregulated divorce.
- Vs. 33-37 Always speak **truth** and fulfill it.
- Vs. 38-42 Do not seek revenge
- Vs. 43-48 Unconditional love.

What was the Answer to Obeying the Law in Regard to Salvation?

- Matthew 5:48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."
- Ultimately, the Jewish nation was to be a light unto the world. They were to accept Jesus as Messiah and **proclaim** Him throughout the world. Unfortunately, the Jews rejected the Messiah, and the "Church Age" was born (Acts 2).
- Salvation is **free** to all who accept Jesus as savior and Lord. Today, the Gospel message is spread throughout the world, not by the Jewish nation but, by the Church (the body of Christ-all believers).
- Jesus told the crowd how impossible it was to keep the Jewish laws. In chapter 5, Jesus set the bar for murder, reconciliation, adultery, divorce, oaths, restraint, and love so high that no one could ever accomplish it completely. For this reason, Jesus stated in vs. 48, "Therefore you are to be **perfect**, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
- Jesus was trying to tell the crowd that it was impossible to please God since His standard of living was impossible to accomplish. The only way a person could ever please God and come into fellowship with Him would be through Jesus Christ.

Chapter 6:1-24; 7:1-13 The Hypocrisy of the Pharisees

- Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the pharisees' almsgiving, prayer, fasting, money, judging, and relationships.
- The Sermon on the Mount concluded with a **salvation** plan (7:13-14; 24-27). Jesus was telling the crowd that many would try to enter heaven through good deeds, riches, etc. however, only those who accepted Jesus Christ would enter heaven.

The Gospel of John

Chapter 5

Vs. 1-47-Jesus Heals a Lame Man

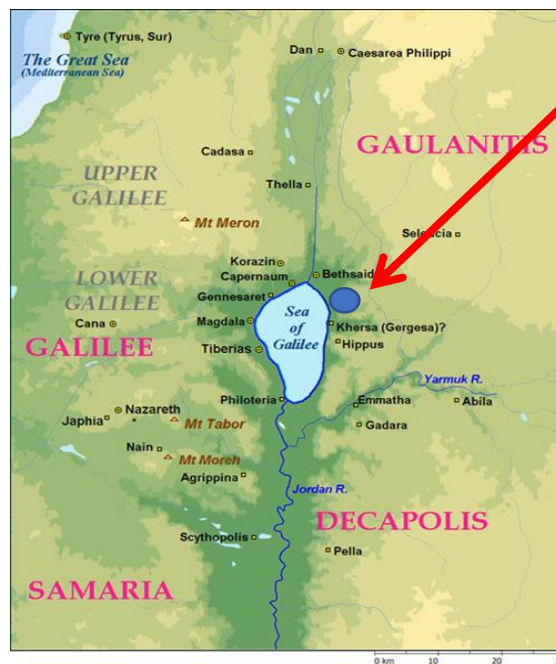
- Jesus returned to Jerusalem for a feast (possibly the Passover Feast). There was a pool named **Bethesda**, which had five columns.
- Archaeological discoveries have uncovered this pool. It was a double pool with a dividing wall between the two pools. A pillar stood in between the two pools and acted as a support. Thus, five columns were needed for support-four for each corner and one in the middle.
- A man who had been lame for **38** years would lie at the pool each day and wait for an angel of the Lord to stir the waters. It appears the man was lame due to sin in his life (vs. 14).
- Jesus told the man to get up, pick up his pallet, and walk. Walking with his bedroll on the Sabbath was a direct **violation** of Jewish traditions (this was not part of the Mosaic Laws but were laws made up by the religious leaders). When challenged by the Pharisees for working on the Sabbath, Jesus stated, "My father is working until now, and I Myself am working."
- Vs. 18 made it clear that Jesus was claiming to be **God**. Vs. 24 states that all who heard Jesus' words and believed in Him would have eternal life. Jesus demonstrated that God would raise the dead in the resurrection and the Son would give spiritual life to those dead in their sins.
- The Jews believed they would **automatically** be part of the resurrection since they were Jews by birth. Jesus explained that only those who believed in Him would be resurrected.

The Gospel of Mark 6-Jesus' Miracles

Vs. 7-10, 30-34-Disciples Commissioned

- The disciples were commissioned to go throughout the region and preach repentance.
 - The disciples were given **authority** to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons.

- The disciples returned from their mission and reported to Jesus all that happened.
 - This display of power among the disciples was **temporary**.
 - After Jesus came down from the mount of transfiguration, he encountered a father who had a demon-possessed son. Jesus cast the demon out since the disciples were unable to do so.
- Jesus took the disciples to a **secluded** place to rest.
 - There will be times in your life where you may have mountain top experiences.
 - These experiences might not always **last**. Sometimes God brings us down from the mountain top for us to rest, relax, and trust his leadership.
 - During these times of rest, it might feel that God has **abandoned** us. We may not see Him working; we may not feel His presence; and we may not hear his voice. Do not let these times fool you. God is as near to you as He was on your mountain top experience.
- As Jesus and His disciples left in a boat, the crowd followed them from the shoreline.
 - When Jesus and the disciples went ashore, they were met by the **crowd**.
 - This was probably the north-east shore of the Sea of Galilee.



Galilean Ministry of Jesus

<http://www.godweb.org/maps/123.htm>

- So much for the rest. The disciples were probably, and reasonably so, annoyed with this interruption. Little did they know; this interruption was about to bring them an astonishing **miracle**.

The Gospel of John 6:26-30-The Crowds Seek a Miracle

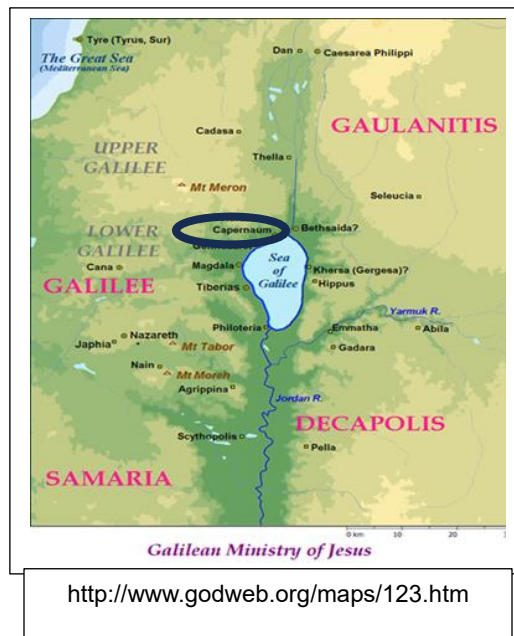
- The next day, the crowds went to the other side of the lake (Sea of Galilee) to find Jesus. When Jesus saw the crowds, He confronted them for not seeking Him but seeking the food He could provide. Jesus stated that the work of God was to **believe** in Him (Jesus) whom God had sent.
- In verse 30 The crowds asked, “What then do You do for a **sign**, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do you perform?” They had seen Jesus’ miracle the day before and still did not believe.
- Jesus compared the manna given to the Children of Israel to the bread of God, which was **Jesus**. Jesus stated in vs. 35 that only those who came to Him would never hunger or thirst again.
- Vs. 38-40, 44 are classic verses for eternal **security**. No one would ever lose their salvation who had received Jesus as their personal savior.

The Gospel of Mark

Vs. 6:35-44-Jesus Feeds 5,000

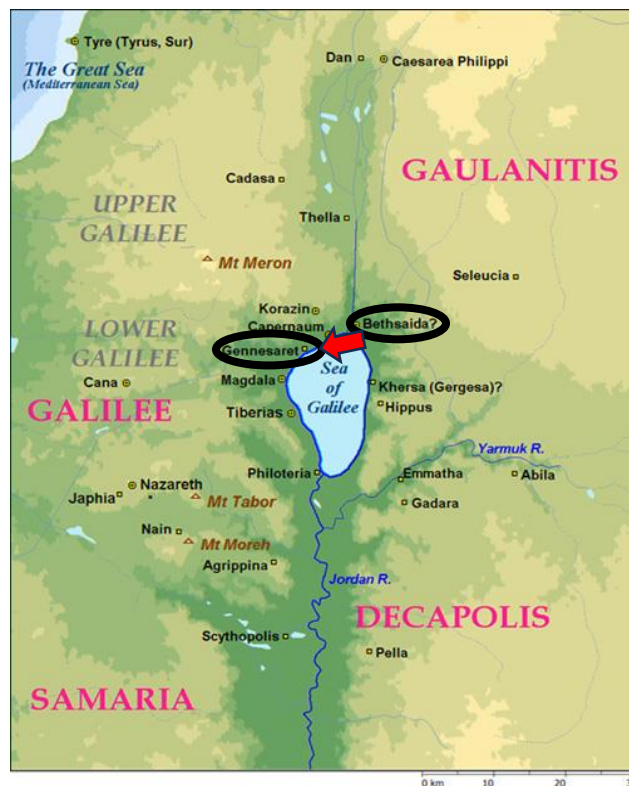
- Since the crowds were in a secluded place, the disciples were concerned about the food situation.
 - They were **astonished** when Jesus told them to provide the food. The disciples had just returned from raising the dead, healing the sick, and casting out demons, however, they still lacked faith.
- Jesus took five loaves and two fish and fed over **5,000** people.

Vs. 45-52-Jesus walks on the Water



<http://www.godweb.org/maps/123.htm>

- Jesus sent the disciples to Bethsaida (northeast shore) by boat while he stayed behind.
- A severe storm erupted and around 3:00-6:00 A.M. and Jesus came to them **walking** on the water.
- Jesus said, “Take **courage**, it is I, do not be afraid.” Jesus got into the boat and immediately he stopped the wind.
- The disciples were astonished for their hearts were hardened.
- Christian maturity takes place over a **lifetime**. We will not be fully mature until we enter heaven. Some of our greatest mountain top experiences often lead to our deepest valleys.
 - David stated what to do when residing in the deep valleys (Psalm 63:1-4).



Galilean Ministry of Jesus

<http://www.godweb.org/maps/123.htm>

Vs. 53-56- Jesus Heals the Sick

- Jesus and the disciples crossed over the lake to Gennesaret (northwest part of the Sea of Galilee-see map above).
- As the people touched the **fringe** of His cloak, they were healed.
- Great things were happening; however, **opposition** was coming.

Mark 7-Traditions

Vs. 1-23 The Pharisees' Traditions



<http://ancientbabylonia.blogspot.com.es/>

- The Pharisees challenged Jesus over their custom of handwashing.
- Many of these **traditions** had become more important than scripture (Mark 7:8-9).
- Many of these traditions existed in oral form and were instituted at the time of the **Babylonian** captivity.
 - The Babylonian captivity (605 B.C., 597 B.C., 586 B.C.) shook the Jews to the core.
 - Instead of turning to God and His word, they instituted **unrealistic** laws thinking that hard work would earn God's favor 1 (Samuel 15:22).
- Jesus spoke to the crowd and said it was what proceeded **out** of a person that brought defilement (7:15-16-extra emphasis is added).
 - "If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." (Revelation 2:11, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).
 - In other words, "Do you **understand** what I am saying?"

Vs. 24-30-A Gentile Ministry-The Syrophoenician Woman

- Jesus left the Sea of Galilee and went into the Phoenician city of Tyre. This was a **Gentile** city (see map above).
- A Gentile woman asked that Jesus heal her demon possessed daughter.
- Jesus did not respond out of rudeness. He was stating that His primary mission was to come as the Jewish **Messiah**. God always reached out to the Gentiles (Rahab the harlot from Jericho, Ruth the Moabites). Unfortunately, these Gentiles were often steeped in unbelief.

Vs. 31-37-A Gentile Ministry-Sidon and Decapolis

- Jesus continued up from Tyre into **Sidon** (a Gentile city) and then back down to the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. This was the region of Decapolis (Greek cities).
- Jesus put his fingers in a man's ears and touched his tongue with saliva. This act probably was an indication that He was going to restore both ears and speech.
- Jesus did not want this miracle announced. It is possible that Jesus did not want a large **Gentile** following since they were in Gentile country and Jesus' primary mission was to the Jews. The Gentile ministry would occur after Pentecost (Acts 2).

Summary

Jesus gave "signs" to the Jewish people. Some believed Him to be the Messiah, others did not believe in Him. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that He would give her living water. She and those in her city believed Jesus' words. Jesus told a Capernaum official that his son would live, and he believed Jesus' word. Jesus made a lame man walk but the crowds did not believe Him to be the Messiah. Jesus fed five thousand people and they did not believe.

Are we willing to take the words of Jesus (the Scriptures) and believe each word? Do we constantly ask for signs to believe? We should not put our trust in Christ because of circumstances but because of His words. Christ promised to take care of our needs and He would always be with us. Hard times may come, as did the storm at sea, but Jesus will always walk beside us saying, "It is I; do not be afraid."

Discussion Questions Chapter 24

1. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus states that those who were hungry and thirsty for righteousness would be satisfied.
 - a. Do you feel people are hungering and thirsting for righteousness today? Explain.
 - b. How does Jesus satisfy spiritual hunger?
 - c. Have you ever had a time in your life when you felt spiritually hungry? Did Jesus satisfy your need? Explain.

2. According to Matthew 28:19-20, the Christian church is to spread the Gospel throughout the world.
 - a. Do you feel the “church” has accomplished or is accomplishing the Great Commission of Matthew 28?
 - b. What are ways that we can help in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
 - c. Have you ever tried to tell someone about Jesus only to be shut down? How did it feel? What did you do?

3. Jesus condemned the pharisees for their hypocrisy in giving alms, praying, fasting, etc. without caring for the people.
 - a. Is it possible for Christians to do good works without having a real heart for the lost? Explain.
 - b. What are some distractions that might cause a Christian to lose heart in preaching the Gospel?
 - c. How can these distractions be remedied?

4. The Bible tells us that for 38 years a man tried to get into the pool of Bethesda. Unfortunately, no one allowed him to be the first one into the water.
 - a. Has there ever been a time when you passed by someone who needed help? How did you feel afterward?
 - b. Here is a scenario: You are late for work and you are expected to give an important presentation. You pass someone who has a flat tire and they wave at you to stop. What should you do?
 - c. What can we do to develop a heart for others?

5. The Disciples were commissioned and empowered to preach the Gospel.
 - a. Has Jesus empowered us for such a commission? Explain.
 - b. What are some ways that we can preach the Gospel?
 - c. Have you ever experienced God’s power when talking to someone about Jesus? Explain.

Jesus, the Son of God

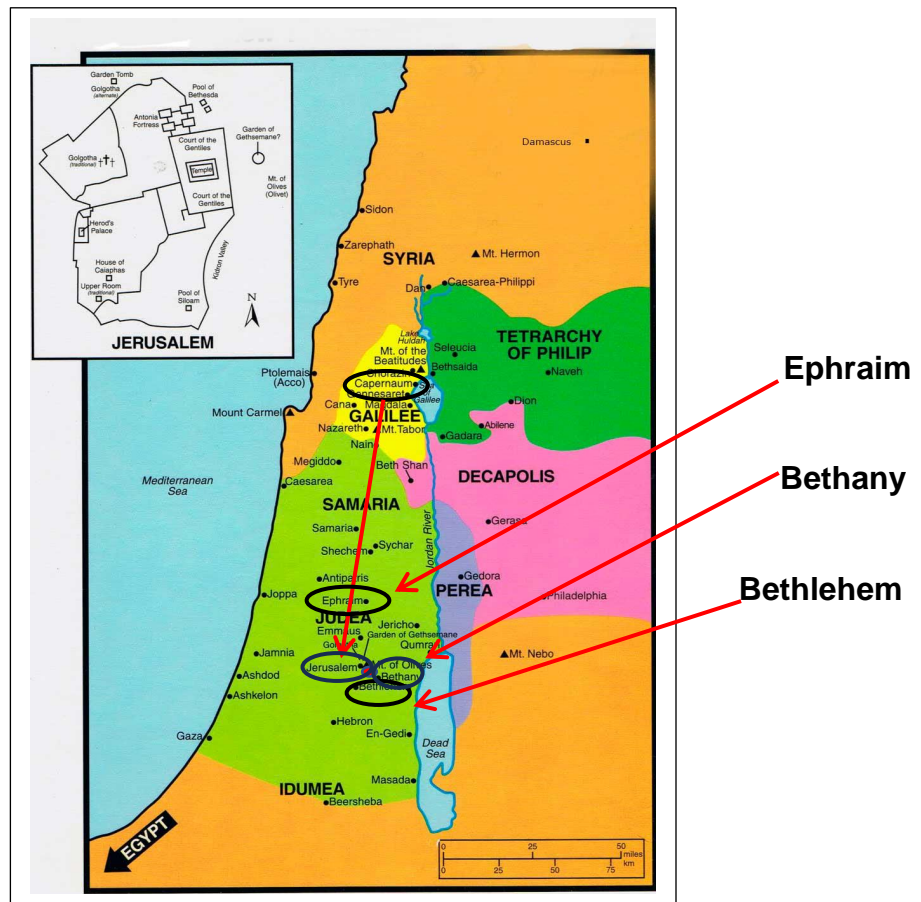
Chapter 25-The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John-Chapter 7

Introduction

Vs. 1-2-The Feast of Tabernacles

- After Jesus had performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand and had proclaimed Himself as “The **bread of life**,” He remained in Galilee (northern part of Israel).



http://www.pinsdaddy.com/map-of-john-the-baptist-ministry_6lkIrvA6boFL7y2lfycrUDq59wxXpHuAWzaWjdKdgbg/

- The **Feast of Booths** was approaching, and all the Jews would be journeying down to Judea (Jerusalem) for the celebration.
- The Feast of Booths was also known as the **Feast of Tabernacles**. The Feast of Booths began on the 15th day of Tishri (the 7th month).

- The first day was to be a day of rest and a holy convocation (gathering). The seventh day was also to be a day of **rest** and a holy convocation.
- The people would make huts of boughs and live in them throughout the week. This act commemorated God's **provision** for the Israelites when He brought them out of Egypt and cared for them throughout the wilderness experience.
- The Feast of Tabernacles will be celebrated during the **Millennium** (Zechariah 14:16). This feast will be a time for all believers to remember Christ's provisions for them while on earth.

Vs. 3-36-Jesus Attends the Feast of Tabernacles

- Jesus was a marked man in Jerusalem. The Jews were seeking to **kill** Him for the healing of the lame man and for claiming to be God.
- Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him and apparently were trying to trick Jesus into going to Jerusalem.
- During the **middle** of the feast, Jesus appeared and began to teach in the temple.
- Vs. 30 states that the Jews could not harm Jesus since, "His time had not yet come." Jesus was very much in control of the situation.
- The unbelieving Jews would not enter the Kingdom of God because of their **unbelief**.

Vs. 37-53-The Last Day of the Festival

- The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths) was to be a time of rest and a holy gathering. It was this day that Jesus stood up and cried out, saying, "If anyone is **thirsty**, let him come to Me and drink."
- Jesus was referring to the **Holy Spirit** that is given to all who believe in Christ.
- The Holy Spirit would not be given until after Jesus had risen from the dead and had ascended into Heaven. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit within believers began on the day of **Pentecost** (Acts 2).
- The Jewish leaders did not believe that Jesus could be the Messiah since He came from Galilee and not from **Bethlehem** (Micah 5:2).
- The Jews did not do their research since Bethlehem was exactly where Jesus was born.
- Bethlehem was also the birthplace of King David. Bethlehem (Ephrathah-see map above) indicates the fertility of the area. Bethlehem means, "**House of Bread**" and Ephrathah means, "fruitful."
- Not only did Jesus claim to be the Bread of Life when He fed the five thousand but even the place of His birth revealed that He was the Bread of Life.

Chapter 8

Vs. 1-11-A Woman Caught in Adultery

- The Pharisees had brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery (Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22-26b). Both man and woman were to be stoned.
- According to their interpretation, she was to be **stoned**. However, their *traditions* did not call for stoning.
- Dwight Pentecost states that Jesus, "...Had reminded them (John 7:19, 22-23) that the Mosaic law did permit certain works on the Sabbath which the Pharisees denied in their **traditions**. The Pharisees were incensed that Jesus should put their traditions in opposition of the law; therefore, when the occasion to support their views presented itself through the discovery of this woman in sin, they brought her to Him. They hoped to show that the law was so harsh it must be **reinterpreted** and that their reinterpretation in their traditions was therefore valid. John specifically stated that the Pharisees were not concerned with righteousness of justice. They hoped to trap Christ into saying that the law was too harsh to be accepted as written and must be reinterpreted. ...They failed in their attempt to make Him acknowledge that the Mosaic Law was too stringent to be observed and to approve the Pharisaic traditional interpretation of that law." (283)

Vs. 12-20-Jesus the Light of the World

- Jesus claimed to be the **Light of the world**. Jesus had, the previous day, claimed to be the Water of Life, now He was claiming to be the light of the world. This gave evidence that Jew and Gentile would be allowed into the Kingdom of God.
- Pentecost states, "There were two most significant features in the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles. The first was to light the golden **lampstand** so that the court might be illuminated during the evening hours of the week of Tabernacles. The second was to proceed to the **Pool of Siloam** to draw water to pour out around the altar. The lighting of the lamps signified Israel's need for light for which God was the only true source. Pouring out the water was a confession of sin and an acknowledgment of the need of cleansing. Thus Tabernacles not only looked backward to God's past provision for His people's need but also looked forward to the coming of Messiah, who would provide illumination and cleansing. In declaring Himself to be the Water of Life and the Light of the World, Christ was claiming to be Messiah, who fulfilled all that was anticipated in the Feast of Tabernacles." (285)

Vs. 21-59-Jesus' Characteristics

- Jesus stated in vs. 32, "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you **free**." Jesus was telling the Pharisees that because of their unbelief, they were not followers of God.
- Vs. 57-58 is very significant in that Jesus openly admitted that He was **God**. The phrase, "I am," was God's personal name Jehovah. God used this name in Exodus 3:14 when addressing Moses. The fact that Jesus used this phrase, He was declaring Himself to be God. The Pharisees tried to stone Jesus, but Jesus left their presence.

Chapter 9

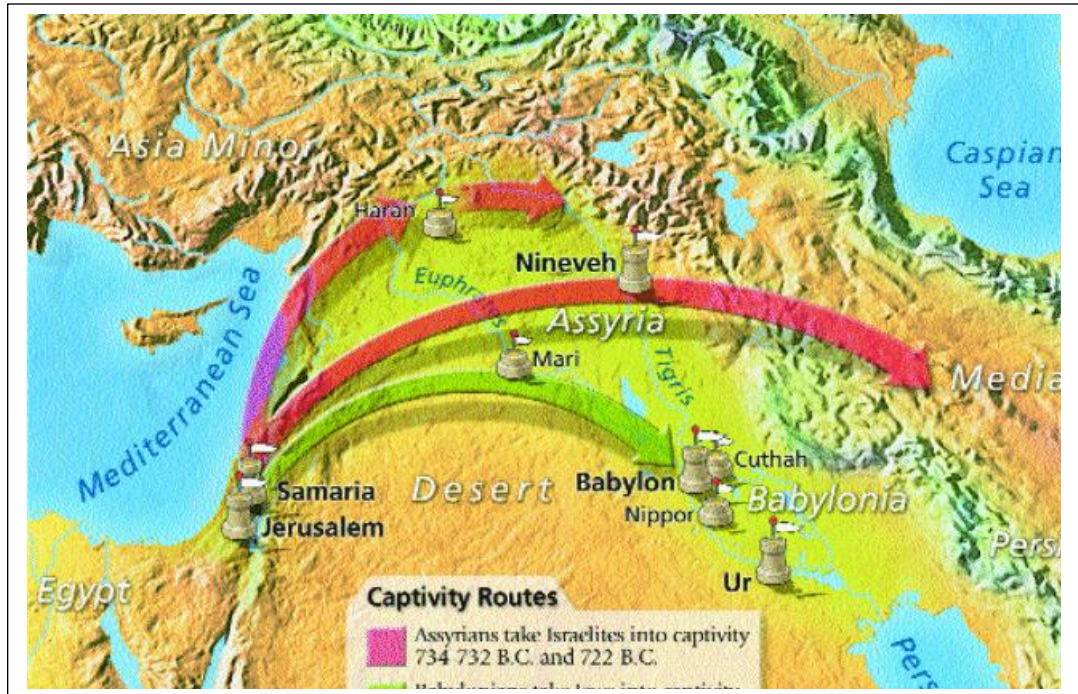
Vs. 1-41-Jesus Heals a Blind Man

- Jesus healed a blind man. It is interesting to note that he was told to wash in the pool of **Siloam**. This was the very pool where the Jews were to draw water to pour around the altar during the Feast of Booths. This act demonstrated the need for the cleansing of sins.
- When Jesus gave sight to the blind man, He was trying to show the people that he was the true Light of the world. It was because of these miracles that John referred to them as "**signs**."
- It is important to read vs. 35-38. The blind man believed that Jesus was the **Messiah**, the Savior of the world.

Chapter 10

Vs. 1-21-The Good Shepherd

- The Jews were very familiar with the concept of the shepherd and the sheep as they applied to **God** and **Israel**.
 - Jeremiah and Ezekiel compared the evil rulers of Israel to that of wicked shepherds before the **Babylonian** captivity (see map on next page).



<http://www.christians-standing-with-israel.org/babylonian-exile-captivity-jerusalem-map.html>

- Jeremiah 50:6 “My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains...”
- Jeremiah 23:1-2- “Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the **sheep** of my pasture!”
- Ezekiel 34:1-10- “...Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of **themselves**! Should not shepherds take care of the flock?’”
- Jeremiah 34:11-16- “...I myself will **search** for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. ...I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land.”
- Christ showed that He was the true **Shepherd**. He was the true Shepherd because of the way He had come to the fold as recorded in the Old Testament.
 - Pentecost states, “The Scriptures had revealed where Messiah would be born (Micah 5:2), when He would be born (Daniel 9:24-27), the circumstances of His birth (Isaiah 7:14), the ministry which the true Shepherd would perform (61:1-2), miracles which He would perform to **authenticate** Himself (35:5-6), and the way in which He would be presented to the nation through a forerunner (Malachi 3:1)-(294).
- In this discourse, Christ was comparing Himself with the false attitudes and teachings of the **Pharisees**.

- Vs. 14 is important in understanding why some did not believe in Jesus and others did. Those who were of the **fold** recognized His voice and responded.
- Vs. 16 was an indication that salvation would be extended to the **Gentiles**.

Vs. 22-39-The Feast of Lights

- Three months after the Feast of Booths (7:2), Jesus had been ministering throughout Perea (east of the Jordan River-see map above) after which He attended the Feast of Dedication.



<https://quotesgram.com/holy-land-quotes/>

- This feast was sometimes referred to as the Feast of Lights, or **Hanukkah**. This date falls near the winter solstice, Dec. 22. Judas Maccabeus instituted this feast in 165 B.C. in commemoration of the cleansing and reopening of the **Temple**. This occurred after the Syrian ruler Antiochus Epiphanes had desecrated the temple in 168 B.C. (Ryrie).

- Vs. 26-27 is a restatement why some rejected Christ's word and others did not. ["But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep].
- Vs. 28-29 is a powerful statement affirming **eternal security** (one can never lose their salvation).
- Vs. 30 is another indication that Jesus and the Father are **one** (two of the three parts of the Trinity).
 - Because Jesus declared Himself to be one with the Father, the Jews picked up stones to **stone** Him (Leviticus 24:13-16).
- Vs. 40 indicates that Jesus eluded their grasp. His time had not yet come to die. Jesus left to go back into **Perea** for another 3 months.

Ch. 11

Vs. 1-44- The Raising of Lazarus from the Dead

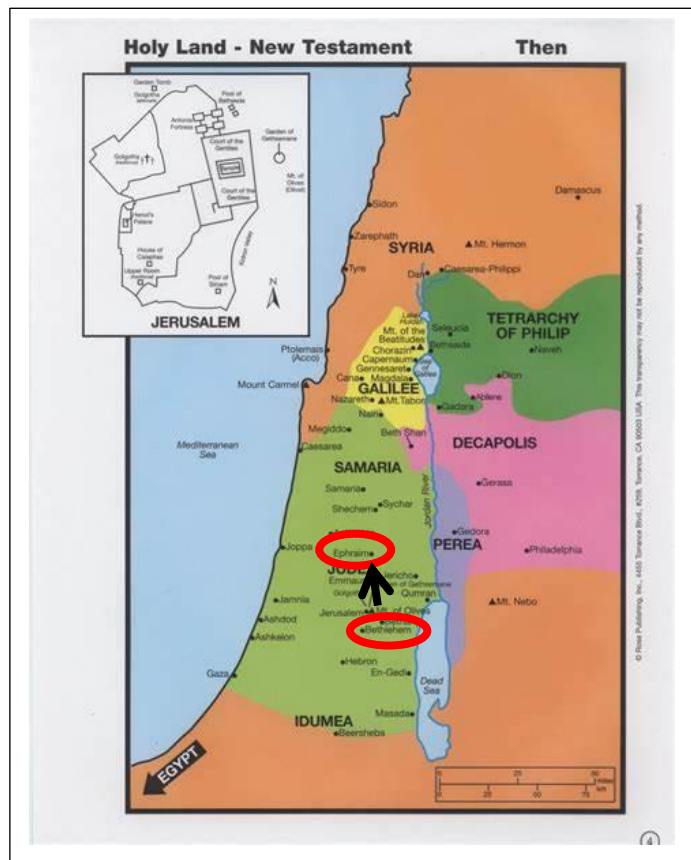


<https://quotesgram.com/holy-land-quotes/>

- Bethany was a town just outside of Jerusalem (see map above). Lazarus had apparently been a very influential man considering the amount of people at his home. Jesus had deliberately **delayed** so that Lazarus would die. Jesus' intent was to perform a miracle so that He would be glorified, and the people would believe that He was the Messiah.
- Vs. 11 indicates that Lazarus had fallen **asleep**. Though the disciples thought that Lazarus was sleeping, Jesus meant that Lazarus had died but would be resurrected (1 Thessalonians 4:14).
- Vs. 8 indicates the disciples were surprised that Jesus was willing to go back to the Jerusalem area since the Jews had tried to **stone** Him three months prior.
- Vs. 16 gives us an interesting insight into Thomas' character. Thomas **encouraged** his fellow disciples to go to Jerusalem with Jesus and be martyred with Him.
- Jesus states in Vs. 25-26 that He is the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in Him, they will never die. Jesus was referring to **spiritual** death. While the body dies, it will be resurrected at the rapture.
- The raising of Lazarus (vs. 43-44) must have been an astonishing **miracle** considering how tightly he must have been bound.

Vs. 45-48-Many Followers of Jesus

- The Pharisees showed their true motivation toward Jesus in vs. 48. Since so many people believed in Jesus, the Jews were afraid that the Romans would destroy the Temple and the Jewish nation since such a following would appear to be an act of **treason** against the Roman Empire.
- Jesus left Bethany and went to the wilderness into a city called **Ephraim**. Ephraim was about 10 miles northeast of Jerusalem (see map above).



<https://quotesgram.com/holy-land-quotes/>

Chapter 12

Vs. 1-8-Jesus' Anointing

- Six days before the Jewish Passover, Jesus came back to Bethany and stayed with Lazarus, Mary and Martha. Mary took a costly **perfume** and anointed the feet of Jesus.
- Though Mary was probably not aware of the significance, her act signified the **burial** of Jesus.
- Because of the miracle of Lazarus, the Jews were also planning to put him to death (vs. 10).

Vs. 12-19-The Triumphal Entry

- This is one of the most amazing fulfillments of Old Testament **Prophecy**. To understand the significance, read Luke 19:41-42.
- To further understand the fulfillment of this prophecy it is necessary to read Daniel 9:24-27. When Daniel made this prophecy, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had already captured the people of Israel (see map above). The date was **538 B.C.**, 67 years after Daniel had been taken from Palestine. Daniel predicted that a decree would be given for the Israelites to return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem. This was fulfilled in **445 B.C.** when Artaxerxes Longimanus issued a decree for Jerusalem to be rebuilt.
- Daniel prophesied that there would be 69 weeks and the Messiah would be **killed**. Jewish culture had weeks of days (7 days); weeks of weeks (49 weeks); weeks of months (49 months); and weeks of years (49 years). This prophecy referred to weeks of years. There would be 69 weeks of years or **483** years before the Messiah would be killed. Artaxerxes gave the edict to rebuild Jerusalem on March 5, 444 B.C. The Passion week, Christ's entry into Jerusalem, was on March 30, 33 A.D. Daniel's 49 weeks of years would equal 173,855 days. This was the exact day that Christ entered Jerusalem on the **Donkey** (Walvoord 226-228).
- Therefore, Jesus states in Luke, "...If you had **known** in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes." Jesus knew the exact time of Daniel's prophecy. As a result, He would not allow the Jews to take and kill him before this specific date.

Summary

When one comes to faith in Jesus Christ, He opens their heart to see the truths of God's Word. The Water of Life, the Bread of Life, and the Light of the world is free to all who accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

God's word can be trusted down to the smallest detail. Christ did not come to the earth without significant meaning. Christ's words are true and faithful. As we grow in the Lord and study His word, the Holy Spirit will begin to guide our thoughts and actions. Our faith in Christ will grow as we see the fulfillment of Christ's words in our life.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 25

1. The Feast of Booths was to be a time of reflection about God's provision during the wandering years of the Jews.
 - a. Do you have a time in your day, week, etc. that you spend to reflect upon God's provisions? Why can this be easy to neglect?
 - b. Do you think the Jews ever observed the Feast of Booths without reflecting upon God's provisions?
 - c. Read Psalm 63:6-7. How did David's meditation influence his attitude?

2. The Jewish leaders did not think Jesus fulfilled Micah 5:2 and therefore could not be the Messiah. Unfortunately, they were misinformed.
 - a. Jesus said, in John 8:32, "...You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." Why is it sometimes easier to jump to conclusions without first finding the facts?
 - b. How often would you say arguments arise from misunderstandings?
 - c. Can you think of a time when an argument erupted over misinformation? What was the result?

3. It appears the Jewish leaders were trying to reinterpret God's laws by establishing rules and regulations.
 - a. Do we want to reinterpret any of God's laws (laws about love, giving, pure living)?
 - b. What is a natural tendency for those trying to cover up a sin?
 - c. Why does sin make it hard to follow God's laws? What are some remedies for conquering sin?

4. Jesus states that He is the good shepherd.
 - a. What are the characteristics of a shepherd?
 - b. What qualified Jesus to be our shepherd?
 - c. Why is it sometimes hard to trust Jesus when He promises to be our good shepherd?

5. It appears that Jesus deliberately waited to come to Lazarus until after he died. Mary and Martha were very disappointed that Jesus had not come earlier.
 - a. Why do you think God sometimes will wait to answer a prayer?
 - b. Have you ever been disappointed in God when He did not answer a prayer? Explain.
 - c. In Lazarus' situation, how was the miracle greater after his death? Can we apply this to our unanswered prayers? Explain.

Bible Basics-The Hour of Darkness Chapter 26-John

“High” or “Special” Day
John 19:31
Nisan

Mon. 10 th	Tue s. 11 th	Wed. 12 th	Thurs. 13 th	Fri. 14 th	Sat. 15 th	Sun. 16 th	Mon. 17 th	Tues. 18 th	Wed. 19 th	Thu s. 20 th	Fri. 21 st
*Cleansing of the Temple *Lamb Selected (Ex. 12:3-6)			Lord’s Supper Passover began on Thurs. at sunset	Jesus’ Death Passover-technical day for Passover	Sabbath-rest-Feast of Unleavened Bread perfection Jesus in the Tomb	Resurrection First Fruits-consecration of first crops to God Countdown to Pentecost 50 days *					End of Unleavened Bread

Feast of First Fruits

- Israel ate the first fruits in the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10-12).
- Haman’s plot to kill the Jews was foiled (Esther).
- Jesus Christ rose from the dead (John 12:24).
- Paul explains First Fruits (1st Corinthians 15:20-23).

<http://ezinearticles.com/?Jewish-Feasts---Feast-Of-First-Fruits&id=1205274>

Feast of Unleavened Bread-Seder

- Jesus prepared for the Feast of Passover (Unleavened Bread). Mark 14:12-16
- As God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt on the night of Passover, the Jews in Jesus’ time looked forward to the Messiah coming to deliver them.
- Jesus was about to fulfill that desire.

The Gospel of John

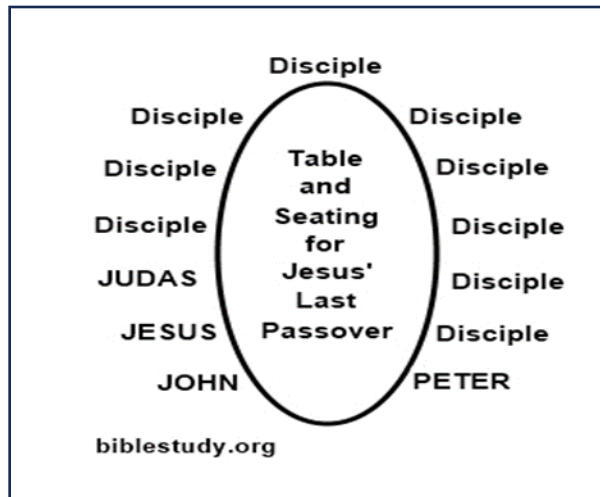
Chapter 13

Vs. 1-20-Christ the Servant

- During the supper (possibly before the actual Passover Lamb was to be eaten) the disciples began to **quarrel** over who was the greatest. This topic came after a discussion about who would betray Jesus [Luke 22:22-24] (Pentecost-427).
- Jesus knowing their selfish and ambitious hearts took off His robe and assumed a servant's role by washing the feet of the disciples. The washing of feet during the Passover meal was a customary sign of **confession** and showed the need for cleansing. The washing was also an affirmation of faith that when Messiah came, He would provide cleansing for His people (Pentecost-427).
- "From the record given to us at the Crucifixion, we know that He wore a seamless robe. This would have been an unusually **costly** robe. Normally robes were made of strips of cloth that had been woven on narrow looms; these strips were sewn together to make a garment of sufficient size to be wrapped around an adult. But the robe that Christ wore had been especially prepared at great cost. ...No doubt this robe was a love gift from a grateful donor." (Pentecost-428).
- "...How fitting that Christ should have laid aside the robe of honor and put Himself in a Servant's place! Well does Paul speak of Him, 'who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a **servant**, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-even death on a cross!' [Philippians 2:6-8]" (Pentecost-428).
- Jesus states in vs. 14-15 that we should be servants to each other. (This will be brought out later).

Vs. 21-30-Jesus Declares His betrayal

- Jesus stated that one of them would betray Him. Vs 26 can be confusing without understanding what Jesus was doing. Dipping the bread in the sauce and giving it to each member of the table would have been a customary act at the Passover Feast. This act was very symbolic. Pieces of lamb and bitter herbs would be placed on unleavened bread, rolled up, dipped into a bitter sauce and given to each guest. The first to receive this bread would go to the guest of **highest** honor. Judas was placed to the left of Jesus while John was placed on the right (Pentecost-430-431).



<http://www.biblestudy.org/biblepic/last-supper-seating.html>

- The fact that Jesus gave the first piece to Judas indicated that He was **honoring** Judas above all the others. The bread, lamb, bitter herbs, and bitter sauce symbolized one's recognition of sin and a foreshadowing of the Messiah who would ultimately take away the sins of the world. The disciples would not have recognized that Judas would betray Jesus since each of the disciples received the bread (Pentecost-431).
- Jesus was showing Judas His ultimate love and was giving him a chance to **repent**. Judas did not repent, and Satan entered him. (Pentecost-431)
- The Three matza pieces
 - While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, gave a blessing, and broke it.
 - Jesus then took the cup and after giving thanks, He gave it to the disciples (Mark 14:22-25).

Vs. 31-38-Jesus Tells the Disciples of His Departure

- Jesus gave a new commandment in vs. 34, "A new commandment I give to you, that you **love** one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."
- Compare Leviticus 19:9 to John 13:34.
- Jesus predicted Peter's denial in verse 38.

Chapter 14

Vs. 1-14- Jesus Prepares the Disciples for His Departure

- Jesus made it very clear that He and the Father were **one** (vs. 7; 9; 10).
- Jesus said in vs. 6 that He was the way and the truth and the life. He said that no one could come to the Father but through **Him**. This is very applicable today

since so many people are trying to reach heaven through works, self-denial, various philosophies, meditation, universal oneness, etc.

- Vs. 12-14 has often been misinterpreted. Jesus clarified this statement in Ch. 15 vs. 7.

Vs. 15-26-Jesus Explains the Role of the Holy Spirit

- Vs. 16-17; 26 explained the role the Holy Spirit would play after Jesus' **resurrection**.
- After Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came and indwelt all believers. Before Pentecost, the Holy Spirit would not reside permanently within a believer.

Chapter 15

Vs. 1-17-The Vine and the Branches

- Vs. 2, 4-8 explains how important it is for a believer to abide in Christ.
- Vs. 6 does not mean that one can lose their salvation. Remember the Jews were the promised people of God. They felt they would automatically inherit eternal salvation because they were **Jewish**. Jesus was saying those Jews who would not accept Him as Savior and Messiah would be cast from God's presence as an unbeliever.
- Jesus reiterated His new commandment again in vs. 12.

Vs. 18-27-Contrast Between the World and Believers

- Jesus told His disciples that the world would hate them because it hated Him first. However, the Holy Spirit would **guide** the disciples into testifying about Christ.

Chapter 16

Vs. 1-6-The Disciples Would be Hated by the World

- Jesus was very clear in explaining to the disciples that they would be **hated** by the world (Chapter 15). Jesus stated in vs. 16 and 19 of Chapter 15 that He had chosen the disciples and that they were not of the world.
- Jesus knew the disciples' sorrow and promised them a "Helper," the **Holy Spirit**.
- The reason why Jesus told the disciples of their eminent doom was to prepare them for the **persecution** to come. Jesus stated in vs. 1 that the disciples would be outcasts from the synagogue. To be cast out from the synagogue in Jewish society would immediately reduce one to poverty and isolation.

Vs. 7-15-The Holy Spirit Would be Given to the Disciples

- Jesus told the disciples that it would be to their **benefit** for Him to go to the Father. By doing so, the Holy Spirit would be given to them. It is interesting to note how Jesus trusted the work of the Holy Spirit. Vs. 13 states that Jesus trusted the Holy Spirit to guide the disciples with to truth (John 16:12-14).

Vs. 16-33-Jesus Spoke of His Death and Resurrection

- Vs. 16-22-Jesus told His disciples that He would be crucified but soon would be resurrected. The disciples could not **comprehend** what Jesus was saying.
- Jesus affirmed the Father's love for the disciples and affirmed their faith in Him.
- Vs. 32-33-Jesus told His disciples that they would leave Him. (This happened when the soldiers came and arrested Jesus). However, Jesus told them that He would not be alone since the **Father** would be with Him. Jesus was aware of the shame the disciples would face after deserting Him. He said, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace..." (Vs. 33).

Ch. 17-Jesus Prayer to the Father

Vs. 1-5-Jesus Prayed for Glorification (Resurrection)

- Jesus stated the simplicity of eternal life-Vs. 3.
- Jesus asked that the Father glorify Him. This did not mean that Jesus was asking for the Father to give Him honor among people, but rather the Father fulfill the resurrection plan by bringing **salvation** to the world.

Vs. 6-19-Jesus Prayed for the Disciples

- Jesus made a distinction between believers and **unbelievers** in vs. 9. The concept that all "mankind" is one and in harmony with each other does not fit with Jesus' prayer.
- We can see Jesus' most earnest love for the believers in vs. 11-16. Vs. 12 gives us the **assurance** that we will never be lost from the Father's hand.
- Jesus stated in vs. 17 that God's word would **sanctify** us (set us apart) from the world. As we grow closer to Christ, the farther we draw from the desires and pleasures of the world.
- Jesus foresaw and prayed, not only for the disciples, but also for **all** who would come to a saving faith in Him. The love of the Father is as strong for us as it is for Jesus (vs. 23).

Ch. 18-The Arrest of Jesus

Vs. 1-11-Judas Betrayed Christ and Peter's Retaliation

- Jesus was very much prepared for what was to follow. Judas, who had betrayed Jesus, led the Roman cohort (300-600 Roman soldiers), and the temple guards to arrest Jesus.
- Peter, having brought a small sword (a small ceremonial dagger with which the disciples had prepared the Passover lamb-Pentecost) struck at the high priest's **slave**, cutting off his ear.
- Jesus was arrested, and the disciples **fled**.

Vs. 12-23-Jesus Before Annas

- Jesus was brought before Annas for examination. Annas had been the high priest and held considerable authority.
- Peter **denied** Jesus.
- Jesus is struck for His answer to Annas.

Vs. 24-27-Jesus Before Caiaphas

- Jesus was then taken to Caiaphas, the High Priest (son-in-law to Annas).

Vs. 28-40-Jesus Before Pilate

- Jesus was led into the Praetorium (the Roman headquarters). The Jews would not go into a Gentile place since it would **defile** them for the Passover. Pilate was the governor of Judea.
- Jesus stated in vs. 37 that He had come to testify to the truth and that everyone who was of the truth would **hear** His voice. It is interesting that Pilate stated, "What is truth?" and leaves without waiting for an answer. This is true today among an unbelieving world.
- The Jews cried out for the release of **Barabbas** in the place of Jesus.

Chapter 19

Vs. 1-5-The Scourging

- **Scourging** was a brutal means of Roman punishment. The accused would be whipped about 39 times. The end of the whip had multiple lashings and bits of iron or bone were attached to the ends of the thongs. Often, the victim died during this beating [Pentecost Pg. 474].

- After the scourging, the Roman soldiers began to beat and mock Jesus. The soldiers twisted together a crown of **thorns** and pressed it into His head.
- Matthew 27:27 states that the whole Roman cohort gathered around Jesus. A cohort consisted of about **300-600** men.
- Pilate tried to release Jesus, but the Jews threatened Pilate of **treason** if Jesus was released (vs. 11). This statement, “We have no king but Caesar,” sealed the redemptive fate of the Jews in accepting their Messiah.

The Trials of Jesus				
	Trial	Scripture	Judge	Decision
Religious trials—Jewish	First	John 18:12-14	Annas	OK given to liquidate Jesus
	Second	Matt 26:57-68	Caiaaphas	Death sentence, charge of blasphemy
	Third	Matt 27:1-2	Sanhedrin	Death sentence made legal
	Fourth	John 18:28-38	Pilate	Not guilty
Civil trials—Roman	Fifth	Luke 23:6-12	Herod	Not guilty
	Sixth	John 18:39-19:6	Pilate	Not guilty, but turned Jesus over to the Jews

<http://jerryrothaus.com/fall-one-year-bible-reading-may-29/>

Vs. 17-22-The Crucifixion

- “Edersheim writes concerning the Jewish Method of execution: ‘The cross was the most disgraceful and one of the cruellest instruments of death ever invented. The Romans, who borrowed it from the Carthaginians, would not allow a Roman citizen to be crucified, but reserved crucifixion for slaves and foreigners or provincials. The Jews customarily used stoning and never crucifixion. It was not only the death of greatest ignominy but of the most extreme anguish and suffering. ...The victim was usually first stripped naked, the garments falling to the lot of the executioners; but in the crucifixion of Jesus, tradition says that a loincloth was used. First the upright was planted firmly in the ground and then the victim was laid down with arms extended on the crossbar to which they were fastened by cords and afterwards by nails through the palms. Then the transom was raised to its position on the upright and nailed while the body was left to swing or its weight rested on an iron saddle peg driven into the upright. Following this the feet were nailed either through the instep separately, or both together with a single iron spike. There the body was left to hang in agony sometimes two or three days, until death from pain and starvation ensued.’” (Pentecost, Dwight J. *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ: A Study of the Life of Christ*, 480.)

Vs. 23-30-The Crucifixion

- Vs. 23-24 was a fulfillment of Ps. 22:18.
- Vs. 28-Jesus said that He was **thirsty**. Psalm 22:15 describes the extreme dehydration that Jesus experienced. It is possible that Jesus was not asking for a drink for thirst sake but He needed to moisten His mouth for one last proclamation, "It is finished" (vs. 30) (Matt.27:50; 27:46; Ps.22:1).
- Vs. 31 explains that the bodies had to be taken from the cross since the **Sabbath** was approaching and it was to be a high day.
- Vs. 31-Ryrie states the Sabbath was a **high day**-The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread fell that year on a Sabbath, making it a "high" or "special" festival.
- The Jews had missed their **Messiah**.

Vs. 34-37-Prophecy Fulfilled

- Vs. 36 fulfills prophecy-Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20.
- Vs. 37 fulfills prophecy-Zechariah 12:10.

Summary

Jesus said, "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3). This truth is so simple. Pilate asked, "What is truth?" Do we take the time to find God's truths for our life? Do we meditate on God's word and pray for His guidance and wisdom? Do we tackle life by the horns and try to wrestle it to the ground, or do we take everything to God in prayer-trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us in all our ways? Prayerfully, ask God to show you His truths and allow His quiet and gentle answers to flood your life with peace and joy.

Jesus promised that He would always be with us and that His Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth. It is imperative that we place our absolute faith in Christ. Even when events and situations do not make sense, we must trust that Christ is in control and that His Spirit will guide us.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 26

1. The Disciples quarreled over who was the greatest.
 - a. Is it possible to have such quarrels without being so open about it?
 - b. Why is recognition so important and servanthood so undervalued?
 - c. It is hard to imagine that Jesus took the time to demonstrate servanthood knowing He was about to be crucified. How do you think this impacted the Disciples after Jesus' death and resurrection?

2. Jesus demonstrated love to Judas even though He knew Judas was going to betray Him. The Bible tells us to overcome evil with good.
 - a. How is possible to overcome evil with good when our nature screams out for revenge?
 - b. Have you experienced a time when you returned a good deed for a bad one? Explain.
 - c. Read Romans 12:19-20. What is meant by heaping burning coals upon an enemy's head? Have you ever experienced this?

3. Jesus told the Disciples that they would be hated by the world.
 - a. Why is there such animosity against Christians today?
 - b. How should a Christian respond to such animosity?
 - c. What can we do to stay strong in our faith?

4. Jesus prayed that we would be sanctified (set apart) from the world.
 - a. What do you think that means?
 - b. Read John 17:15. Jesus prayed that we would not be taken out of the world but be protected from the evil one. How can one be part of the world and yet remain sanctified?
 - c. How does God protect a Christian from evil?

5. Peter thought he was going to protect Jesus by cutting off the slave's ear.
 - a. Do we sometimes try to protect Jesus by arguing with a nonbeliever?
 - b. Is it proper to have spiritual arguments (disagreements) or should Christians avoid them altogether?
 - c. Were you ever engaged in a spiritual argument with someone? How did it turn out?

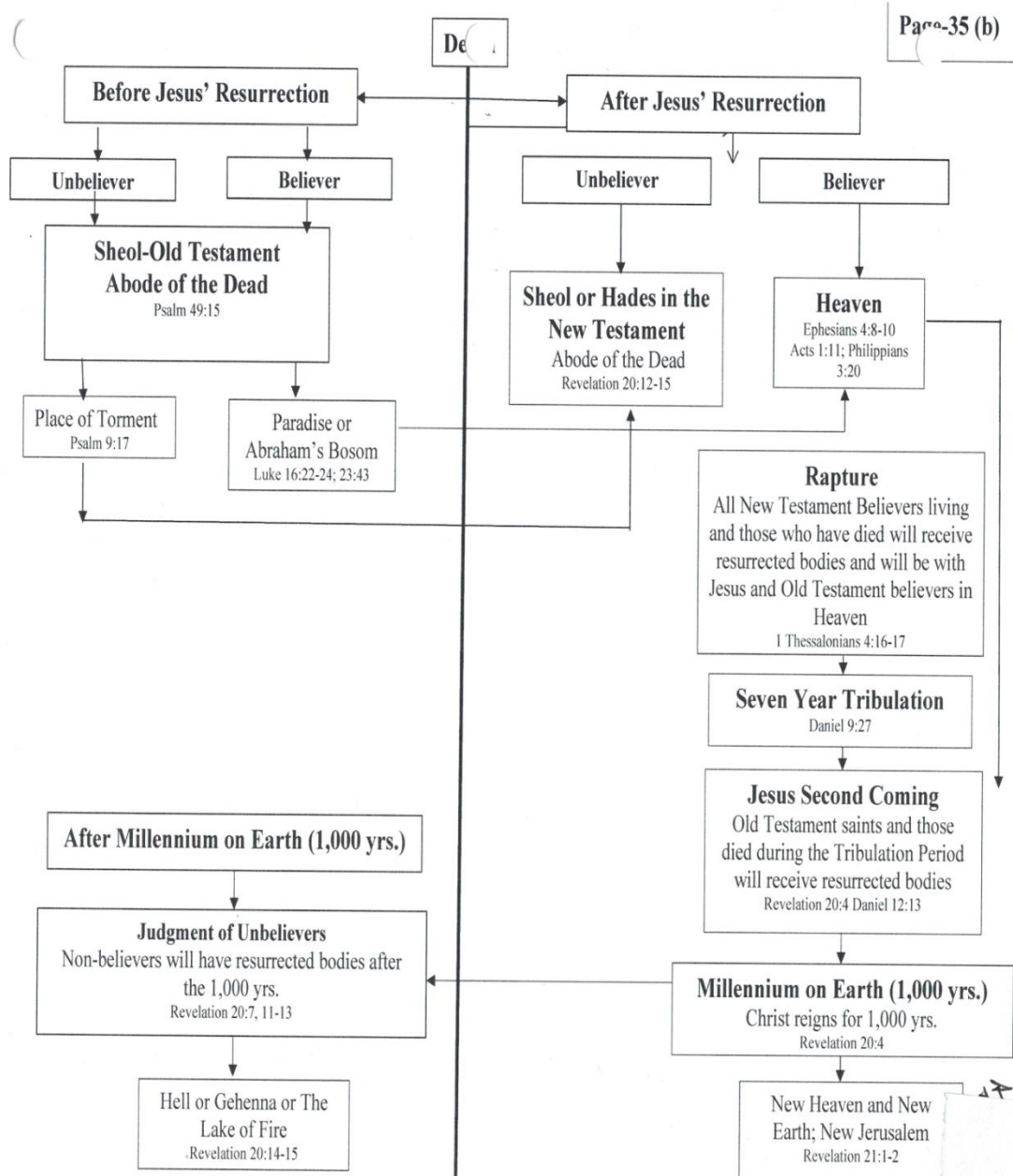
Bible Basics-The Resurrection Chapter 27-Matthew, Luke, John

<p>“High” or “Special” Day John 19:31 Nisan</p>

Mon. 10 th	Tue. s. 11 th	Wed. 12 th	Thurs. 13 th	Fri. 14 th	Sat. 15 th	Sun. 16 th	Mon. 17 th	Tues. 18 th	Wed. 19 th	Thu. s. 20 th	Fri. 21 st
*Cleansing of the Temple *Lamb Selected (Ex. 12:3-6)			Lord's Supper Passover began on Thurs. at sunset	Jesus' Death Passover-technical day for Passover	Sabbath-rest-Feast of Unleavened Bread perfection Jesus in the Tomb	Resurrection First Fruits-consecration of first crops to God Countdown to Pentecost 50 days *					End of Unleavened Bread

Where did Jesus Go After His Crucifixion? (1 Peter 3:18-20)

- Luke 23:39-43 gives us an insight where Jesus went after His Crucifixion.
- From the beginning of time there were **two** places a spirit would go after death.
 - One was called “Paradise” or “Abraham’s Bosom.”
 - The other was called “the place of **torment**.”
 - Both places are referred to as “Sheol” (Old Testament) or Hades (New Testament). This was the place of the dead or departing spirits.
- When Jesus told the thief on the cross that “**today**” he would be with Jesus in Paradise, He meant the place of Paradise in Hades.
- There was a great **chasm** that separated the two parts of Hades.
- According to Luke 16:19-31, those on either side could communicate with those on the other.
- When Jesus descended into Hades, it did not mean He went to the place the **Place of torment**.
- So, how did Jesus preach to those whose spirits were in prison (Place of Torment) in 1 Peter 3:18-20?
 - He was able to yell or speak across the chasm without actually going there.
- Jesus took those who were in “Paradise” and led them to **Heaven** to be with the Father (Ephesians 4:7-10; Psalm 68:18).



The Gospel of Matthew

Chapter 28

Vs. 1-15-The Earthquake

- After the Sabbath, (now Sunday) Mary Magdalene and the “other” Mary (probably the mother of James-Matthew 27:56) came to the tomb to prepare the body of Jesus.
- A great **earthquake** occurred, and an angel of the Lord rolled the stone away.
- The angel told the women not to be afraid.
- The women were told that Jesus had risen and that He would appear to the **disciples**.
- The guards told the chief priests all that had happened at the tomb.
- The elders were assembled and gave a large sum of **money** to the soldiers. The soldiers were told to say that the disciples had come during the night and stole the body of Jesus.

The Gospel of John

Chapter 20

Vs. 1-14-The Resurrection

- Ryrie states the order of Christ’s appearances throughout the Gospel accounts: 1) to **Mary Magdalene** and the other women (vv.11-18; Matt. 28:8-10; Mark 16:9-10; 2) to Peter, probably in the afternoon (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5; 3) to the disciples on the Emmaus road toward **evening** (Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13-32; 4) to the disciples, except Thomas, in the upper room (vv. 19-25; Luke 24:36-43; 5) to the disciples, including Thomas, on the next Sunday night (vv.26-29; Mark 16:14; 6) to seven disciples beside the Sea of Galilee (21:1-24; 7) to the apostles and more than **500** brothers and James, the Lord’s half brother (1 Cor. 15:6-7); 8) to those who witnessed the ascension (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:3-12).

Vs. 15-31-Jesus Calls Mary

- Mary recognized the voice of Jesus after He stated her name. Does Jesus ever speak your name? Do we **recognize** His voice when He calls?
- Jesus reiterated a powerful phrase when He stated, “**Peace** be with you.”
- John told of Jesus’ signs in order that one may believe that Jesus is the **Christ**, the Son of God; and that by believing one may have life in His name.

The Gospel of Luke

Chapter 24

Vs. 13-35-The Emmaus Road

- After Jesus' **resurrection**, two believers-Cleopas (vs. 18) and possibly his wife-were traveling to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. Jesus appeared to them and began to explain the scriptures from Moses to the prophets about the things concerning Himself.
- For whatever reason, the two did not **recognize** who Jesus was.
- The two invited Jesus to stay for dinner. While at dinner, Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. At that moment their eyes were opened, they recognized Jesus and He **vanished** from their sight.
- They immediately returned to Jerusalem, found the disciples and told how Jesus had appeared to them.
- As they were telling their story, Jesus appeared and said, "**Peace** be to you."
- Jesus opened their minds to understand the scriptures concerning Him.
- Jesus instructed the disciples to **stay** in the city until they received power from on high. This would be the infilling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The Gospel of John

Chapter 20

Vs. 19-29-Jesus Appears to Thomas

- For some reason **Thomas** was not with the disciples when Jesus appeared. When they told Thomas that they had seen Jesus, he refused to believe it unless he could see the nail prints in his hands and side.
- Thomas appears to have been a very strong man in character (John 11:7-8; 16-the death of Lazarus).
- After eight days, Jesus appeared again this time with Thomas in attendance. Jesus told Thomas to put his finger into His hand and to touch His side. Thomas recognized Jesus and **believed**.

Chapter 21

Vs. 1-14-The Disciples Go Fishing

- Sometime later, Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James and John, and two others decided to fish in the **Sea of Galilee**.
- During the night, the disciples did not catch any fish. The next morning Jesus stood on the shore and told them to cast their net on the right-hand side of the boat. Not recognizing Jesus, they obeyed and caught a tremendous number of fish. John (the writer of this Gospel) recognized Jesus and proclaimed that it was the Lord.
- **Peter** immediately threw himself into the sea and swam to shore.
- When the other disciples reached the shore, Jesus had prepared a fish breakfast for them.

Vs. 15-17-Jesus Confronts Peter

- After eating breakfast, Jesus asked Peter whether he **Loved** Him. Peter answered, "Yes, Lord: You know that I love You." Jesus responded, "Tend My lambs."
- Jesus asked a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you **love** Me?" Peter answered Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." Jesus said, "Shepherd My sheep."
- Jesus asked a third time, "Simon, son of John, do you **love** Me?" Peter was deeply grieved for being asked this question three times and answered, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said, "Tend My sheep."
- The first two times that Jesus asked whether Peter loved Him, Jesus used the word **agapo** which means to love with strong affection (Zodhiates: The Complete Word Study Dictionary). This word also means to have total commitment.
- The third time Jesus uses the word **phileo** which means to have affection for someone but not one of total commitment.
- When John responds to Jesus he uses *phileo* all three times.
- It is possible that John did not want to use *agapo* since he had promised to give his life for Jesus before His crucifixion and had **denied** Jesus three times.
- Jesus asked Peter to tend His sheep meaning to shepherd His followers (1 Peter 5:1-4).

Vs. 18-25-Jesus Foretells Peter's Death

- Jesus told Peter that he would die by **crucifixion** when He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go" (NAS).

- Jesus then responded to Peter, “**Follow Me.**”
- **John** asked Jesus what the outcome would be for John, the disciple whom Jesus loved.
- Jesus answered by saying, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” (NAS)
- John went on to state that if all the things that Jesus did were written down, the **world** itself could not contain all the books.
- The Gospel of John was written by John, the author of 1st, 2nd, 3rd John, and Relation.

The Gospel of Matthew-16

Vs. 13-18-Jesus Identity Revealed

- At an earlier time during Jesus’ ministry He had asked the disciples who they thought He was. Peter answered that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. Peter was recognizing Jesus as the **Messiah**.
- Jesus responded to Peter that it was the Father in heaven who had revealed this to him.
- Jesus went on to say, “I also say to you that you are Peter and upon this **rock**, I will build My church. Many misunderstand this phrase as to mean that Jesus would build His church (the Christian church) upon Peter.
- The name Peter in Greek means **petros** or stone. When Jesus states that He would build His church upon “this rock” He uses **Petra** a projecting rock, cliff. Jesus meant that the church would be built upon the revelation of Jesus as Messiah (or Jesus Himself).

Summary

Vs. 23 sums up John’s Gospel, “...If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!” Our goal is to follow Jesus.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 27

1. Mary recognized the voice of Jesus after He said her name.
 - a. Does Jesus speak to us today? Explain?
 - b. Have you ever heard Jesus' voice?
 - c. What can we do to hear Jesus' voice?

2. Jesus appeared to two unnamed followers on the Road to Emmaus.
 - a. Apparently, these two followers were not part of the 11 Disciples. Why do you think Jesus appeared to these two?
 - b. It is interesting to note that Luke did not mention their names. What might this tell us about Jesus meeting the needs of ordinary people?
 - c. Why do you think Jesus disappeared after their eyes were opened?

3. After Jesus death, Peter went back to his former profession of fishing.
 - a. What lesson might we learn about Peter's behavior and his old lifestyle.
 - b. Why is it easy to fall back into old habits (not reading the Bible, not attending church, not fellowshiping with other Christians, etc.)?
 - c. What can a Christian do to stay on track when following Jesus?

4. Jesus told Peter that he would eventually die by crucifixion.
 - a. What gave Peter the courage to live such a courageous life after Jesus resurrection?
 - b. Read 1 Peter 1:14-15. How might Peter have applied these verses to himself?
 - c. Read 1 Peter 4:1-2. How did these verses apply to Peter's life?

5. Jesus stated that the church would be built upon Himself.
 - a. How do many unbelievers define the Church?
 - b. What misconceptions can believers have of the church?
 - c. Read John 17:20-21. How do these verses apply to the church today?

New Beginnings

Chapter 28-Acts

Introduction

- The book of Acts was written around 61 A.D. by **Luke**. Luke was the apostle Paul's personal physician (Colossians 4:14).
- Luke was also the author of the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-2). Historians are not sure about the identity of Theophilus. Some feel he was a prominent **Roman** official.

Transition

- The book of Acts is an amazing historical narrative in that it:
 - Makes a transition from the Old Testament's **Laws** to the New Testament's **Church**.
 - Introduces the work and indwelling of the **Holy Spirit**.
 - Continues the historical narrative from the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John).
 - Gives the historical setting for the rest of the New Testament (Paul's Epistles (letters) including the writings of James, Peter, John, and Jude).
- The four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John end with Christ's resurrection and Great **Commission**. Acts picks up these themes and details the working of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles and the Church for the next 30 years (30 A.D.-60 A.D). Acts ends with Paul's imprisonment in Rome (61-63 A.D).
- Most of Paul's Epistles (letters) to the churches were to **congregations** that he established during the Acts narrative.
- The Old Testament Laws were given to the Jews to make them aware of sin, their need for atonement through sacrifices, and to prepare them for ushering in the Messiah (Jesus Christ).
- The Jews **rejected** the Messiah; therefore, the Church Age was formed through the Holy Spirit. It is now the responsibility of the **Church** (the body of Christ; the collective body of all believers) to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- After Jesus' resurrection, He commissioned the believers to spread the Gospel until His return (Christ's second coming)-Matthew 28: 19-20.

Timeline of Important Dates of Jewish History

- God told Abraham that his descendants would be enslaved for 400 years in a foreign land (Genesis 15:13-16) 1875 B.C.-1445 B.C.=430 years generation=400 years).
- Numbers 14:33-34 The Israelites had 40 years to wander in the wilderness 1445-1446 B.C.

- Jeremiah 29:10 Israel will be in captivity for 70 years (605 B.C.-535 B.C.). Cyrus decreed the Jewish return in 535 B.C.
- Daniel 9:25-26 stated that 173,855 days would pass until Jesus would enter Jerusalem as Messiah (March 5, 444 B.C. to March 30, 33 A.D.)

The Book of Acts

Acts 1

Vs. 1-4-Introduction

- Jesus had given specific orders for the disciples not to leave Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit had fallen upon them (Acts 1:4-5).
- Jesus was resurrected on First Fruits (Sunday after His crucifixion). The Jews were to count 50 days after First Fruits and then celebrate Pentecost-which means 50.
- Jesus stayed 40 days before ascending into heaven (Acts 1:3). Thus, the disciples had waited 10 days for the Holy Spirit to arrive on Pentecost.
- On the 15 of Nisan, the Jews were to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Jews were to eat unleavened bread. Leaven was a symbol of sin. However, on Pentecost-the Jews were to eat leavened bread.
- The fact the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost symbolized that all people-Jews and Gentiles (Gentiles, who represented leaven were now joined with the Jews) were part of the same body of Christ.

Chapter 2-Formation of the Early Church

Vs. 2-13-The Holy Spirit Appears

- “Rushing mighty wind” The Greek word for mighty is *biaios* which means “violent.” The disciples had no idea what to expect. All they understood was that they were to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus was given a physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove after His baptism (Matthew 3:16). There is no indication that anyone other than Jesus and John the Baptist saw the Holy Spirit as a dove (John 1:32-33). This physical manifestation was given partially so John would recognize Jesus as the Messiah.
- It appears that the physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the form of tongues of fire came upon the Disciples so they would know and understand what the Holy Spirit was doing.
- Peace was often a message by God to humanity. A dove often symbolized “peace” which is what Jesus came to bring. Jesus came to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29); The angel that appeared to the shepherds at Jesus’ birth said, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased (Luke 2:14).

- The tongues of fire appear to have symbolized, not only the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but also the **work** the Spirit was going to do. That work was to preach the “Good News” of Jesus Christ.
- God often used physical manifestations when implementing His work.
 - When God promised Noah that He would never destroy the earth by water, He provided a **rainbow**.
 - When the Law was given, God manifested Himself with thunder, lightning, a thick cloud, a very loud trumpet, a fireball, smoke, and a violent earth quake. This got the Jews’ attention and proved to them that God was at work.
 - God wrought signs and **wonders** through the judges and prophets to prove Himself to the Jews.
 - Jesus performed many miracles to prove His **identity**.
 - God performed mighty miracles through the apostles to authenticate the formation and foundation of the “Church.”
- While God performs miracles today, these signs and wonders were meant for a specific purpose and for a specific time. Paul stated the true signs of an apostle in 2 Corinthians 12:12. These were specific acts designed to **authenticate** the apostles’ teaching.
- Since the Holy Spirit had not been given, the apostles indwelling of the Holy Spirit and belief in Christ came at two separate times. They were infilled with the Holy Spirit because they believed in Christ. Today, the filling of the Holy Spirit and salvation by faith happen **simultaneously**.

Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Filling of the Holy Spirit

- There is a difference between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the filling of the Holy Spirit.
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit a one-time occurrence when one receives Jesus into their life (Matthew 3:11). At this time, we are sealed with the Spirit for all eternity (Ephesians 1:13).
- The filling of the Holy Spirit is the ultimate goal of spiritual maturity each believer strives to obtain (Ephesians 5:18).

Vs. 14-47-Peter’s Sermon

- Peter stood up and delivered a powerful sermon explaining that these manifestations were predicted by **Joel** when he stated, “...And it shall be in the last days...that I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind...”

- Peter went on to explain that Jesus was the Messiah and **3,000** came to believe in Jesus.
- Many signs and wonders were performed by the disciples authenticating the work of the Holy Spirit.
- All the believers were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and began **sharing** with those in need.
- The Lord was adding to their numbers daily.

Chapter 6

Vs. 8-15-Stephen Brought Before the Jewish Council (The First Christian Martyr)

- God empowered **Stephen** to perform great wonders and signs among the people.
- Verse 9 indicates that men, from perhaps various synagogues, began arguing with Stephen.
- The nonbelieving Jews fabricated accusations against Stephen and dragged him before the Council. The Council, also known as the **Sanhedrin**, was composed of 70 or 72 Jewish elders and teachers.
- The Holy Spirit's anointing must have been upon Stephen for his face looked like that of an **angel**.

Chapter 7

Vs. 1-60-Stephen's Defense and His Stoning

- Caiaphas was the high priest presiding over the trial. Jesus was brought to Caiaphas before His **crucifixion** (John 18:24). Caiaphas was the ruling high priest from 18-36 A.D. while Annas was high priest from 6-15 A.D. (Luke 3:1-2). Annas apparently held a high position during Caiaphas' reign.
- Stephen began his narrative of the Jewish **history** starting with Abraham.

Vs. 51-53-Stephen Denounces the Council

- At this point, Stephen turned the narrative against the Council and stated how they had **rejected** God. They killed the Messiah, Jesus Christ, just as their forefathers had killed the prophets.

Vs. 54-60-Stephen is Stoned

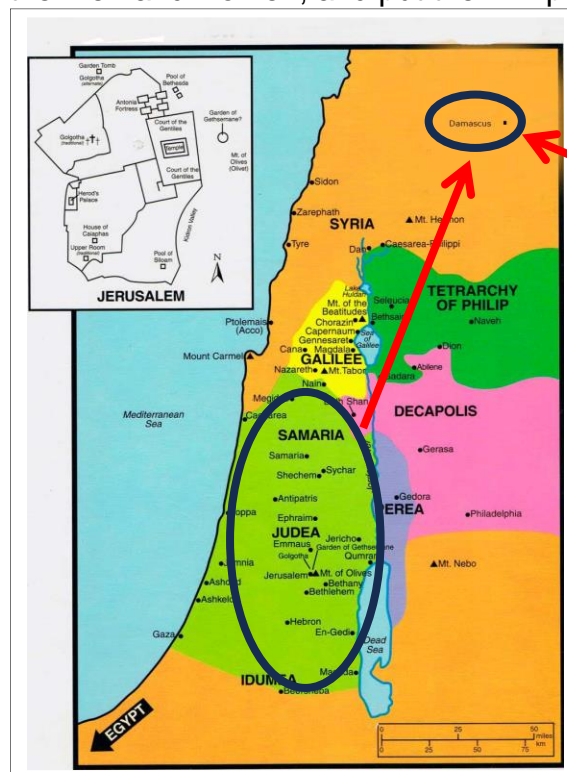
- The Council became enraged at Stephen.
- Stephen looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God and **Jesus** standing at His right hand. Stephen announced what he saw, and the Council rushed him out of the city and stoned him.

- As they were stoning Stephen, he cried out and asked the Lord to **receive** his spirit. Stephen also asked that the stoning would not be held against his executioners.
- At this point, Stephen died.

Chapter 8

Vs. 1-3-The Beginning of Saul's Persecutions

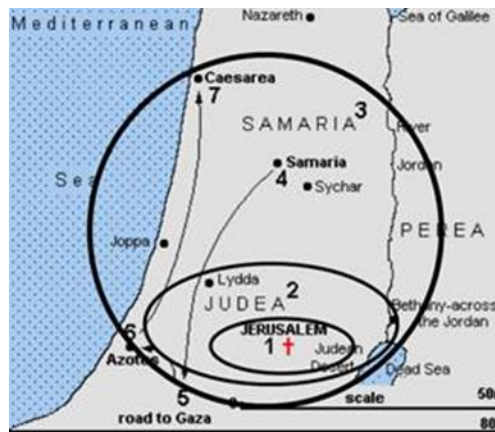
- Saul, who will later be called Paul, was in full agreement with Stephen's stoning.
- After Stephen's stoning, a great persecution fell upon the Christians at Jerusalem. Since Stephen was a Hellenistic Jew, it is possible that the **Hellenistic** Jews were the ones most severely punished and forced to flee Jerusalem. (Acts 11:19-20).
- The Jews were scattered throughout the regions of **Judea** and **Samaria**. This region was now the second phase of Jesus' commission (Acts 1:8). **Damascus**
- Saul began an intense persecution of the Christians. He went from house to house, arrested the men and women, and put them in prison.



Damascus

[minihttp://www.pinsdaddy.com/map-of-john-the-baptist-ministry_6lkIrvA6boFL7y2lfycrUDq59wxXpHuAWzaWjdKdgBg/stry_6lkIrvA6boFL7y2lfycrUDq59wxXpHuAWzaWjdKdgBg/](http://www.pinsdaddy.com/map-of-john-the-baptist-ministry_6lkIrvA6boFL7y2lfycrUDq59wxXpHuAWzaWjdKdgBg/stry_6lkIrvA6boFL7y2lfycrUDq59wxXpHuAWzaWjdKdgBg/)

The Great Commission of Acts 1:8 Begins



<http://www.talentshare.org/~mm9n/articles/Paul/Paul3.htm>

Chapter 9

Vs. 1-2-Saul Goes to Damascus

- Saul was threatening the Christians with **imprisonment** and death. Going to the high priest (Caiaphas), he obtained permission and letters to bind the Christians—both men and women—and bring them to Jerusalem.
- Paul's zeal for persecuting the Christians was very severe. It is amazing how strong the Christians were during this time of **persecution**. They did not renounce their faith but continued to spread the Gospel throughout the region.



<http://www.centuryone.com/mmwrd.html>

Vs. 3-19-Saul's Conversion

- As Saul was nearing Damascus (see map above), a light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. Falling to the ground, Saul heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" Paul answered, "Who are You, **Lord**?" He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."
- Paul apparently saw Jesus within the bright light (Acts 26:16; Galatians 1:15; 1 Corinthians 15:8; Philippians 3:12).
- Paul used the word "Lord" in asking who He was. The Greek word for Lord is *kurios* which is the Greek equivalent for the Old Testament Hebrew word *Jehovah*. The Lord said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting..."
- Paul identified the Lord **Yahweh** or (*Jehovah*) of the Old Testament with Jesus of Nazareth, whom he had so fiercely persecuted through the believers. It was because of this appearance that Paul considered himself to be an apostle (1 Corinthians 15:9; Acts 1:21-22).
- Jesus instructed Paul to go into **Damascus** and wait for further instructions. Paul gave a more detailed narrative in Acts 26:14-18.
- Vs. 7 states that the men heard the voice but did not see anyone. Acts 22:9 states that those with Saul saw the light but did not understand what the voice was saying.
- Saul was **blinded** by the experience. The men led Saul by hand into Damascus where he went 3 days and nights without eating or drinking.



<http://www.all-creatures.org/sermons98/map-07.html>

Vs. 10-18-Saul Receives His Sight

- The Lord appeared to **Ananias** and told him to pray for Saul to receive his sight.
- Ananias was apparently a leader in the **Damascus** church (Acts 22:12).
- At first, Ananias was ready to answer the Lord's call until he learned of the mission.
- God assured Ananias that Saul was a chosen instrument of His and would be a testimony for Christ to the Gentiles, kings, and to the Jews. God also told Ananias that He would show Saul the **suffering** that he would have to endure for Christ.
- Ananias referred to Saul as **brother** which indicated his trust in God's word. Ananias prayed for Saul and he immediately regained his sight and was baptized.

Summary

Never give up praying for the lost. They may be family members, loved ones, friends, neighbors, or people and rulers from countries around the world. Our prayers reach the throne room of heaven and are heard by our heavenly Father. God also knows about our physical needs. He wants us to come to Him while presenting our requests. Expect God to answer your prayer. It may not be in the way you asked but God will answer as He sees best. Trust for God's guidance, His peace, and know that He is very merciful.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 28

1. The book of Acts demonstrates the working of the Holy Spirit within the church.
 - a. How did the Holy Spirit's role differ in the New Testament from the Old Testament?
 - b. Why do you think Old Testament believers were so quick to turn from God?
 - c. Why were New Testament believers so dedicated to God's work?
2. Jesus commissioned the Church to spread the Gospel.
 - a. Discuss some effective ways in which the Church is spreading the Gospel of Christ?
 - b. List some cautions the Church could follow while spreading the Gospel of Christ?
 - c. When did you first hear of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ? Explain.
3. Jesus gave specific orders for the disciples not to leave Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit had fallen upon them?
 - a. Does God ever tell us to wait? Explain.
 - b. Have you ever felt spiritually stagnant while waiting for an answer? Explain.
 - c. What might we do during these periods of waiting?
 - d. What might God be telling us during these times of waiting?
4. In God's perfect timing, He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell the Disciples.
 - a. What do you think the Disciples were doing while they waited for the Holy Spirit?
 - b. What do you think the Disciples thought would happen when the Holy Spirit arrived?
 - c. Has God ever worked in your life in a way you never expected? Explain.
5. Both Peter and Stephen demonstrated incredible boldness and wisdom after they were filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Did your life change after receiving Christ as your personal savior? Explain.
 - b. What keeps people from accepting Christ?
 - c. As a Christian, how should our lives reflect God's work?

Paul's Mission Chapter 29-Acts

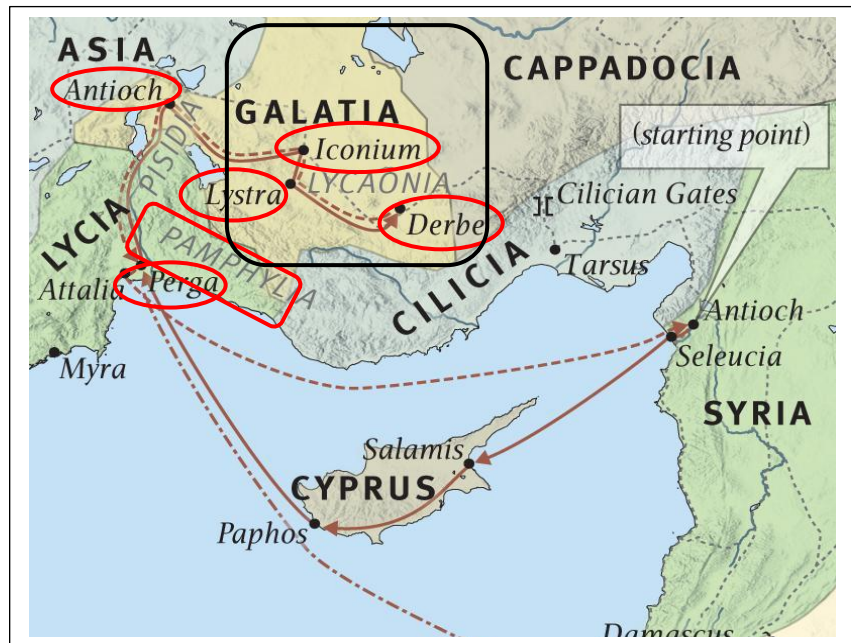
The Book of Acts

The First Missionary Journey

Chapter 11- Antioch

Vs. 19-22

- Many Christians fled **Jerusalem** to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. This was due to the Christian persecution.
- Christians came from Cyprus and Cyrene (North West Africa) and preached to those in Antioch.



<http://www.lahistoriaconmapas.com/atlas/syria-map/aleppo-syria-news-map.htm>

- Paul was from Tarsus
- Antioch was located on the Orontes River about 300 miles from Jerusalem and was the capital of the Roman province of Syria.
- Antioch was the **third** largest city in the Roman Empire, with a population of about 500,000.
- Antioch was one of the most cosmopolitan centers of the world and a center for commerce. Seleucia was Antioch's seaport.

- **Antioch** replaced Jerusalem as the number one Christian city and became the center for early missionary activity.
- Believers were first called "**Christians**" in Antioch (Acts 11:26).
- Christ's commission in Acts 1:7-8 was now being fulfilled through persecution.

Chapter 13- First Missionary Journey 47-48 A.D.

Vs. 13-36- Cyprus, Pamphylia/Pisidia

- While in **Antioch**, the Holy Spirit directed Paul and Barnabas to preach the Gospel.
- They took John Mark (the writer of the Gospel of Mark) with them.
- They went to Seleucia, then on to Cyprus.
- After preaching throughout Cyprus, Paul, Barnabas, and Mark travel to **Perga** in the region of Pamphylia (see map above).
- Mark **left** Paul and Barnabas and went back to Jerusalem.
 - This was going to cause tension later between Paul and Barnabas.
- From Perga, Paul and Barnabas went to Antioch in the region of Pisidia (see map above). This was a different Antioch than Paul's launching base in Syria.
- Paul usually met with the **Jewish** leaders of a city before meeting with the Gentiles.
- Paul delivered a sermon about the Jewish history and the coming of Christ.

Vs. 46-52- Paul Preaches to the Gentiles

- Since the Jews refused to become spiritual "lights of the world," Paul turned to the **Gentiles**. Since the Jews rejected their Messiah, the Church Age was born.
 - We are living in the **Church Age** today.
 - The Church today is the body of Christ composed of anyone who believes in Jesus. The Church's mission is to spread the Gospel throughout the world (Matthew 28:19-20).
- The Gentiles received the Gospel message with great joy.
- The Jews incited the devout and prominent **women** and the leading men of the city. They revolted against Paul and Barnabas and drove them out of their district.
- Paul and Barnabas went on to Iconium.

Chapter 14- Iconium/ Lystra/ Derbe

- Paul and Barnabas preached within the regions of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (see map above). While in Lystra, **unbelieving** Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and turned the crowds against Paul and Barnabas.
- The people **stoned** Paul and dragged him out of the city.

- They supposed him to be dead.
- The Lord **miraculously** restored Paul and he reentered the city.

The Churches Within the Region of Galatia

- The cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe were located within the region of **Galatia** (see map above).
- It is possible that the book of Galatians was written to the churches within the Galatian region sometime after Paul's first missionary journey.
- If so, the Galatian letter was probably written from Antioch in A.D. 49, making it the **earliest** of Paul's epistles.

The Book of Galatians

Chapters 1-2

Vs. 1-10-Paul's Amazement

- Paul sent his letter to the various churches throughout the region of **Galatia**.
- Galatians 1:6 indicates that Paul was **amazed** that the new believers had already turned from the sound teachings of the Gospel.
 - This did not mean they had lost their salvation, but they were beginning to go back to Jewish traditions.
- After Paul's **miraculous** stoning, recovery, and after the many miracles God wrought through Paul and Barnabas, it was hard to believe they had left the Gospel message so quickly.
- Human nature tends to quickly **revert** to old lifestyles and habits. Jesus states in Luke 9:23, "...If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross **daily** and follow Me" [NASV].

The Second Missionary Journey

The Book of Acts

Chapter 15

Vs. 36-41-Paul and Barnabas Separate

- After some time in Antioch, Paul wanted to **revisit** the churches from the first missionary journey.
- Barnabas wanted to take **Mark** with them.
- Paul was adamant against taking Mark since he had abandoned them during the first journey.

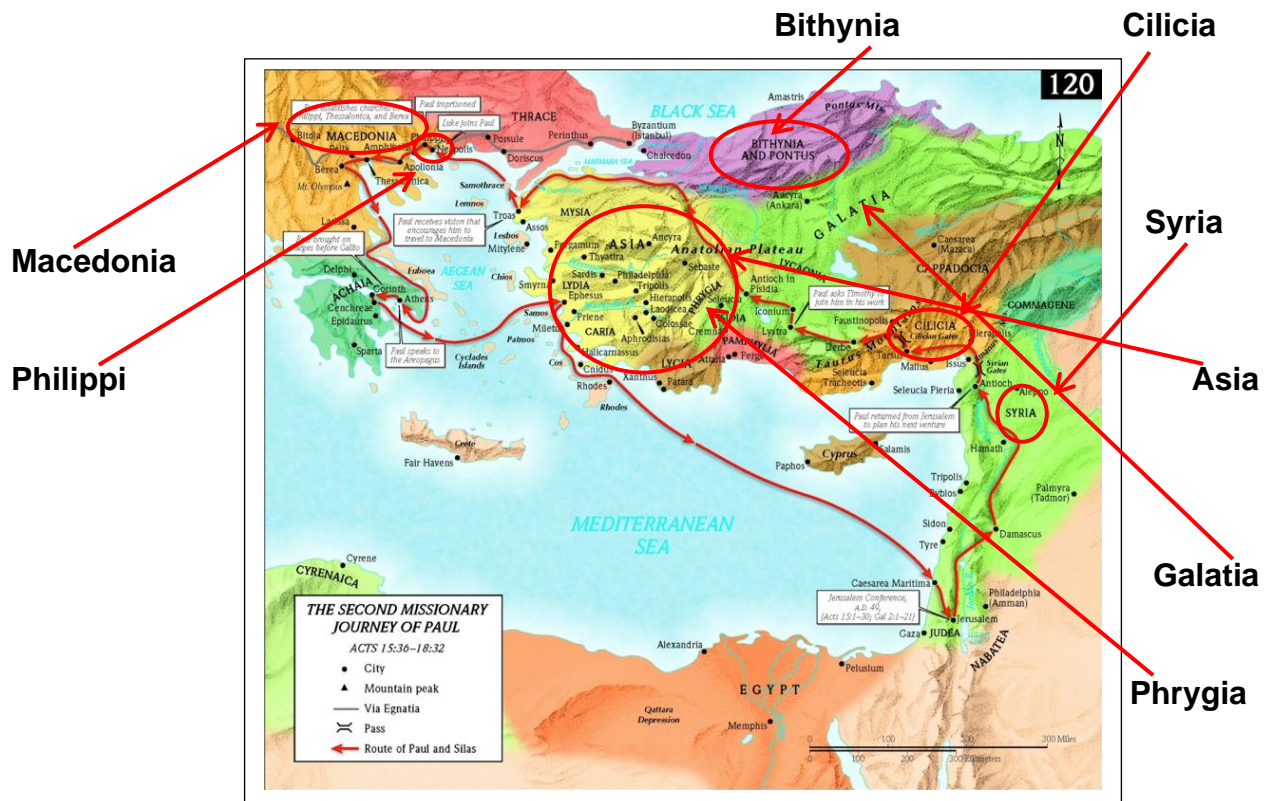
- Because of this disagreement, Paul and Barnabas **separated**.
- Barnabas took Mark with him to Cyprus while Paul chose Silas as a missionary companion.

The Churches Revisited

Chapter 16

Vs. 1-5-Timothy Accompanies Paul

- Paul and Silas traveled up through Syria and Cilicia and **strengthened** the believers.
- During their travels, they revisited Derbe and Lystra. Lystra was the city where Paul was stoned during the first missionary journey.
- While at Lystra, Paul became acquainted with **Timothy**.
- Paul had Timothy accompany him on the rest of the journey.
- 1st and 2nd Timothy was written by Paul to Timothy (1st Timothy 1:1-2).



<http://quotesgram.com/apostle-paul-quotes-about-death/>

Ch. 16-10-The Call to Europe

- Paul traveled throughout the Phrygian and Galatian regions. However, he was **forbidden** by the Holy Spirit to go into Asia (Asia Minor today).
- After journeying into the region of Mysia, Paul and Silas prepared to go into Bithynia. However, the Holy Spirit prevented them from making those plans.
- Paul continued west and came to the port city of Troas.
 - Troas was the launching point for those entering **Macedonia**.
- Paul received a vision of a man giving an appeal for Paul to preach in Macedonia.
- Paul immediately made plans for Macedonia.

Vs. 11-15-Philippi

- Paul went to the island of Samothrace, then to Neapolis, and on to **Philippi**.
- King Philip of Macedonia founded the city of Philippi.
 - Philip was the father of **Alexander the Great**.
 - Philippi eventually became a Roman colony and a military outpost.
- Paul established the first European church at **Philippi**.
- Because of Paul's preaching, the chief magistrate had Paul and Barnabas beaten with rods and thrown into prison.
- At midnight, as Paul and Silas were **singing** hymns and praying, a great earthquake shook the prison doors open.
- The punishment of death was given to a Roman guard who lost a prisoner.
 - Paul stopped the guard from committing suicide when he shouted that none of the prisoners had escaped.
- Immediately, the guard brought Paul and Silas to his house, washed their wounds, and became a **believer** (Acts 16:31).

The Book of Philippians

- Paul eventually wrote the book of Philippians while in prison at **Rome**.
- His writing occurred after the third missionary journey.
- The Philippians had remained faithful to Paul.
- Twice, the Philippians sent money to Paul while he ministered in **Thessalonica** (Phil. 4:16).
- Philippians 4:19- "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." [NASB]
- A church that gives to missionary work will have its **needs** met.

Chapter 17

- From Philippi, Paul traveled through Amphipolis, Apollonia, and **Thessalonica**.



<http://quotesgram.com/apostle-paul-quotes-about-death/>

The Books of 1st and 2nd Thessalonians

1st Thessalonians

- After Paul left Thessalonica, he traveled down to **Athens**.
- From Athens, Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to encourage the believers.
- Since Paul and Silas had to leave the city so quickly, they were concerned with the believers' spiritual well-being.
- Paul traveled to **Corinth** after Timothy left for Thessalonica.
- Timothy went to Corinth and gave Paul a **positive** report about the church.
- At Corinth, Paul meets Aquila and his wife Priscilla.
- Paul was very pleased about the report and wrote 1st and 2nd Thessalonians.
- 1st Thessalonians 3:1-2, 5-8-Paul gives an account of his contact with the Thessalonians.
- From Corinth, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila at Ephesus and quickly left for Jerusalem.

Third Missionary Journey

The Book of Acts

Chapter 18-Paul's Third Journey Begins

- After spending time in Antioch, Paul left for his **third** missionary journey.
- Paul went through the Galatian and Phrygian sections of Asia strengthening all the disciples.

Chapter 19

Vs. 1-7-Paul's Mission in Ephesus

- After ministering throughout the Galatian and Phrygian regions, Paul went to **Ephesus**.



<https://www.understandchristianity.com/timelines/pauls-third-missionary-journey/>

- The Gospel possibly came first to Ephesus after Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there on his second missionary Journey.
- Ephesus was known as a **commercial**, political, and religious center.
 - The great temple of **Artemis** (Diana) was the central point of Ephesus' religion.
- Ephesus was a major trading center much like Alexandria and Antioch.

The Book of Ephesians

- Paul wrote the book of Ephesians while **imprisoned** in Rome around A.D. 61.
- The book was possibly a **circular** letter in that it was meant to be sent to various churches throughout Asia.
- Reasons for being circular:
 - Ancient manuscripts do not contain the word “Ephesus” in the introduction.
 - There is an absence of a controversy within any church.
- Paul preached in Ephesus for about **three** years during the third missionary journey. The fact that this letter does not mention specific names appears to indicate that it was meant to be passed on.

Chapter 20

Vs. 1-6-Paul Ends His Third Missionary Journey

- While in Ephesus, a riot broke out due to Paul’s evangelism. The silversmiths were losing money since people were not buying the souvenir statues of the goddess Diana.
- After the uproar, Paul left for **Macedonia** (see map above).
- From Ephesus, Paul went to Troas and followed the same route to Corinth as he did on the second missionary journey.
- Paul wrote the book of Romans while in Corinth (see map above) during his **third** missionary journey. Paul intended to take an offering to the poor in Palestine. He intended to deliver the money while in Jerusalem.
- From Jerusalem, Paul planned on visiting the Roman church while on his way to **Spain** (Romans 15:24)
- This plan did not materialize according to Paul’s plans since he was arrested while in Jerusalem and sent to Rome as a **prisoner**.
- It was during this Roman imprisonment that Paul wrote the books of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

Summary

Ephesus was a very large and wicked city. However, it was this city in which Paul was able to spread the Gospel throughout Asia. Demetrius, the silversmith, caused Paul much trouble. Despite his opposition, God was in control. We may not fully **understand** why certain trials and tribulations come our way. Even when there appears to be no “end in sight,” our hope must rest in God. Psalm 23 states, “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me...” [NASB].

Discussion Questions

Chapter 29

1. Read Acts 1:7-8.
 - a. What method did God use to carry out this command in the early church?
 - b. Has God's work ever come from a bad situation in your life? Explain.
 - c. Has God ever placed you in an unusual situation to proclaim His Word? Explain.

2. Antioch replaced Jerusalem as the primary Christian city and became the center for early missionary activity.
 - a. Why do you think Antioch became the hub of Christianity (look on your map)?
 - b. How might the Christians in Jerusalem felt to see a Gentile city become the hub of Christianity?
 - c. Do you think God can make a paradigm shift in our life? In other words, do you think God can exchange long established habits or ministries for new ones? Explain?
 - d. Why do we tend to fight change?

3. Mark left Paul and Barnabas during the first missionary journey. It is felt by many that Mark's courage faltered during this Journey? Paul and Barnabas split up in deciding whether to take Mark on the second missionary journey.
 - a. Did Mark's failure eventually turn out for his good? Hint-the Gospel of Mark was written by him.
 - b. Read 2nd Timothy 4:9-11. At the end of Paul's life, what was his view of Mark's usefulness?
 - c. What do you think caused a change in Mark's life?

4. After Paul's stoning, he reentered the city.
 - a. What gave Paul such courage?
 - b. Do you think you have this kind of courage? Do you think you might have such courage if the situation arose?
 - c. God often waits to give us faith or courage until we need it. Have you ever experienced an unusual amount of faith or courage in a difficult situation? Explain.

5. Why do you think the Holy Spirit did not allow Paul to preach in Bithynia or Asia during his second missionary journey?
 - a. Do you have unsaved family members or friends? Is it frustrating when they do not respond to the Gospel? Explain.
 - b. Why is it important to keep praying for them? Is it possible that God might use someone other than yourself to lead them to Christ?
 - c. Why do you think God sent Paul to Greece instead of Bithynia?

Paul's Final Days Chapter 30

Roman Imprisonment

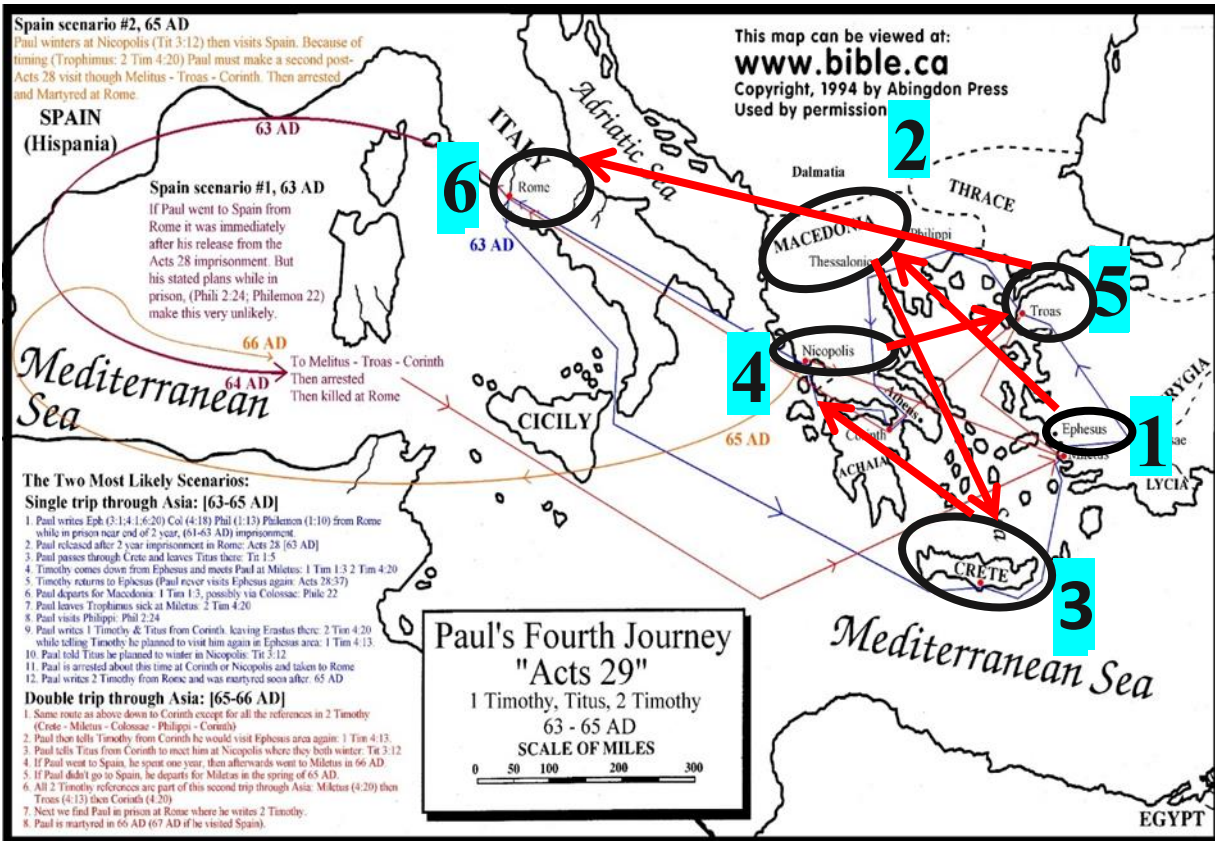
- Paul was under house **arrest** for two years.



https://www.conformingtojesus.com/charts-maps/en/paul's_journey_to_rome_map.htm

- His accusers probably never showed up in Rome knowing they could not get a verdict of guilty.
- During that time, he could entertain visitors.
- Paul was **not** kept from preaching the Gospel.
- During his house arrest, Paul wrote the letters of Ephesians, **Philippians**, Colossians, and Philemon.
- It is probable that Paul was freed and continued his ministry.
- After imprisonment, Paul wrote three letters: 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus.
- These letters are often called the "**pastoral epistles** (letters)" because they contain teachings for the pastoral care of the churches and explain the qualifications for ministers.

Probable Order of Events After Paul's Roman Imprisonment



- After his imprisonment, Paul visited Ephesus and left Timothy there to supervise the church.
 - Paul then went on to Macedonia (1 Timothy 1:3)
- From Macedonia he wrote 1 Timothy.
- Paul visited **Crete** and left Titus there to supervise the churches (Titus 1:5).
- After Crete, Paul went to Nicopolis in Achaia (Southern Greece-Titus 3:12).
- Either from Macedonia or Nicopolis, Paul wrote an encouraging letter to Titus (the epistle of Titus).
- Paul visited Troas whereby he was suddenly **arrested**, taken to Rome and imprisoned (2 Timothy 4:13).
- During Paul's second Roman imprisonment, Paul wrote the epistle of 2nd Timothy (2 Timothy 1: 16-18; 4:9-12).
- According to tradition, Paul was beheaded on the **Ostian Way** which was west of Rome.

The Book of 1st Timothy

Background

- Timothy was the son of a **Gentile** father and a **Jewish** mother named Eunice (Acts 16:1-3).
- Paul asked Timothy to accompany him while on his second missionary journey.
- After Paul's first Roman imprisonment, he left Timothy in **Ephesus** (1st Timothy 1:3).
- 1st Timothy was probably written from Macedonia (1 Timothy 1:3).
- Paul desired to see Timothy, but circumstances prevented such a visit (1 Timothy 3:14; 4:13).
- This letter was a guide for Timothy's pastoral responsibilities.

Important Themes

- 1:3-4 Paul gave instruction concerning strange and false doctrines.
- 1:5 Paul instructed Timothy to **love** from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.
- 1:18-19 Paul encouraged Timothy to fight the "**good fight**."
- 2:3-4 It is God's will for all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of His truth.
- Chapter 3 contains instructions for bishops (overseer or elder) and deacons.
 - The elder was the principal official in a local church.
 - **Deacons** (minister or servant) were helpers of the elders.
- Chapter 4 Paul instructed Timothy against the dangers of false teaching.
- Chapter 5 Paul gave instructions for godly relations.
- Chapter 6 Paul gave further instructions concerning the relationship between masters and slaves; the dangers of **false** teachers; the dangers of money; and the importance of godliness.

The Book of 2nd Timothy

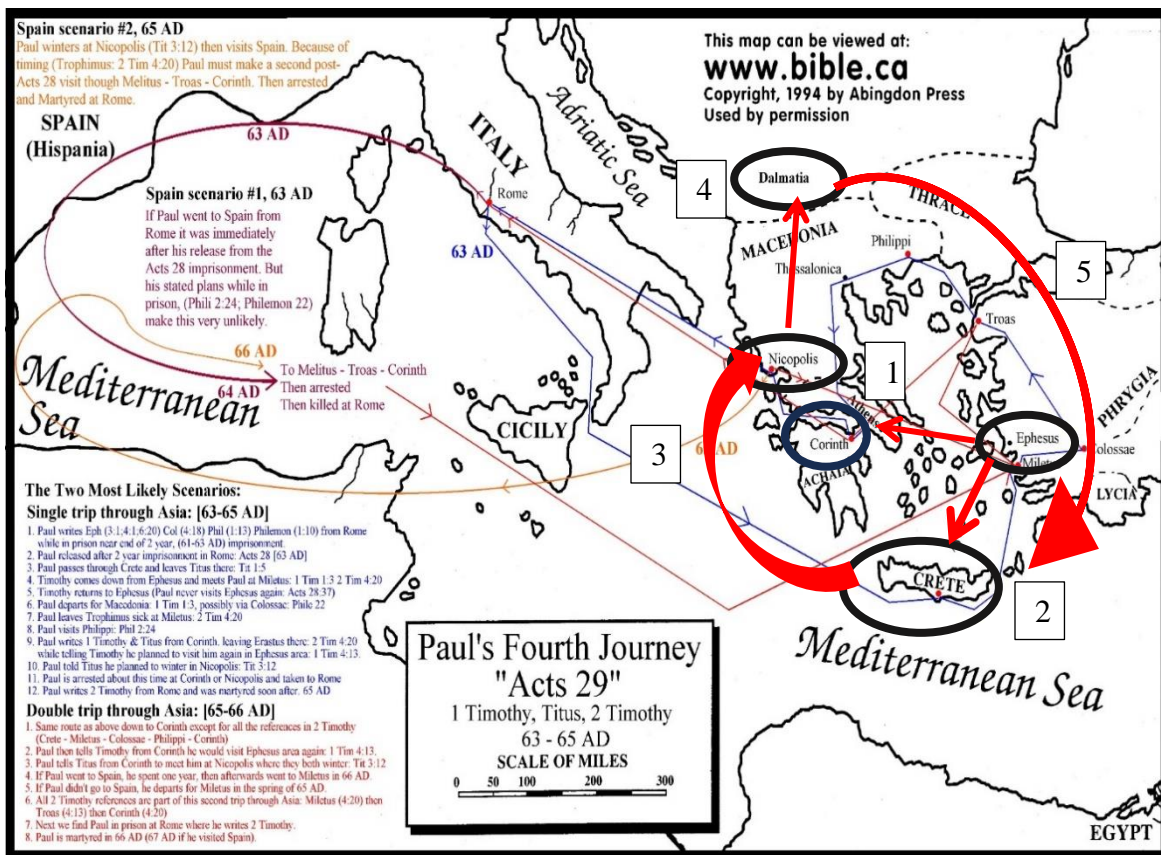
- Paul was imprisoned in Rome a **second** time as a probable result of Nero's persecution.
- Paul realized that his death was near (1:8, 16; 4:6-8).
- Paul was **alone** and cold in a dungeon (4:10-13).
- 2nd Timothy was probably Paul's last letter.
- 2nd Timothy is a deeply personal letter.

Important Themes

- 1:1-2 Paul expressed his love for Timothy.
- 1:6-7 Paul encouraged Timothy to **rekindle** the gift that God had given him.
- 1:8 Paul told Timothy not to be **ashamed** of the Gospel nor of him.
 - Paul told Timothy to join him in suffering for the Gospel.
- 1:12 Paul was assured of his **heavenly** reward.
- 2:4-5 Paul encouraged the believers not to entangle themselves with worldly matters.
- 2:19 Paul had the promise of eternal **security**.
 - We are sealed by God (Revelation 9:4; Ephesians 1:13).
- 3:16-17 **All** scripture is adequate for godly living.
- 4:7-8 Paul gave his last testament of a job well done.
- 4:9-12 Paul wanted Timothy and Luke to join him while in Prison at Rome. Tychicus would take Titus' place in Ephesus.

The Book of Titus

Background



- Titus was a **Gentile** by birth (Galatians 2:3).
- Titus was converted through Paul's ministry (Titus 1:4)
- Titus accompanied Paul to Jerusalem after the first missionary journey (Acts 15:2; Galatians 2:1-3).
- During Paul's third missionary journey, Titus was Paul's representative to the church at **Corinth** (2 Corinthians 7:6-7; 8:6, 16).
 - He and two others took the letter of 2nd Corinthians to Corinth.
 - This letter urged the Corinthians to keep their promise of collecting funds for the poor in Jerusalem.
- After Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, he left Titus in **Crete** to oversee the churches.
- Later, Titus left Crete to join Paul in Nicopolis.
 - Either Artemas or Tychicus took Titus' place in Crete (Titus 3:12).
- Paul sent him on to **Dalmatia** (the former Yugoslavia-2 Timothy 4:10).
- Church tradition states that Titus eventually returned to Crete and died there.

Important Themes

- 1:4 Paul referred to Titus as his **child** in faith.
- 1:5 Paul wanted Titus to solidify the churches and to appoint elders in every city.
- 2:1-10 Paul explained the duties of a minister.
- 2:11 Paul stated that salvation was for **all** people.
- 3:4-7 Paul explained that salvation was by grace not by works.

Summary

Paul understood that his time on earth was limited. He desperately wanted the churches to grow in Christ. After his first imprisonment, Paul sent Timothy, Titus, and others such as Artemas and Tychicus to carry on the work of ministry to the churches. Paul's concluding words to Timothy should be the motto for every believer: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" [2 Timothy 4:7 NASB].

Discussion Questions Chapter 30

1. Timothy was eventually given the responsibility to supervise the church at Ephesus. Ephesus was a well-established church and was obviously a big responsibility for Timothy.
 - a. Read 1st Timothy 1:18. What do you think Paul meant by fighting the “good fight”?
 - b. Read 1st Timothy 6:6-12. Is it difficult to live a Christian life? Explain?
 - c. What help do we have in fighting the “good fight?”

2. Paul left another protégé, Titus, to minister in Crete.
 - a. What equipped Timothy and Titus to effectively lead these churches?
 - b. What value does training have in Christian ministry? Explain.
 - c. Can we be effective ministers of the Gospel without adequate training? Explain.

3. Paul was beheaded on the Ostian Way.
 - a. Why do you think God allowed Paul to die this way?
 - b. Read 2nd Timothy 4:6-8. Was Paul ready to meet Jesus?
 - c. What do you think Paul meant when he said that he had kept the faith?

4. Paul encouraged Timothy to rekindle the gift that God had given him.
 - a. What do you think Paul meant by this?
 - b. What do you think was Timothy’s gift?
 - c. Why do you think Timothy’s spiritual gift had weakened?
 - d. What might Timothy have done to strengthen his spiritual gift?

5. Every believer has a spiritual gift.
 - a. How would you define a spiritual gift?
 - b. What spiritual gift has God given you?
 - c. What can we do to strengthen our spiritual gifts?

The End of Time

Chapter 31-The Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation of Jesus Christ: A Commentary by John Walvoord

Chapter 1

Vs. 1-3-Introduction

- Vs. 1-The opening verse of the first chapter immediately introduces the general theme of Revelation, namely, the revelation of **Jesus Christ** in His present and future glory.
- The Greek word for *revelation* is *apokalypsis* meaning a “revelation, disclosure, or unveiling.”
- The revelation was given by God to Jesus Christ, who gave it to an angel to give to **John**, who wrote it down for the believers.
- Vs. 3 indicated the time was *near or shortly coming* meaning **quickly** or suddenly coming to pass.
- This phrase did not indicate the events would occur soon in relative time but when they did occur, they would happen quickly.
 - There was given a three-fold blessing for those who **study** Revelation:
 - Blessed are they who **reads**
 - Blessed are they that **hear**
 - Blessed are they that **keep** those things which are written therein.

Vs. 4-8-Seven Churches

- John wrote to seven churches which were all located in the western half of **Asia Minor** (modern day Turkey)



<https://atrueott.wordpress.com/2013/01/14/the-literal-throne-of-satan-the-book-of-revelation-evidences-examined/>

Vs. 5-6-Jesus Credentials

- Verse 5 stated:
 - Jesus was a faithful witness
 - Jesus fulfilled the role of a prophet
 - Jesus was the “**firstborn** of the dead”- the first to receive a resurrected and immortal body.
- Col. 1:15 stated Christ was “*the firstborn of every creature*” which indicated a **positional** attribute and not a numerical order.
- Vs. 6 stated Christ made all believers as a kingdom of priests unto God.

Vs. 7-8-Jesus, The Beginning and the End

- Vs. 7-as Christ was received by a cloud during His ascension (Acts 1:9), so will His coming be in the clouds of heaven (Matt. 24:29-30). **All** will see Him.
- *Amen*- “truth” or “faithfulness” hence the meaning “be it true” or “**so be it.**”
- Vs. 8-Christ is the *Alpha and Omega*-the beginning and the end.

Chapter 2

Vs. 1-7-The Message to Ephesus

- The geographical order of the churches followed a **pattern** beginning at Ephesus, moving north to Smyrna, then farther north to Pergamos, east to Thyatira, south to Sardis, east to Philadelphia, and southeast to Laodicea.
- Though there were certain issues that pertained to these churches, there was a general theme which applied to other churches at the time.
- These themes are applicable to the church **today**.

Vs. 2-3-Commendation of Doctrine and Diligence

- The Ephesians was commended for their labor and **patience** (perseverance), and abhorrence toward those who were evil.
- However, the church had **lost** their love and was working with a legalistic sense of duty.
- There were dangerous patterns these “second generation” Christians were following:
 - First: a **cooling** of spiritual love.
 - Second: the love of God replaced by a love for worldly pleasures.
 - Third: a spiritual **compromise** toward worldly wants and desires.
 - Fourth: spiritual corruption.
 - Fifth: a **departure** from the faith and the loss of effective spiritual testimony.
- The Lord gave three direct exhortations:
 - First: Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen
 - Second: **repent**

- Third: do the first works.
- The threat of Christ removing the lamp stand appeared to indicate the Church's loss of **effective** testimony.

Vs. 8-11-The Message to Smyrna

- Christ referred to Himself as the *"first and the last."*
- This phrase meant Christ was the **eternal** God past, present, and future.
- Since the church at Smyrna was going through persecution, Christ reminded them He too was persecuted and martyred.
- Because of persecution, the Christians at Smyrna were experiencing **poverty**.
- However, Christ said they were **rich** in faith.
- It is interesting to note Christ gave no **rebuke** to the Christians at Smyrna.

Vs. 12-17-The Message to Pergamum

- The church at Pergamum was commended for remaining and not denying Christ.
- There were those within the church who practiced the teachings of Balaam and the teachings of the Nicolaitans.
- These false teachers were apparently allowed to **stay** in the church.
- During the time of Constantine, it became popular to be a Christian.
- As a result, Christian teachings became **blurred** with secular teachings.

Vs. 18-29-The Message to Thyatira

- Christ commended the church for their works, faith, and love.
- Apparently, the church at Thyatira was known for its good **works**.
- The church was also commended for its love, faith, service, and perseverance.
- The church **appeared** to be growing in their effort to serve Christ.
- Christ gave a powerful indictment against a wicked woman named **Jezebel**.
- Jezebel's teaching and influence led members of the church to commit fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols.
- Jezebel claimed the right and office of prophetess and urged the **Christians** in Thyatira to continue their idolatry and pagan worship.
- Jezebel was given time to **repent** and did not do so.
- Christ encouraged the believers to hold fast onto what they had and to **wait** for His coming.
- Christ promised the faithful would rule over nations during the millennium.
- Those who proved worthy on earth would be given positions of **authority** during the millennial reign.
- "The morning star" was probably a reference to Christ Himself.

Chapter 3

Vs. 1-6-The Message to Sardis

- Sardis had a reputation for being **alive**. However, it was dead in spiritual life.
- Churches today must be careful not to substitute programs and activities for their growth in Christ.
- The church at Sardis had some faithful believers since Christ told them to strengthen the things that remained.
- The church was told to **repent** or else reap judgment.
- Those who **overcome** will be clothed in white (**overcome-the one who believes in Jesus Christ**).
- The robes represented the character and service of the saints.
- The steadfast saints would be rewarded for their purity of character and service.
- The overcomer would not have their name **blotted** out from the Book of Life.
- This phrase was not a threat of losing salvation but was meant to affirm eternal security.
- This message could have reflected the future church during the Protestant Reformation.
- During the 1500's the church was very corrupt and had **strayed** from the pure Word of God.
- There were those, however, who stayed true and trusted in Christ as Savior.
- The message to Sardis is applicable to the church today.
- The believers were encouraged to: be **watchful**, strengthen and hold fast to the things which remained, remember the truth, remember experiences of the past, and repent in mind and heart.

Vs. 7-13-The Message to Philadelphia

- Christ was showing Himself to be holy and true.
- Christ's message was a true **light** in a dark and evil world.

- As the church found itself amidst an evil generation, its **steadfastness** toward Christ remained true.
- Christ held the **key** of David which represented Christ's authority.
- This reference appears to have alluded to Isaiah 22:22. Here it was recorded Eliakim held the key to all the treasures of the king.
- Christ held the key to truth and holiness as well as to opportunity, **service**, and testimony.
- The city of Philadelphia was situated geographically as an entrance to Asia Minor.
- Christ was going to keep this church alive, so their testimony and witness could **spread** throughout Asia Minor.

- There was great opposition toward the Christians in Philadelphia, especially among the Jews.
- Sometimes the worst persecutors eventually turn to Christ.

Vs. 14-22-The Letter to Laodicea

- Christ's faithfulness was a contrast to the Laodiceans.
- The Laodiceans were **indecisive** and were neither faithful nor true.
- Christ referred to Himself as the "Beginning of the creation of God."
- This phrase did not mean He was the first created but that He was **before** all creation.
- Christ taught the dangers of being **lukewarm**.
- Christ characterized being "cold" as those who were rebellious and hostile to God's word.
- Those who were "hot" were characterized as being on fire for Christ.
- Those who were characterized as "lukewarm" were those who may have tasted the blessings of salvation but felt **indifferent** to the workings of the Holy Spirit.
- Since the church had an abundance of **material** things, they did not have a need for God in their life.
- Christ was telling them though they were rich in material blessings; they were poor in spiritual blessings.
- Without the joys of Christ, the Laodiceans were **miserable**.
- Christ warned about the dangers of material blindness and self-reliance.
- To those Christians who had become ineffective, Christ warned them to repent or be disciplined.
- Christ **disciplines** his own out of love.
- Christ does not **impose** Himself upon any individual but does respond to an open invitation of the heart.
- Christ will **urge** unbelievers, call upon them, and knock upon their heart's door, but He will not force His way into any person.
- The day will come when Christ will not present Himself as the **invited** guest but will come with power, glory, and judgment.

Chapter 19

Vs. 1-10-Marriage of Christ and the Church

- The heavenly host announced the **marriage** of the Church to Christ.
- The wedding contract was consummated for the Church after Christ's death and **resurrection**.
- Christ has joined every Christian to himself in a legal marriage.
- When Christ comes for His church (the **rapture**), the second phase of the wedding will be fulfilled, namely, the Bridegroom coming to receive His bride.

Chapter 21

Vs. 1-A New Heaven and Earth

- In verse 1, John saw a new heaven and a new earth.
- As mentioned in prior chapters, the book of Revelation is a compilation of **many** prophecies already given throughout Scripture.
- There are several sources other than Revelation that prophesy of a new **heaven** and new earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; II Peter 3:13).

Vs. 2-27-Description of the New Jerusalem

- John saw the New Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down from of heaven.
- The beauty of this city was without **comparison**.
- The New Jerusalem was compared to that of a bride adorned for her husband.
- Since the **Holy City** came from heaven, an implication could be made this city was not created after the millennial period but was preexistent before the millennium.
- It is possible Christ was describing this city when said He goes to **prepare** a place for us (John 14:2).
- The beauty of this city will be filled with the glory of **all** believers.
- The New Heaven and earth will be a **perfect** environment in contrast to the old heaven and earth.
- The saints will have eternal enjoyment in a **perfect** situation.
- The inhabitants of the city will experience eternal life with absolute moral purity.

Chapter 22

- As the book of Revelation closed, a special invitation was given by the Spirit and the bride (the Holy Spirit and the church).
- It is fitting for Revelation to end with the urging for all to "**come**."
- A threefold invitation was given:
 - to the one who hears
 - to the one who is **thirsty**
 - to any other who desires eternal life
- **Eternal life** will be given to all willing to accept the free gift.
- A similar invitation was extended in Isaiah 55:1.
- The invitation to come was an urgent **command**.
- The day will arrive when it will be too late to receive Christ's saving grace.
- **Now** is the day of grace.
- The hour of judgment is coming.
- Revelation ends with a reminder of God's "grace."
- The Father's ultimate will is for all to come to a saving **knowledge** of Him.

Summary

- The church at Ephesus represented the danger of losing the first love (Rev. 2:4).
 - The church at Smyrna represented the **strength** Christ gives to those who suffer.
 - Today, as world events unfold, it may behoove the Church to adhere to Christ's words of "Fear not."
 - The church at Pergamum represented the constant danger of **doctrinal compromise** (Rev. 2:14-15).
 - Compromise is often the first step toward complete defection.
 - We should heed this warning today since compromise and tolerance is widely accepted.
 - The church at Thyatira illustrated the dangers of **moral compromise**.
 - Do we make moral compromises today?
 - The church at Sardis illustrated the danger of spiritual deadness.
 - Do we place our attention upon our programs and good works rather than upon God?
 - The church at Philadelphia was warned against the danger of not holding fast and was exhorted to keep **patient** and to maintain the strength they had.
 - The church at Philadelphia was to wait for the coming Lord.
 - This letter represented the rapture of the church before the time of tribulation.
 - The church at Laodicea was issued a warning against the dangers of being **lukewarm**, of self-sufficiency, and not being conscious of their spiritual needs.
 - To contemporary churches, each of these messages is amazingly relevant.
 - We are living in an age of grace whereby Christ summons all to a saving relationship with Him.
 - The invitation to the seven churches is as relevant today as it was during John's time.
-
- God wants everyone to see how much he **loves** them and asks each person to open their heart and receive Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

Prayer of Salvation

Dear Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I trust and follow you as my Lord and Savior. Guide my life and help me do your will. In your name, Amen.

Prayer of Rededication

Lord Jesus, my spiritual flame has begun to die and the zeal I once had for you is no longer the center point of my life. I ask that you strengthen my flame and let my lamp- once again-burn brightly for you. When I enter heaven and see you face-to-face, I want to say that I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. I want you to say to me, "Well done good and faithful servant." May I leave today with a renewed sense of your nearness and purpose. I pray this in Jesus' name-Amen.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 31

1. The church at Ephesus had lost its love and was working with a legalistic sense of duty.
 - a. What can cause a Christian to lose their love and commitment for Christ?
 - b. What steps could one take to rekindle that love and commitment?
 - c. What warning signs might we observe that our love for Christ is waning?
2. Jesus gave no rebuke to Smyrna.
 - a. How do trials bring perspective to life?
 - b. Have you ever experienced a “wake-up” call in life? How did it change your way of thinking or behaving?
 - c. Jesus said the Christians in Smyrna were rich in faith? What do you think that meant?
3. Read through the list of churches.
 - a. What message impacted you the most?
 - b. What message do you feel was the harshest? Why?
 - c. What message was the least harsh? Why?
4. Jesus allowed John to see the new Holy City?
 - a. Why do you think Jesus allowed John to see this future city?
 - b. Does this future city give you strength for today? Explain.
 - c. What is the first thing you would like to do or see when you get to heaven?
5. The final message to all unbelievers is to “come.”
 - a. What does this mean?
 - b. What does this message say about God’s love?
 - c. How should we respond to this final message?

