Called to Serve

A BASIC SURVEY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES FOR ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

"Hey, I didn't know that!"

Student Edition

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Called To Serve: A Basic Survey Course of the Holy Scriptures

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Lesson One

About the Holy Scriptures

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- How many books in the Orthodox Bible;
- How many people actually wrote the Bible;
- How many years it took to write the Bible;
- The three designations of the term "Word of God";
- The primary difference between the Old and New Testaments.
- Some early versions of the Bible in English
- The Common version of the western Roman Empire
- Some modern versions of the Bible in English

What is the Bible?

The book which we call "The Bible" is actually a library of books. The word "Bible" is actually from the Greek word *biblios* (βιβλιοσ) which simply means the "book."

There are a total of 76 books in the Orthodox Canon of Scripture (that is, the Orthodox Bible).

- 49 in the Old Testament,
- 27 in the New Testament.

The Writers of the Bible

The men who wrote the Bible did so under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit. About fifty people were responsible for writing the books in our Bible. We know many of them (Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, etc.) but some of them we do not know. For example, we do not know who wrote the book of Job, or some of the Psalms.

The Bible was written from about 1400 B.C. to about 100 A.D. - a period of about 1500 years. To the Orthodox Christian, there is no "inter-testamental period" because we see the Old Testament as not just a set of writings, but a living covenant which remained in effect until the New Testament fulfilled it.

The Bible is the written witness of God's revelation to His people. But it is more than just a record of God's word. You can read the record of an event, but simply reading this record does not permit you to actually participate in the event. I can read about the Civil War, but that does not mean I actually experience or participate in it, even if I go to Civil War reenactments. I can only experience what it may have been like, but the actual event is beyond my experience.

The Holy Scriptures, however, offer us direct participation in the life of God, because they are His message to us (not just those in the past), and present to us His truth about who we are, and Who He is. We get a chance to experience the same God, the same vision that the Prophets and Apostles did.

The Word of God

The phrase "Word of God" is variously used today, especially among heterodox Christians, and especially in reference to the Holy Scriptures, and sometimes to the expository preaching of the Scriptures.

Yet, to the Church Fathers, the Prophets, and to Orthodox Christians, the "Word of God" means the Logos, the Eternal Word, Jesus Christ, Who became Incarnate for us, and is glorified as "one of the Holy Trinity." The Eternal Word communicates His message to us primarily through the Holy Scriptures. The Word is a person, and that person is the message. His message is proclaimed throughout the Old and New Testaments, and by those of us who endeavor to "spread the Word."

Thus, for us there are three distinct, but

interconnected, designations of the "Word of God."

1. The *God-man Jesus Christ*, the Eternal Word, the 2nd person of the Holy Trinity,

2. The *written witness to Him* in the form of prophetic and apostolic writings, that is, the Holy Scriptures, and,

3. The *proclamation of Him* as an invitation to faith and life in Him.

For the Orthodox Christian, the Old and New Testaments form a unified whole of God's revelation. That is, we do not see the Old Testament as the 'Jewish Bible,' and the New Testament as the 'Christian Bible.' We see that the Old Testament prophets were receiving instruction from, and witnessing to, the same Christ that the New Testament apostles were. The primary difference between the two is one of promise, and fulfillment. One may also see that the Old Testament addressed exterior or ritual holiness, while the New Testament deals with interior or personal holiness.

Ancient Manuscripts and Translations

No part of the Bible currently exists in what we call the "autograph" copy, that is, the original document in the original handwriting of the writer. What we do have is ancient manuscripts in the original language, and ancient translations of the original texts.

Manuscripts

All manuscripts are documents which were copied by hand in the original language. Of course, there was no printing press until the 16th century. Manuscripts are made from another original copy. Many of these were scrupulously and tediously copied. Occasionally, there were errors in the copying, but because we have so many manuscripts that go back to the 1st and 2nd centuries, it is easy for us to compare and see where these additions occur. The term manuscripts indicates a handwritten copy in the language of the original.

Translations

What is today referred to as a version of the Bible, is a translation. The oldest version of the Old Testament is called the *Septuagint*. It is frequently abbreviated as LXX (the roman numerals for "70") The Septuagint Old Testament is an ancient Greek version of the Old Testament, translated at the order of Ptolemy, the King of Egypt, beginning around 269 B.C. It is the oldest version of the Old Testament that we have in any form or in any language.

The LXX was the Bible used and quoted by our Lord Jesus Christ. It was used by Ss. Peter, Paul, James, John and all the Apostles and early Church. It is most often quoted in the New Testament whenever there is an Old Testament quote. There were other Greek versions made after the Septuagint. These include the ones by Aquila, Theodotus, and Symmachus, but none of them were accepted as authoritative like the Septuagint. The Septuagint was the "*King James Version*" of its day.

Other versions of the Bible include the Latin *Vulgate* (meaning "common" or "vernacular") and was in common use in the west for many centuries. It is the official version of the Roman Catholic Church even to this day. There were also many Syriac, Coptic, and Ethiopian translations of Scripture.

You will, from time to time hear of something called the *Masoretic text*, or version. Masoretic text is often abbreviated MT. It is a version of the Hebrew Old Testament, translated from 700-1000 a.d. (yes, that's right) by the Masorets, Jewish scholars trying to standardize

the Old Testament Hebrew lettering and pronunciation from fragments of existing Hebrew, oral tradition, and the Septuagint.

Haplography in the MT

Often, they translated well known references to Christ out of the text. This is a process scholars call *haplography*, or "plain writing." It means to make "plain" or flat something which was not plain before. In many places the Hebrew in the Masoretic text is obscure, or nonsensical. Often this is because of the attempt to remove any reference to Christ or the Church's interpretation of Him, from the text.

For example, in Psalm 40 in the Masoretic text, verse 6 says:

> *Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired,*
> ***but Thou hast dug out ears for me.***

The Septuagint, on the other hand, says something very different.

> *Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired,*
> ***but Thou hast prepared a body for me.***

This is a clear reference to the bodily Incarnation of Christ, and the process of removing the Christian reference is a textbook case of haplography.

Another example is the Masoretic version of Psalm 22. This is a prophecy of the Crucifixion, and in verse 16, the Septuagint says

> *-they have pierced my hands and my feet.*

The Masoretic text, however, has rendered it differently;

> *-they have sawed off my hands and my feet.*

There are many more, but we will not include them here. This is just a survey course.

English Versions

There have been many translations of the Holy Scriptures into the English language. Some have been good and admirable works, some have been deliberately slanted, or poorly done, or to promote a particular theology. Very few have included all of the books of the Septuagint in the Old Testament.

They started with a translation of the Gospel of St. John into Anglo-Saxon by the Venerable St. Bede in the early 700s.

Alfred the Great translated portions of the Bible into Old English around 900 a.d. After the Norman Conquest, Norman French mixed with Anglo-Saxon to become what we now call "Middle English."

Around 1380 a.d. *John Wycliffe* and his fellow workers, translated the Bible from the Latin Vulgate into Middle English.

In the 1520's a.d. *William Tyndale* produced his own translation of the Bible. Tyndale used the available Greek and Hebrew texts, as well as the Latin Vulgate, for his translation.

In 1568, in response to several roughly translated puritan versions of the Bible, the Church of England produced their own version, known as the "*Bishop's Bible*."

In 1611, under the appointment of King James of England, 54 scholars produced a new version, based on the earlier "Bishop's Bible", but also consulting other English versions, the Vulgate, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, and German texts (Luther's translations, which had conspicuously removed several books from the New Testament!). It was published first in 1611. It was subsequently republished several times afterwards, with corrections, as there were mistakes in the first versions.

Interestingly, until about 1929, the King James Version of the Bible did contain the books of the Septuagint Old Testament!

Modern English Versions

We won't attempt to list them all here. There are more and more every year. Not all are of value, and many have been produced and translated with a particular theological slant permeating the text. It is best to avoid them.

Revised Standard Version (1952)

> *The RSV is the version which OCA liturgical textual translations are made from.*

New American Standard Bible (1963)

New International Version (1978)

New King James Version (1982)

New Revised Standard Version (1989)

> *The NRSV has the dubious distinction of being roundly condemned by Orthodox bishops in America, so blatant is the deliberate theological error evident in its translation.*

English Standard Version (2001)

> *This is very like the original RSV, but updated.*

There are many other versions of the Bible in English now. It is hard to keep track of them all, and they are not all translated accurately, or even well. Be careful, then, when you read from the Holy Scriptures!

LESSON ONE REVIEW

What does the word "Bible" mean?

_____

How many books are in the Orthodox Bible ?

_____

How many are in the Old Testament?

_____

How many are in the New Testament?

_____

How many men actually wrote the Bible?

_____

How long did it take them?

_____

What are the three designations of the term "The Word of God" generally used by Orthodox Christians?

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Which one do the fathers typically use?

_____

What is the Septuagint (LXX)?

_____

Why does the Orthodox Church use the Septuagint Old Testament?

_____

_____

_____

What is a manuscript?

_____

_____

What is a translation/version?

_____

_____

What is the Vulgate Bible?

_____

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_____

_____

What is the Masoretic text (MT)?

_____

_____

When was it translated?

_____

What is haplography?

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Give an example of haplography. Cite the Chapter and verse of the Bible passages.

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What are some modern English versions?

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Lesson Two

About the Two Testaments

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The divisions of the Old and New Testaments
- How many books in each division
- The purposes of each group in the New Testament

There are interesting parallels between even the arrangements of the books of the Old and New Testaments.

Old Testament	New Testament
Law	Gospel
History	History
Wisdom	Letters
Prophecy	Prophecy

Each begins with the most important revelation of God's Truth, followed by the Histories, then Wisdom/Letters (which tell the reader how to guide their lives) , and finally, prophecy.

Even the final books have parallels. The last book of the Orthodox Old Testament is the book of Daniel, which is very similar and very related to the Book of Revelation. Daniel was also the last book written in the Old Testament, just as Revelation was the last book written in the New Testament.

You will find that in many heterodox Old Testaments, that Daniel is not the last book - Malachi is the final book. These are following the Masoretic order, placing the 12 minor prophets at the end, since they are smaller books. The Septuagint Old Testament has Daniel last since it was written last, just as Revelation is in the New Testament.

Shadow & Fulfillment

As we look at the Old Testament, we see it as a unified Christian book; one permeated by the presence of Christ, and in preparation for understanding His Incarnation, and the institution of the New Covenant. Far from being a quaint, Jewish accounting of pre-Christian happenings, the Old Testament tells us precisely how to interpret what Christ did, said, and set forth for us for our salvation.

The Old Testament

The Books of the Old Testament can be divided into four easy categories. Learn them!

Law	5 books
Histories	18 books
Wisdom	7 books
Prophecy	19 books

*4th Maccabees is sometimes included in an appendix, but is considered part of the Old Testament.

The Books of the Law, or ***the Torah***, are the five books attributed to the Prophet Moses. They are also called ***the Pentateuch***, which is Greek for "the Five books." Each of the Old Testament books in English has a Greek title, because they were named when only the Septuagint was being used.

The Histories account for much of the history of Israel from the period of Joshua and the entrance into Canaan around 1400 B.C. all the way to the exploits of Judas Maccabeus around 170 B.C. covering a period of about 1300 years.

The Wisdom books contain much wisdom, history and prophecy, but are catalogued under this classification because of its profound philosophical truth. The wisdom books have always formed the core of liturgical worship and hymnography, for Jews and Christians alike.

Some of the Psalms are a thousand years older than much classical Greek literature, yet are still being sung and prayed by over a billion Christians and Jews. Much ancient poetry is known only to a few scholars, but the Psalms are known by over a billion Christians.

The Prophecies contain much of God's message to the people of Israel, particularly when they were dabbling in idol worship, or had given themselves over to sinful practices. They also are filled with references to the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

The New Testament

The books of the New Testament, like the Old, fall into easily distinguishable categories.

Gospel	4 books
History	1 book
Letters	21 books
Prophecy	1 book

The books of the Gospel are the account of the life, teaching, suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is one Gospel - the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There are four books recounting that Gospel, and we call them the Gospel books. The official title of each is "The Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John" indicating that they are not writing a new Gospel, but only recording their accounting of the one Gospel. They give us Jesus' actions, word, and doctrines. They were written so that we may believe in Christ (John 20:31).

The Book of History of the apostolic Church is told in the Acts of the Apostles. It actually is the second part of St. Luke's Gospel, and picks up where the Gospel leaves off.

The Letters, or Epistles, are letters written by certain Apostles to individual Churches, or to Churches in general. There are 21 total. They help guide our Christian life.

14 from St. Paul (individual)

7 from other Apostles (general)

They tell us the problems, and conditions of these early Christian communities, and the solutions which the Apostles prescribe.

The Book of Prophecy is the Book of Revelation. Written by the Apostle John while in exile on Patmos in Greece, it is the last of the New Testament books to be written. It was written to provide clear hope for Christians still in, and suffering in, the world.

LESSON TWO REVIEW

What are the divisions of the Old Testament? Include the number of books in each division

_____

_____

_____

_____

How long a time is covered by the Old Testament books of History?

_____

Give the divisions of the New Testament books and the number of books in each.

_____

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Briefly tell the purpose of the Gospels

_____

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_____

What is the purpose of the book of Acts?

_____

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_____

What is the purpose of the Letters?

_____

_____

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_____

What is the purpose of Revelation?

_____

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_____

Lesson Three

The Nature of Holy Scriptures

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The council which determined the canon of Scripture as we have it today, and the date of that council.
- The three criteria for Scriptural books
- Some books which did not make it into the canon
- About the spiritual sense of Scripture
- The four senses of Biblical interpretation
- Some specific examples of each kind

Which came first, the Bible or the Church?

This is self-evident to anyone who actually *reads* the Bible, as it contains the early happenings of the Apostolic Church. The living, breathing, worshipping community which went forth to the four corners of the earth did not have a "Bible" as we have it. They did have access to the Old Testament, but they proclaimed Christ as the Savior, and did not pass out Bible tracts. To truly understand the Holy Scriptures, to accurately interpret the Word of God to the human heart and mind, one must recognize that the Bible is a liturgical document. That is, it is properly understood only within the context of the living community of worshippers - the Church.

The Ecclesial Nature of Scripture

The Bible came from the Church. The Canon of Scripture was fixed at the Council or synod of Carthage in 397 A.D. This Council determined once and for all, for Orthodox Christians, what books were to be considered Holy Scripture. Among the heterodox, the Roman Catholic Church had no official canon until the Council of Trent in the 16th century (although the Vulgate was accepted as the official text since the 5th century), and the protestant churches still have no established authority or document which describes the canon they accept.

The Old Testament accepted as authoritative by the Orthodox Church is the Septuagint version. It is abbreviated LXX (roman numerals for "the Seventy"). The Septuagint is the oldest surviving version of the Old Testament in existence. It was used by our Lord Jesus Christ, and quoted by the Apostles throughout the New Testament. As the oldest version, 800-1000 years older than the Masoretic Hebrew text, it provides us with the text closest to the original writings of any other version.

The Orthodox Church, as the one, true Body of Christ, used three criteria to determine which books would be accepted as the New Testament. These criteria were that the book in question had to be;

1 **Apostolic** in its origin,

2 **Salvific** in its message,

3 **Universal** in its recognition *(that is, known by the whole Church)*

There were many books accepted as Scriptural that were rejected by the Council of Carthage in 397 a.d., not because they were all fraudulent, but because they did not meet all of these criteria. Some of these texts include the *Didache* (the teaching of the 12 Apostles), the 2 epistles of Clement, the 7 letters of Ignatius, the *Shepherd* of Hermas, the *Epistle to Diognetes*, the *Acts of Peter and Paul*, and various other Epistles and Gospels attributed to different apostles. Many of these are genuine, but not universally recognized by the whole Church. The much talked about *Gospel of Thomas*, for example, was not only not recognized by early Orthodox Christians, but not even recognized by all Gnostics. It just wasn't important to the Church, as it is just a collection

of alleged sayings of Christ. Most other so-called "Gospels" were written hundreds of years later than our canonical Scriptures.

The Liturgical Nature of Scripture

Both the Old and New Testaments came out of a community whose principle task was the proper worship of the one true God. Is it far fetched to say, then, that outside the liturgical experience of the worshipping community of believers one may not properly understand Holy Scripture? The ancient Christian saying, "*lex orandi lex credendi*" (the rule of prayer is the rule of belief) is a living testimony to this experience. Simply studying the text does not give the meaning which the Spirit inspired, because without the living worship of God, the message is out of context.

The context of worship and its role in properly understanding the message intended by the writers of the Bible is no secret. Nor is it some preciously hidden knowledge accessible only to those who have been deemed worthy. The Church has been the guardian of this precious deposit of faith since the beginning.

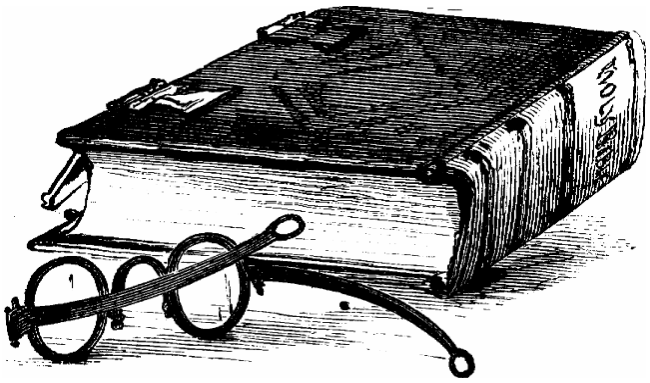
The books of Scripture were written by the Church, to the Church, and for the Church.

We see that the Scriptures are proclaimed;

- **Regularly** *(daily or weekly in most parishes)*
- **Publicly**
- **In Worship**

The reading and proclamation of the Bible takes its proper place within the worship of the Body of Christ.

The Bible was written by men who worshipped the One True God. It is worth repeating. The Bible was written by the Church, to the Church, for the Church. Outside of "*the Church of the Living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth,*" (1 Tim 3:15) it is impossible to accurately interpret, let alone translate, the Holy Scriptures.



About Biblical Interpretation

The Old Testament, as we have said, is a library of Christian documents. When we look at the Old Testament, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and within the mind of the Church, we can see the shadow, imprint, and 'mark' of Christ everywhere, from the very beginning to the very end.

However, in order to properly understand Old Testament prophecy, we must properly understand Biblical interpretation from the mind of the Church. This is not as daunting as you might think.

Beginning with Philo of Alexandria (c. 40 b.c.), the Old Testament has been understood both literally, and *spiritually*. Philo was a first century b.c. Hellenized Jew, well versed in the Scriptures (Septuagint Old Testament) as well as philosophy, and was the first to explain the Old Testament Scriptures in a spiritual sense. What does this spiritual sense or interpretation of Scripture mean?

The Church has always understood the Holy Scriptures to have deeper, and non-contradictory, truths within it. These are clearly intended by God, though it is unclear how much of it is intended by the human author, and how much he did not intend!

THE FOUR SENSES OF SCRIPTURE

St. John Cassian expresses the Church's mind with precision and clarity, and identifies four senses or kind of Biblical interpretation. These four senses have been the Church's mind about the Scriptures from the time of the Apostles! Here they are. Memorize them now.

1. The Literal sense
2. The Spiritual sense
    I. The Typological sense
    II. The Moral sense
    III. The Eschatological sense

There are fancier and more technical words for these commonly used by scholars, but you don't need to know those right now.

THE LITERAL SENSE

The Literal sense is what the author wrote, and what he plainly meant by what he wrote. Metaphors are a part of the literal sense. For example, when St. John writes that Jesus says *"I am the Vine…"* He does not mean that Jesus is saying He is literally a plant. He means that this language is a symbol for the reality, we get our life from Him, as a branch does from it's parent *vine*.

All other senses of Scripture depend on the literal sense. That is, they are grounded entirely in the fact that the literal sense is true, and that the Biblical persons and events were real.

The next three belong to the spiritual sense of Scripture.

THE TYPOLOGICAL SENSE

The Typological sense is the sense that refers to Christ in types, or prefigurements. We see these everywhere in the Old Testament. St. Paul even uses the word 'type,' in two of his letters.

- **Romans 5:11**
  "Adam was a <u>type</u> of Christ…"
- **1 Corinthians 10:6**
  "*Things that happened in the desert to Israel during the Exodus are <u>types</u> for Christians."*

Memorize these two now.

The word *type* means a mark, or imprint, as one would leave from a blow, like a handprint.

THE MORAL SENSE

The Moral sense refers to the personal, moral and spiritual interpretations which have rightly been made over the centuries. We apply these lessons to ourselves, and they teach us very specific things about the spiritual life in Christ.

A good example is Psalm 137:9, which says "*Blessed is he who takes your little ones, and dashes them against a stone."* Taken literally and physically, this is horrific, but in the moral sense, 'little ones' means 'little sins', sins which have only begun and have not gained strength. Blessed is he who destroys them by dashing them against the Rock of our salvation - our Lord Jesus Christ.

Other examples of the moral sense can be seen in a multitude of our liturgical texts, and especially in the *Canon of St. Andrew of Crete*.

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL SENSE

The Eschatological sense simply means the interpretation of Scripture as pertains to the end times. This is not always what you may think, and not limited to the books of Daniel or Revelation. A common example of all four of these senses can be seen in the Biblical city of Jerusalem.

- In the *literal* sense, Jerusalem is a real city in Israel, the capital of Israel. It is mentioned in the Biblical text as a city

which really existed. It even exists to this very day.

- In the *typological* sense, Jerusalem is the Church. It is the city on a hill, illuminating the whole world with its holiness and truth. It is the new, True Israel.
- In the *moral* sense, Jerusalem is the soul of the believer, the interior city of the King of Glory.
- In the *eschatological* sense, Jerusalem is the heavenly kingdom in all its splendor: the heavenly Jerusalem, our true homeland.

Finally, one last point. It is important for us to remember that the spiritual sense of Scripture depends entirely on the literal sense. That is, the spiritual sense comes from the *facts* presented in Scripture, *not the words*. Without the foundation of the literal sense, mythical and pointless allegorizing would have no end.

LESSON THREE REVIEW

Which came first: the Bible or the Church?

_____

How do we know this?

_____

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What were the three criteria used by the Church to determine which books would be considered Scripture, and which would not?

_____

_____

_____

Which Council determined the current Canon of Scripture?

_____

What was the date of this Council?

_____

List a few books which were considered by some to be authoritative and Scriptural up to this council

_____

_____

_____

What does "*lex orandi lex credendi*" mean?

_____

How is Scripture always proclaimed in the Church? In what context is Scripture always proclaimed by Christians?

_____

_____

_____

Who first used the spiritual sense to describe interpretation of Scripture?

_____

What are the four senses of Scripture?

_____

_____

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_____

From the writings of which saint do we see these listed most clearly?

_____

What is the Literal sense of Scripture?

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What is the Typological sense of Scripture?

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In what two Bible verses does St. Paul use the word “type”?

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What does the word “type” actually mean?

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What is the Moral sense of Scripture?

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Give an example of the Moral sense from the Psalms.

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What is the Eschatological sense of Scripture?

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Give an example of each of these senses of Scripture, using Jerusalem as the subject

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All senses of Scripture depend on which sense for their proper context and interpretation?

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Why?

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Lesson Four

Books of the Old Testament

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- All the books of the Old Testament
- The origin of their names, where applicable

A mechanic or carpenter must know his toolbox. A surgeon must know his instruments. Each must not only know how to use them, but where each can be found for a particular job or operation.

The Bible is the "toolbox" of the Christian.

It is easy to learn the books of the Old Testament, and it can be done in one evening. Most of the Old Testament books take their names from the Septuagint Old Testament, and have their origin in the Greek language.

BOOKS OF THE LAW

There are five books of the Law:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Memorize them now.

These five books are also known as the Pentateuch, from the Greek *penta* (five) and *teuchos* (book). With the exception of the last Chapter, telling of his death, they were written by Moses.

Genesis means *beginning*. Genesis traces the history of mankind from the Creation of the World up to the Exodus; about 1500 b.c.

Exodus means *exit*. This book tells how God brought the Israelites out of Egypt to Mt. Sinai, and there received the Law, to govern them as an independent nation under God.

Leviticus is named for the *Levites*. All men of this tribe were dedicated to religious service. One family of them became priests and the rest were assistants, musicians, caretakers, and so on. The book of Leviticus contains special laws for Levites so that they may properly prepare themselves for worship, and regulations for the worship itself.

Numbers is named for the twice-called census, or *numbering,* of Israel. It records parts of the law not included in Exodus, and tells of the Israelites wandering the desert of Sinai before they reached the Promised Land.

Deuteronomy means *the second telling of the Law.* It record's Moses final address to his people before they enter the Promised Land, recounting all that they have been through, repeating much of Exodus.

BOOKS OF HISTORY

There are 18 books of history.

Joshua, Judges, Ruth

1-2 Kingdoms (1-2 Samuel)
3-4 Kingdoms (1-2 Kings)
1-2 Paralipomenon (1-2 Chronicles)

1-2 Esdras, Nehemiah
Esther, Judith, Tobit,
1,2,3 Maccabees*

*4 Maccabees is sometimes in an appendix

The first grouping tells of how Israel conquered the land of Canaan and lived there being lead by the Judges.

The second grouping tells how Israel became a monarchy, and rose to prominence. It also tells of how it became weakened through idolatry, and fell and were taken captive by the Assyrians and Babylonians.

The third grouping tells of events after the Babylonian captivity was over, and ending with the heroic struggles of the Maccabees.

BOOKS OF WISDOM

There are seven books of Wisdom.

Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes,
Song of Songs *(Song of Solomon),*
Wisdom of Solomon
Sirach

Psalms is a collection of liturgical hymns, many written by the Prophet King David.

Job is a narrative dealing with the problem of human suffering. It's origin is quite independent of the other Old Testament Scriptures.

Proverbs is a collection of short wisdom sayings; brief and to the point, written by the Prophet King Solomon.

Ecclesiastes means *the preacher*, which is the name Solomon gave himself in this writing. This book is a sermon, dealing with the uselessness of most human activity, followed by the purpose and duty of man on earth.

Song of Songs is a great work of mystical theology, filled with typology and allegory. It is the only book in the Bible which does not specifically mention God by name. It is often described as a love poem, a drama, an operetta, or a jumbled collection of them all. In reality, it is a profound prophecy of the love of Christ for His Church.

Wisdom of Solomon is a collection of longer wisdom themes, including much Messianic prophecy.

Sirach is also a collection of the profound, Spirit filled wisdom sayings of the wise Sirach. These are excellent guides to life and wisdom, rather like the book of Proverbs.

BOOKS OF PROPHECY

There are 19 books of Prophecy. For ease of memorizing, we will list them in four groups. Take the time to learn them thoroughly, and review them often.

Minor Prophets

The next three groups are known as the twelve minor prophets only because their writings are much smaller than the major prophets.

Hosea	Obadiah	Zephaniah
Amos	Jonah	Haggai
Micah	Nahum	Zechariah
Joel	Habakkuk	Malachi

Major Prophets

The first group is the Major Prophets, so called because they wrote large, or major, books.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch,
Epistle of Jeremiah,
Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.

These can be easily memorized using the following mnemonic. Memorize it now.

I	**I**	**I**saiah
J	**J**ump	**J**eremiah
B	**B**ack	**B**aruch
E	**E**ating	**E**pistle of Jeremiah
L	**L**ittle	**L**amentations
E	**E**gg	**E**zekiel
D	**D**oughnuts	**D**aniel

The Minor Prophets

In the Masoretic text (MT), the Minor Prophets are placed last, after the Major Prophets, and you will see this in heterodox Bibles. In the Orthodox Bible, however, the Septuagint ordering is used, and the last book is the latest written.

Hosea wrote just before the fall of Israel, and his life was a living allegory - his love for his unfaithful wife, Gomer, a type of God's love for his unfaithful people.

Amos came from the country to urge the city dwellers to turn away from their self-seeking dishonesty and cruelty.

Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, and had a similar message. It is Micah who foretold where the Messiah was to be born, a prophecy well known to Jewish scholars ever since.

Joel denounced the sins that would ultimately lead to Israel's destruction at the hands of foreign powers.

Obadiah foretold the destruction of the enemy nation of Edom.

Jonah proclaimed God's call for repentance to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. It was heeded by the Assyrians, while being ignored by the chosen people.

Nahum foretold the final ruin of Nineveh because of it's return to sin.

Habakkuk asked God why sinners go unpunished for so long. God replied that what may seem slow by human standards is utterly sure unless sinners repent.

Zephaniah lived shortly after Habakkuk, and sounded the call for sinners to repent and return to God.

Haggai taught the Israelites after the return to Jerusalem at the end of the Babylonian captivity, and urged them to rebuild the Temple.

Zechariah lived at the same time as Haggai, and urged the Israelites to be diligent in returning to faithful Temple worship.

Malachi tells the Israelites that giving to God, short of one tenth of one's belongings is robbing God. He urges the Israelites to return to God by faithfully fulfilling their obligations to Him.

The Major Prophets

These are called the major prophets because of the length of their works, not because they are more important.

Isaiah lived in Jerusalem and was an adviser to King Hezekiah. His writings are a clarion call to righteousness, a warning of the coming captivity, and the promise of relief and restoration after the captivity. He foretold many things of the life and mission of Christ, 700 years before the Incarnation.

Jeremiah lived in Jerusalem before and during the invasions preceding the Babylonian captivity. He pointed out that captivity was the result of sin.

Baruch was the secretary of Jeremiah, and tells of the coming captivity, and restoration afterwards, including a prophecy of the Incarnation of Christ as a part of Jerusalem's consolation.

The Epistle of Jeremiah is a copy of a letter sent by Jeremiah to Jews about to be taken captive to Babylon, and warns them sternly against idolatry.

Lamentations is the writing of Jeremiah weeping over the destruction of Jerusalem, but acknowledging that it was the just punishment for her sin.

Ezekiel was a priest, and one of the captives in Babylon. His book details marvelous visions of heavenly worship.

Daniel was also a Babylonian captive, but he became the trusted advisor of the Babylonian king. He foretells the fall of Babylon, and the great empires of the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans that would follow.

LESSON FOUR REVIEW

Name the books of the Law

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Name the books of History

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Name the books of Wisdom

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Name the books of Prophecy

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What is the meaning of the word *Genesis*?

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What is the meaning of the word *Exodus*?

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Who were the Levites, and what was their work?

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What does the word *Deuteronomy* mean?

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What does the word *Ecclesiastes* mean?

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Who called himself that?

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Name the Major Prophets

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Lesson Five

Books of the New Testament

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- How many Gospels there are
- All the books of the New Testament

The New Testament has 27 books - three times three times three! Be sure to review the four groupings of New Testament books as found in Lesson Two.

THE GOSPELS

There is one Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ! It is recorded in four books. You can probably already name the four Gospel books.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

Each of these is an account of the **one Gospel; the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

The word "Gospel" means "good news." Each of these accounts gives us the "good news" that Jesus, suffered, died, and rose again from the dead, bringing life and immortality to all who believe in Him. That is the Gospel in a nutshell.

The Gospels were written by the men whose names they bear. Matthew and John were two of the Twelve, and sure eyewitnesses of Jesus' earthly ministry.

Matthew was written especially for Jews who knew the Old Testament and were looking for the Messiah. Often it points out the fulfilling of prophecy.

Mark is a short but powerful accounting of Jesus work, stressing His actions and miracles, as would have appealed to the active Romans.

Luke is a literary gem, and would have appealed to cultured and well educated Greeks.

These three form the *Synoptic* Gospels, from the Greek words meaning *seen together,* as if with one eye. They are very similar in viewpoint and content in comparison to John's Gospel.

John was written later than the Synoptic Gospels, and records the deep spiritual teachings and mystical reality of Jesus Christ.

BOOK OF HISTORY

The Acts of the Apostles, or just Acts, is the one book of history in the New Testament. It makes up the second half of the Gospel according to Luke (sometimes called 'Luke, part two'). Acts is an account of the life of the early Church. For example, we see that new disciples continued in *"the apostles' teaching, and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers."* (Acts 2:42)

THE LETTERS

There are 21 letters in the New Testament. Sometimes these are called *Epistles*, but that is just another word for letter. Each letter is named after the author, or the people it was written to.

The Pauline Epistles

14 of the letters are attributed to Paul. We memorize them in the following four groups;

Romans, 1&2 Corinthians

Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians

1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy

Titus, Philemon, Hebrews

The General Epistles

The other seven letters were written by four authors, and each is named for its writer.

James
1,2 Peter
1,2,3 John
Jude

These are called General Epistles because they are not addressed to any particular person, but to the Church in general. They have universal appeal, and so are also called the Catholic, or universal, Epistles.

BOOK OF PROPHECY

Revelation is the one book of prophecy in the New Testament. The writer was John the Apostle. He wrote this as a response to the vision he received while in exile on the isle of Patmos. The cave where he received the Revelation is known, and today has an entire monastery built around it. It was written around 100 a.d. In very vivid language and imagery, it details the victory of Christ and his saints over evil, and was written to give hope to Christians in the midst of their sufferings. Some have speculated that it is the story of human history from the perspective of heaven!

LESSON FIVE REVIEW

How many Gospels are there?

_____

Name the four Gospel books

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Who wrote the book of Acts?

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What is the message and purpose of Acts?

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Name the Letters with the author of each

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Who wrote the book of Revelation?

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What is the message and purpose of the book?

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Lesson Six

About Old Testament Persons

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- Eight of the Sixteen key persons of the Old Testament.
- The events and other persons associated with them.

Why bother with the Old Testament?

Since the Old Covenant has been fulfilled by Christ, why study that at all? Many Christians make that mistake, not knowing what they are doing.

The Old Testament is part of the revelation of Christ, for one thing. It is *Christ* Who created the world, *Christ* Who spoke to Moses out of the Burning Bush, *Christ* Who visited Abraham, *Christ* Who sent His Prophets. In other words, it tells us much of *Jesus Christ*, and sets the entire New Testament experience in context for those of us who did not live at that time or in that culture.

If the Old Testament is the shadow, and the New Testament the fulfillment, the two Testaments together tell us much of the God we love and serve, if we understand it properly.

Finally, our faith is *personal*. Our God is personal, and our history is personal. Therefore, an outline of Old Testament history should revolve around the key persons of the Old Testament.

SIXTEEN KEY PERSONS

An outline of Old Testament history is possible by memorizing the sixteen key persons of the Old Testament. Memorize them in four groups of four:

Adam	Jacob	Gideon	Elijah
Noah	Joseph	Samuel	Esther
Abraham	Moses	David	Nehemiah
Isaac	Joshua	Solomon	Maccabees

To make this list an outline of Old Testament history, learn to associate each name with several other names and Old Testament events. This is an easy way to set the Old Testament in an easy-to-remember order, and keep things straight in terms of people, places, and events.

1. Adam and the Creation

With Adam we associate the beginning of the world, Paradise, the fall, and punishment. But with the fall, came the first promise of redemption (Genesis 3:15). Also, associated with Adam are *Eve*, and his sons, *Cain, Abel, and Seth.*

2. Noah and the Flood

As mankind grew in number, they grew in sin also. As they became more wicked, God determined to cleanse the earth of its sin, saving one family who would faithfully serve him. Noah was commanded to build the Ark, so that he and his household might survive the Flood. With Noah, we also associate *Mrs. Noah* (*her name is not given in Scripture*) and his sons, *Ham, Shem,* and *Japheth.*

3. Abraham and the Promise

Abraham was chosen by God to be the father of his chosen nation. Mankind again multiplied in number, and sadly, in sin. This time God selected a faithful man, and his wife, to be his witnesses before the godless nations. With Abraham, we associate his wife *Sarah*; *Lot*, his beloved nephew; and *Melchizedek,* the priest-king of Salem.

4. Isaac and the Sacrifice

Isaac was the second son of Abraham. God told

Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, but Isaac was saved by God by the substitution of a male ram. With Isaac, we associate his wife *Rebecca*, and his older half brother, *Ishmael*.

5. Jacob the Patriarch

Jacob is the second son of Isaac, and was known for being sly and deceptive. He wrestled with an angel, and received a new name from God - Israel. With Jacob we associate his brother *Esau;* his wives *Leah* and *Rachel*; and his father-in-law, *Laban*.

6. Joseph and Egypt

Sold as a slave by his jealous brothers, Joseph became the ruler of Egypt, and saved his father, brothers, and people from starvation, bringing them to a lush green land - Goshen in Northern Egypt. With Joseph we associate his wife *Asenath;* his brothers *Reuben, Judah,* and *Benjamin*.

7. Moses and the Exodus

Moses was a Hebrew raised and trained in the palaces of Pharaoh. He became God's Lawgiver, and led God's people out of bondage in Egypt. Moses led them for 40 years through the Sinai desert, and died on the banks of the Jordan River looking at the Promised Land. With Moses we associate his wife *Sephora*; his brother *Aaron*; his sister *Miriam*; and his father-in-law *Jethro*.

8. Joshua and the Promised Land

After living 120 years, Moses died at the banks of the river Jordan. Joshua led the Israelites into Canaan as they conquered their new home. With Joshua, we associate his faithful friend, *Caleb*; Aaron's son, *Eleazar*, who succeeded him as high priest; and *Rahab*, a friend in an enemy city.

LESSON SIX REVIEW

Why should Christians who are guided by the New Testament study Old Testament History?

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Why study the *persons* of the Old Testament?

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Name the first eight of the sixteen leading persons of the Old Testament. Mention at least one event, and at least two other people associated with each.

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Lesson Seven

About Old Testament Persons

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The rest of the Sixteen key persons of the Old Testament.
- The events and other persons associated with these.

Lesson Six mentioned the events and persons associated with the first eight of the sixteen key persons of the Old Testament. This lesson deals with the remaining eight.

Before you begin this lesson, you should review the first eight persons from *Lesson Six*, and be sure you have them memorized.

9. Gideon and the Judges

After Joshua died, the people once again fell into sin, and were overrun by foreign nations. Each time they repented of their sins, God sent them a leader to help them drive out the invaders. These were the Judges, and Gideon was one of them. With Gideon, we associate fellow judges *Deborah;* the Mighty *Samson*; and *Ruth*, a gentile who became an ancestor of Christ.

10. Samuel the First Prophet

Samuel was the last of the Judges, and the first of the prophets - he anointed both King Saul and King David. With Samuel we associate his mother, *Hannah*; the priest *Eli*; and *King Saul,* who he anointed to be king of Israel.

11. David the Great King

David was the shepherd boy who became the King of Israel. He slew the giant Goliath while still a youth. He was the second king of Israel. He was also a great musician, and composer, as he is the author of many of the Psalms. He was known, despite his sins, as a man after God's own heart. With David we associate the Giant *Goliath of Gath*; the prophet *Nathan*; his son *Absalom*; and *Bathsheba*.

12. Solomon the Wise King

Solomon was David's son, and received the gift of profound wisdom and insight from God. His writings in the Scriptures (Some of the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Wisdom of Solomon) attest to that. He built a magnificent Temple. With Solomon, we associate the *Queen of Sheba*; and his sons *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam*, who split the nation of Israel into northern and southern kingdoms after his death.

13. Elijah the Great Prophet

After the kingdom was divided, both Israel and Judah had many kings, but few good ones. It was the prophets who consistently led the chosen people at a time of terrible division and confusion. Elijah was one of the prophets who stood against the efforts of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel to return Israel to idolatry. With Elijah we associate *Jezebel*, the idolatrous queen; *Elisha,* his helper and successor; *Isaiah,* the Gospel prophet; and *Jeremiah,* the weeping prophet.

14. Esther and Purim

Esther was a Jewish girl during the time of the Babylonian captivity, who saved her people through wisdom and cunning. Her actions and faith provided the foundations of the feast of Purim. With Esther we associate her uncle, *Mordecai*; *Tobit*, the righteous man whose son had an amazing adventure accompanied by an angel; and *Judith*, who, like Esther, saved her people through courage and cunning.

15. Nehemiah and the Return from Exile

Nehemiah was the governor of the Jews after their return from captivity in Babylon. He rebuilt

the walls of Jerusalem, organized the new government, and restored honor for the Law of God. With Nehemiah, we associate *Artaxerxes*, the Persian king who appointed him governor of Judea; *Ezra*, the scribe devoted to teaching God's law; and *Malachi*, who wrote concerning the Messiah, and proper offering to God.

16. Maccabees and Hannukah

Israel was re-established, but once again, over time, fell into sin. The empire of the Greeks threatened and eventually took over Jerusalem, installing profane worship in God's Holy Temple. One old man, the priest Mattathias, refused to worship the idol of Zeus placed in the Temple, and with his sons, slew the idolatrous Greeks, and began a guerilla war against them. Their leader was Judas *'the Hammer'* Maccabee. The miracle which took place, that the oil did not run out, was the establishment of the feast of Hannukah. With Judas Maccabee we associate *Mattathias*, his father; *Solomonia*, the mother of the seven children who refused to worship idols; and *Eleazar*, the old man who also refused.

LESSON SEVEN REVIEW

Name the second eight of the sixteen leading persons of the Old Testament. Mention at least one event, and *at least* two other people associated with each.

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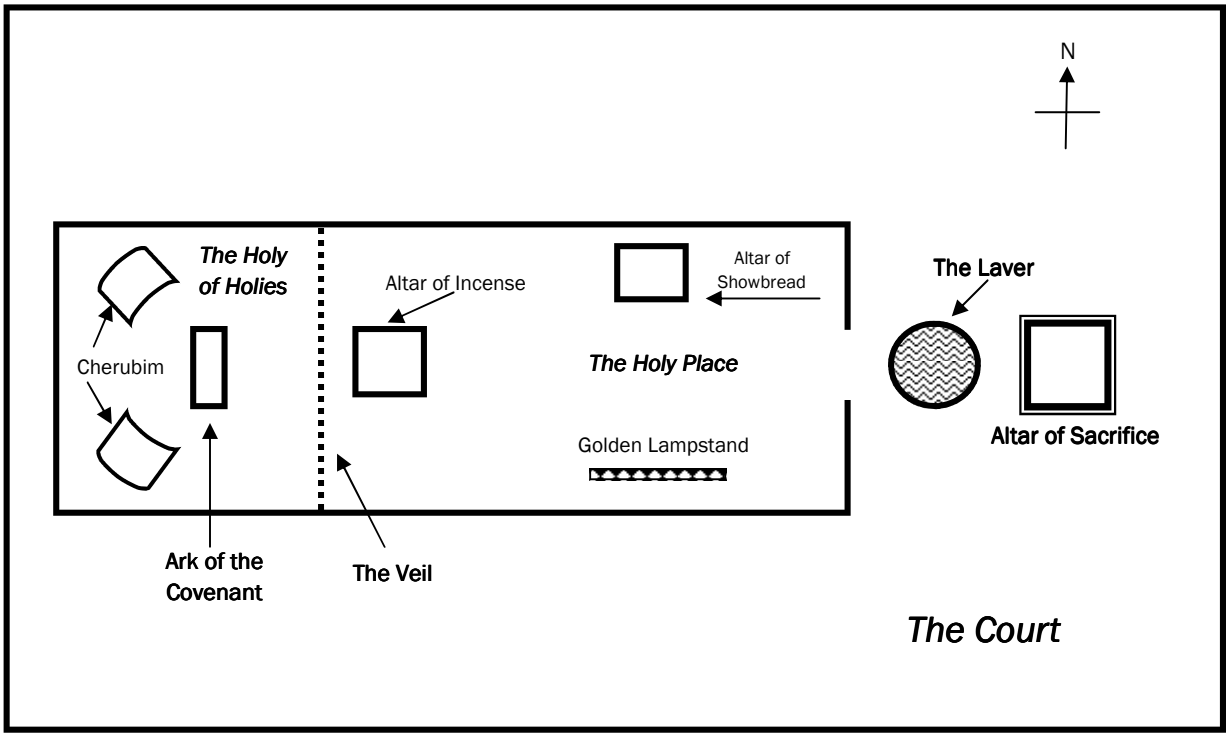

Diagram of the Tabernacle

For Lesson Eight

Lesson Eight

About the Altar and Tabernacle

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The meaning of the word 'sacrifice'
- About the Altar
- Where God gave instructions for building the Tabernacle
- About the Tabernacle and its parts

In the Old Testament times, worship was liturgical, ritually precise, and communal - the entire people of God gathered to give glory to God, and this glory centered on the Altar, and in the Tabernacle. Later, the Temple became the place of worship.

THE SACRIFICE

Sacrifice had a crucial role in Jewish worship, just as it does in Christian worship. The altar was the place where the offering became the sacrifice. The word sacrifice is from the Latin *sacra facere*, and means "to make holy."

The first Scriptural record of sacrifice are the sacrifices of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:3-5). Cain offered a sacrifice of wheat, and Abel, of his flock - a lamb. Abel's sacrifice was acceptable to God. Because of this jealousy over the sacrifice, Cain killed his brother, and became the world's first murderer.

We also see the importance of sacrifice in the life of the Patriarch Job. The book of Job begins and ends with Job worshipping God, and offering sacrifice.

THE ALTAR

Primitive altars were mounds of earth and stone on which sacrifices were burned. The early Hebrews had a custom to make a rough altar of stone wherever they were encamped, and to offer sacrifice upon it. This became the tradition of the Hebrew Patriarchs.

When the Israelites were leaving Egypt, they made

altars of wood and brass (or bronze), and carried it with them into the wilderness. This was placed in the Courtyard of the Tabernacle. In the Temple, this portable altar was replaced by a massive stone altar in the Courtyard of the Temple.

In Hebrew worship, there were three separate altars: The Altar of Sacrifice, the Altar of Showbread, and the Altar of Incense.

Sacrifices were burned in a wood fire on the Altar. Coals from this fire were taken from the Altar of Sacrifice, past the Altar of Showbread, and used on the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place.

THE TABERNACLE

The Tabernacle was the elaborate 'tent' that served as a portable temple to the Israelites during their wanderings in the Sinai wilderness and before the building of a permanent Temple by Solomon.

When the Israelites arrived at Mt. Sinai, God not only gave them the Law, he also gave them specific instructions for designing and building the Tabernacle - the place of His worship. Worship in the Tabernacle was to imitate the model God showed Moses on the mountain; the worship of God as it takes place in heaven. (Exodus 25:9)

The Tabernacle was to localize and symbolize the dwelling of God among His people. It was placed in the midst of the Hebrew tents during their wanderings and was the center of all their worship. The glory of God rested on it during their wanderings. When this visible glory (*shekinah*) moved from the Tabernacle, the Israelites packed up, and followed it wherever it went.

So important was this to the Hebrews that they celebrated it as a feast - *the Feast of Tabernacles*. This is one of the three high holy days of the Jewish calendar to this day.

PARTS OF THE TABERNACLE

Everything in the Old Testament points to the New, and the Tabernacle is no exception. The Tabernacle tells us much about the acceptable sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The Court was the yard or open court of the Tabernacle, and its dimensions were 150' by 75'. It was symbolic of the whole Universe. The Court would represent the universe, or the non-Jewish world, and corresponds to the Narthex or Vestibule of a Christian Church.

The Altar of Sacrifice was the very first thing one encountered when entering the Court. It was 7½ feet square and 4½ feet high. All animals offered in worship were burned on this altar. Remember that the Altar of Sacrifice was in the Court, not in the Holy Place. This is important in prophecy, as Jesus was crucified outside of Jerusalem, not within the city limits The Altar of Sacrifice symbolizes the Cross and sacrifice of Christ.

The Laver was a large basin of water in which the priests would wash their hands and feet of dirt, or ash from the sacrifice, before entering the Holy Place. It is a foretelling of baptism, as one could not enter the Holy Place without first washing in the Laver.

The Holy Place was the inner court of the Tabernacle. It was 30 ft by 15 ft. Only a priest could enter this part of the Tabernacle. This corresponds to the Nave of a Christian Church. This represents the Church, the new Jerusalem, the people of God. In the New Testament era, we, by virtue of our baptism, are a nation of priests. Hence, we all enter this part of the Church to worship.

The Altar of Showbread was in the Holy Place. It was a table on which the showbread was placed every day. Showbread was twelve loaves of fresh baked bread, set before the Lord, showing the people of Israel that God, indeed, continues to provide for them. It was five loaves of this bread that David was given as provisions for his journey, during his escape from King Saul. The Altar of Showbread symbolizes the Holy Eucharist and is always in the Holy Place, and no where else, just as the Eucharist is always in the Church, and no where else.

The Golden Lampstand was a lampstand of pure gold, in the form of a budding tree, with seven branches holding the seven lamps. It represented the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden, and was the

light source for the Holy Place. The seven lamps represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and corresponds to Chrismation and a life in the Holy Spirit.

The Altar of Incense was also in the Holy Place. Incense was offered here in worship of God, using a coal taken from the Altar of Sacrifice. We offer our prayers to God like sweet smelling incense, and they become acceptable to God by virtue of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.

The Veil separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, or the Most Holy Place. It was a heavily and colorfully embroidered fabric curtain, like a tapestry. This represents the separation between God and man, and the mystery of the Heavenly Kingdom. The Iconostasis and the Curtain represent the Veil in a Christian Church.

The Holy of Holies was a perfect cube; 15' high, 15' wide, and 15' tall. Only the high priest was allowed in here, and he only dared to enter once per year. The Holy of Holies corresponds to the Sanctuary or Altar area of a Christian Church.

The Ark of the Covenant was kept in the Holy of Holies. It contained the stone tablets of Ten Commandments, the Jar of manna, Aaron's rod which budded, and two other items made of gold (a gold mouse, and gold tumors - it's a great story how these made it into the Ark). The Mercy Seat, where the glory of God rested, was just above the Ark. The Ark represents the Living Presence of God, and is symbolic of the Ark or Tabernacle on a Christian altar.

LESSON EIGHT REVIEW

What does the word *sacrifice* mean?

_____

What are the earliest recorded sacrifices?

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_____

What were altars made of during the time of the Hebrew Patriarchs?

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What was the altar made of after the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt?

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Where in the Bible did God give instructions for building the Tabernacle?

_____

When did the Israelites pack up, and move the Tabernacle to a new location?

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Name the parts of the Tabernacle, and what they represent or symbolize to Christians

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Lesson Nine

About the Temple

Objectives of this lesson

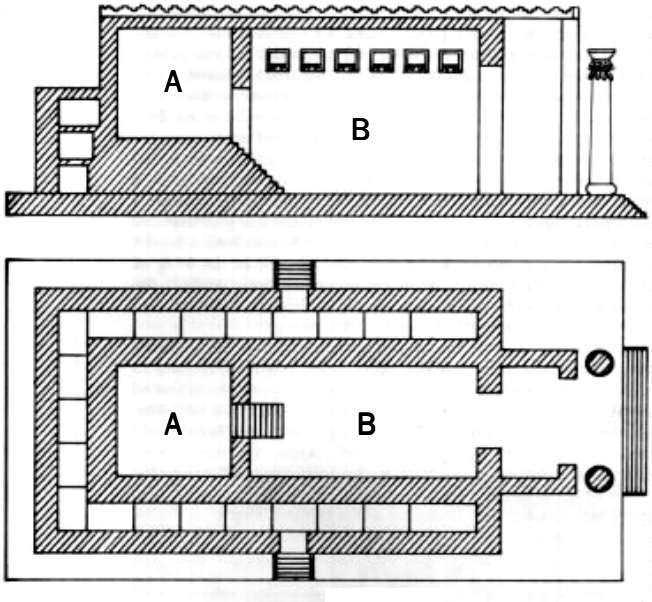
At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- How long the Hebrews worshipped in the Tabernacle
- The Three different Temples
- The typological significance of the Temple to Christians
- The origin, purpose and function of the Synagogue

THE TEMPLE

The Temple was built on exactly the same plan as the Tabernacle, but it was on a larger scale, and made of stone and timbers. It was a massive structure, with many unique features.

The Hebrews worshipped in the Tabernacle exclusively from the days of Moses to the time of Solomon. This is a period of about 500 years. The people had stopped living in tents, and were living in homes, but they continued to worship in the temporary shelter of the Tabernacle for many generations.



In Solomon's Temple:
A - The Holy of Holies; B - The Holy Place

THE THREE TEMPLES

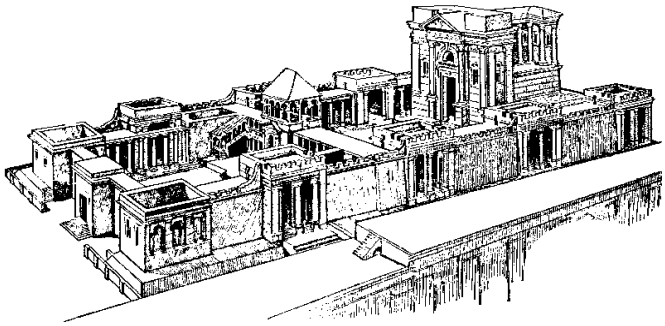
Solomon's Temple was built about 960 b.c. Solomon's Temple was based on the same plan as the Tabernacle, but much larger in size. In fact, all of the dimensions were doubled, and it was made out of stone and cedar, rather than fabric. Solomon enlisted the help of the gentile king, Hiram of Tyre to build it, and used cedars from Lebanon, which were straight, strong and fragrant timbers, impervious to corruption. It was ultimately destroyed by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. The Temple faced west, so that the light of the morning would illumine the entire Holy Place at sunrise.

Zerubabbel's Temple was built around 516 b.c. after the Israelites had finally returned from their captivity in Babylon. Zerubabbel was the governor of the city of Jerusalem. His rebuilt Temple was at least as large as Solomon's, and very richly adorned.

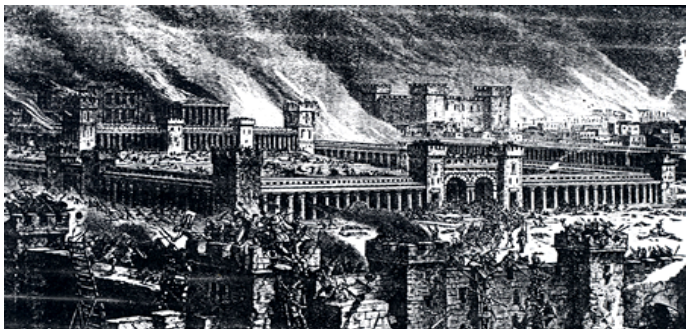
Zerubabbel, governor of Judea, rebuilding the Temple

There is some speculation that the Ark of the Covenant was not there. Some say it was destroyed by the Babylonians. It is believed that Solomon's son by the Queen of Sheba spirited it away to Ethiopia. It is kept in an Orthodox Church, where it is guarded by an Orthodox monk to this day. He is appointed by his predecessor, and holds the office for life - never leaving the chapel where it is kept.

Treasury building of St. Mary of Zion Church, Axum, Ethiopia.
The location of the Ark of the Covenant today.



Herod's Temple was begun around 20 b.c. In order to avoid a general destruction of the Old Temple, which was in terrible repair, the rebuilding was done piecemeal, a little at a time. It only took a year and a half to complete the Temple itself, but the work on the surrounding buildings went on for years. The entire complex was not completed until about 64 a.d., only six years before it was ultimately destroyed by the Roman army in 70 a.d.



An image of the destruction of the Second Temple

SYMBOLISM AND TYPOLOGY

The Tabernacle and the Temple, being closely related to each other, have something to tell us symbolically and typologically. The Tabernacle was constructed only by Hebrews. It was temporary. The Temple was built by Hebrew and Gentiles. It was permanent. These represent the Old Covenant, which was temporary and for the Hebrew people, and the New Covenant, which is eternal, and includes Jews and Gentiles. The Fathers refer to this distinction as being between the *Synagogue* (the Old Testament people of God - Jews only), and the *Church* (the New Testament people of God, Jews and Gentiles).

THE SHEMA

The Shema (pronounced ***sh-MA'***) is the most important prayer in the Jewish faith.

Hear O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one.

This prayers is as important to Jews as the Lord's Prayer is to Christians. Just like the Lord's Prayer, it is found in two different places in Scripture.

Memorize them now.

Deuteronomy 6:4

Mark 12:29

THE SYNAGOGUE

During the Babylonian Captivity, the Jews had no Temple to worship at. From this experience, the Synagogue developed. Synagogue means "*place for meeting together*."

At the Synagogue, the Jews would gather for Sabbath services of prayer, to hear the Holy Scriptures and the lessons from them. Synagogues also became key places of community gathering, a place to learn the Holy Scriptures, and a center for Jewish culture and identity. While there could only be one Temple for Jewish worship and sacrifice, every city, town, or village could have a Synagogue. This tradition continues to this day, now that Temple worship is no longer a possibility in Judaism, and Rabbinic Judaism has transformed the Jewish religion into one that can survive without the Temple and the sacrifice.

This was a marvelous preparation for the Christian Church, as the worship of the one True God could be carried to the ends of the earth.

There is much discussion of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem so that the daily sacrifices might begin again. While this is interesting, it is of no consequence to Christians, as Christ superceded the Temple made of stone, and made each one of us a true Temple of the Holy Spirit.

LESSON NINE REVIEW

How long did the Hebrews worship in the Tabernacle?

_____

_____

When was Solomon's Temple built?

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_____

How large was Solomon's Temple compared to the Tabernacle?

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When was Zerubabbel's Temple built?

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Where was the Ark of the Covenant during the restoration of the Temple during Zerubabbel's time?

_____

_____

Where is it now?

_____

_____

When was Herod's Temple built?

_____

Why did it take so long?

_____

_____

_____

When was it destroyed, and who did it?

_____

_____

What is the most important Jewish prayer?

_____

_____

_____

Where in the Bible do you find the Shema?

_____

_____

What is a Synagogue?

_____

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_____

Why did Jews begin Synagogues?

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What did Synagogues prepare the world for?

_____

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Lesson Ten

About the Jewish Feastdays

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The three principle Jewish Feasts
- The three lesser Jewish feasts
- How and why each feast was named
- About the Day of Atonement

IMPORTANCE OF THE JEWISH FEASTS

Many important events in the Holy Scriptures happen during significant feast days in the Jewish faith. Our Lord was a Jew, and loved these feasts and celebrated them with his family and friends.

The three great feasts of the Jewish faith are:

- **Tabernacles**
- **Passover**
- **Pentecost**

The three lesser feasts are

- **Rosh Hashanah** (Trumpets)
- **Hannukah** (Dedication)
- **Purim** (Lots)

There is also a day of prayer and fasting: **Yom Kippur**, or the Day of Atonement.

THE GREAT FEASTS

The Feast of Tabernacles

The feast of Tabernacles begins on the 15th day of the seventh month (Sept/Oct). This feast commemorates the Hebrews wandering in the desert of Mt. Sinai, when God dwelt among them in the Tabernacle. To remind them of those days, it was not uncommon for people to leave their homes and live in temporary shelters; sort of a festal campout. These they called "*tabernacles*", a name meaning 'tent' and they gave the feast that name. This feast also had a special significance as the autumn harvest feast, so thanksgiving was a prominent theme in its celebration.

The Christian feast corresponding to Tabernacles is, of course, Christmas; the Nativity of Christ - the celebration of God coming to dwell among us in the tabernacle of His Incarnate Flesh.

The Feast of Passover

The Passover originated when the Israelites were set free in Egypt. The Lord, just before they left, descended to the land, bringing death to all the first -born of every home, but he passed over the Israelite homes, preserving them from death. Thanksgiving to God for His salvation is a theme that permeates the entire Passover supper.

Each family had a lamb for the Passover feast. Two or more families might even share a lamb. This feast came just before the barley harvest, and the first sheaf of the harvest was one of the offerings. Once the Temple was built, the entire nation gathered in Jerusalem for this grand feast.

The Greek word for Passover is *Pascha*. Our Lord was sacrificed and crucified on the feast of Passover, as the true Paschal Lamb, and Christians keep this feast in accordance with His Command.

The Feast of Pentecost

Pentecost is the fiftieth day after Passover. The Greek word for fiftieth is *pentecostoas*. It was also called the feast of Weeks, since it came seven weeks after Passover. It is a feast of first fruits. Since the barley and wheat were harvested between Passover and Pentecost, thanksgiving was a prominent feature of this feast also.

Since the Middle ages, Pentecost began to be associated with the anniversary of the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai. Like Passover, once the Temple had been built, the Israelites gathered at Jerusalem to celebrate this feast as a nation. The Ten Commandments are found in two locations in the Bible. Memorize them now.

- **Exodus 20**
- **Deuteronomy 5**

Pentecost on the Christian calendar is likewise a feast of first-fruits - commemorating the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and Disciples in the Upper Room. From there, they immediately went out, praising God in various languages, understood by those from far and wide who were gathered at Jerusalem for the Feast. It was the first harvest of the Church in the Holy Spirit.

THE LESSER FEASTS

The Feast of Trumpets - Rosh Hashanah

Called *Rosh Hashanah* today by modern Jews, this New Year's Feast was known as the Feast of Trumpets on the old patriarchal calendar, and took place on the first day of the seventh month.

The Feast of Lights - Hannukah

Hannukah is the week long *Feast of Dedication*, beginning on the 25th day of the ninth month on the Jewish calendar. It commemorates the purification and rededication of the Temple after it's defilement at the hands of pagans. It is also called the *Feast of Lights*, from the lamps, torches, and candles used to commemorate the miracle which kept the oil from running out for 8 days.

The Feast of Lots - Purim

Purim falls on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the twelfth month, and commemorates Queen Esther's deliverance of her people from destruction and massacre. Purim means "lots" recalling that Haman cast lots to see if he would destroy the Jews or not. (Esther 3:7)

The Day of Atonement - Yom Kippur

The Jewish calendar also celebrates a day of Atonement. In Hebrew it is called *Yom Kippur*. This is not a feast day, but a day of prayer, fasting and repentance. It is celebrated on the tenth day of the seventh month. Special offerings are made in order to atone for sins on this day.

LESSON TEN REVIEW

Name the three Great Feasts of the Jewish calendar

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_____

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What did Tabernacles commemorate?

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What is the Christian equivalent of Tabernacles, and its explanation

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_____

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What did Passover commemorate?

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What is the Greek word for Passover?

_____

What did the Jewish Pentecost celebrate?

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What does the Christian Pentecost celebrate, and how are they related to one another?

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What was added to the Jewish commemoration of Pentecost during the Middle Ages?

_____

_____

Where do you find the Ten Commandments in the Bible? List both locations.

_____

_____

What was a distinctive theme of these three feasts?

_____

Name the three lesser feasts of the Jewish calendar, and what they commemorated

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_____

What is Yom Kippur?

_____

Why is it not considered a Feast Day?

_____

_____

Lesson Eleven

Old Testament Geography

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The basics of Old Testament Geography
- How to locate Egypt, Sinai, Canaan, Syria, and Mesopotamia on a map
- The location of Mt. Ararat, and Mt. Sinai
- Identify four key rivers in Old Testament geography
- Identify key bodies of water in the region

The Old Testament begins with the creation of the world, and man, and the Garden of Eden. We don't know where the Garden of Eden was, but we do know where several other important things mentioned in the Old Testament are. They form the backdrop of the whole Bible.

Canaan, is the Promised Land. It is located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. Nearly the entire span of Jesus life on earth was spent in what on the Old Testament map was Canaan.

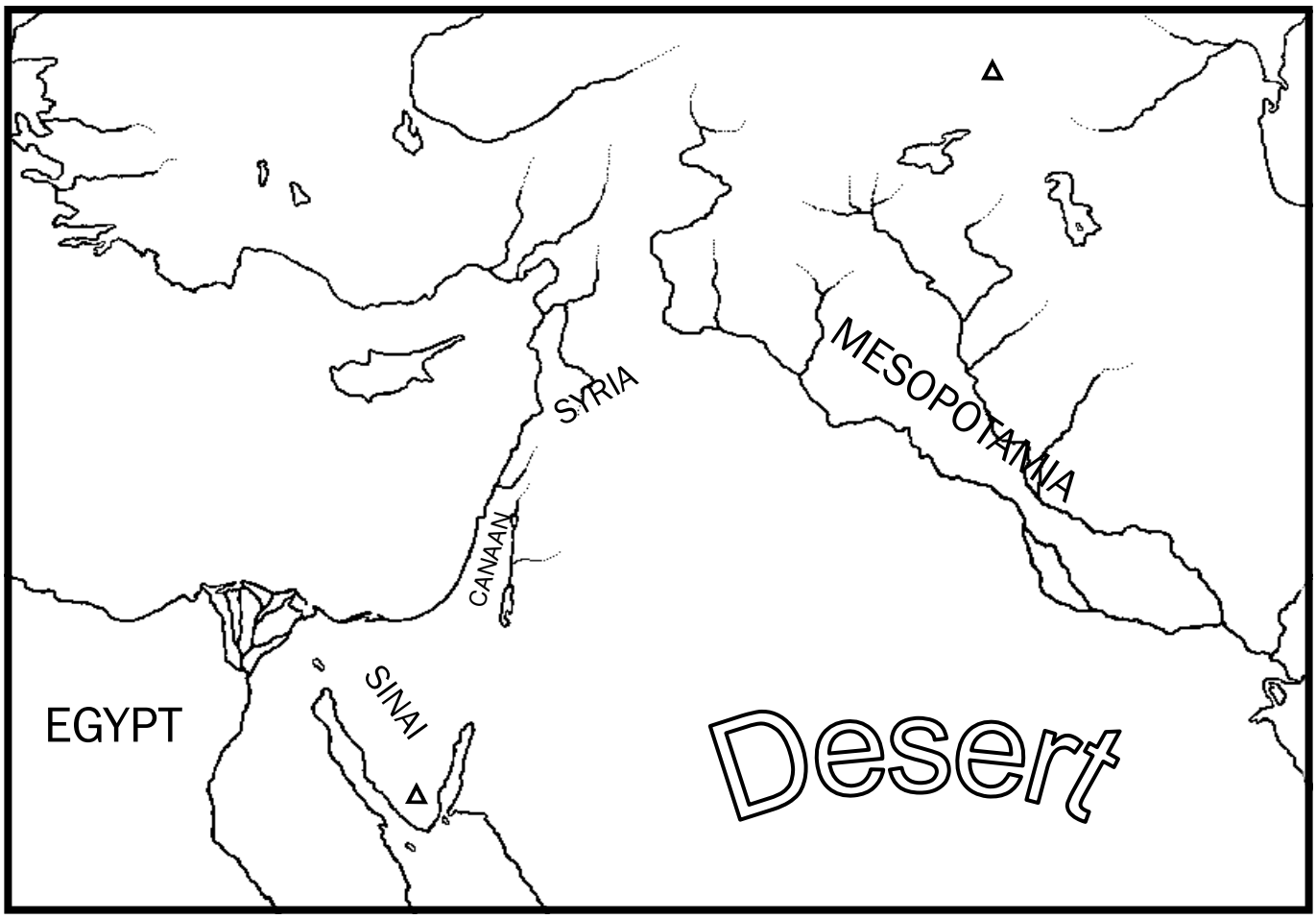
Egypt is at the bottom left. You can see the Nile River and the Nile Delta. Goshen is in the Nile Delta. Goshen is where the Israelites settled in the days of Joseph.

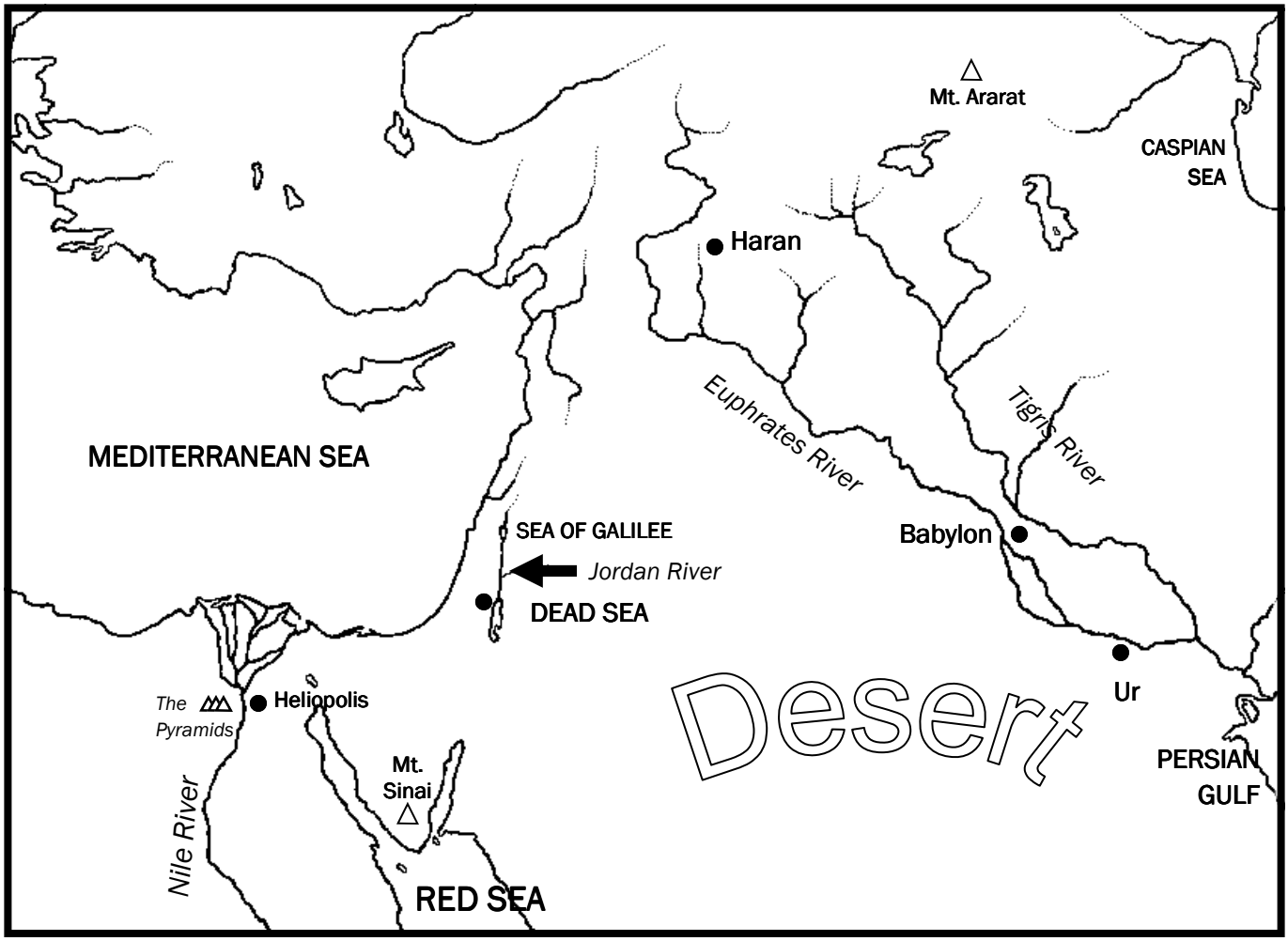
Syria is just north of Canaan.

Sinai is south and west of Canaan.

Mesopotamia to the east, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Mesopotamia means "between the rivers."

Starting at the Persian gulf and sweep from Mesopotamia across Syria, down through Palestine into Egypt forms the Fertile Crescent, the cradle of ancient civilization. South of the Fertile Crescent is desert, and north are a multitude of mountains





Bodies of Water

There are 4 bodies of water circumscribing the Fertile Crescent.

The Mediterranean Sea

The Red Sea

The Persian Gulf

The Caspian Sea

You see them on the map.

Rivers

There are four important rivers.

The Tigris

The Euphrates

The Nile

The Jordan

The Tigris and Euphrates rivers form about half of the Fertile Crescent. The Nile River is in Egypt. The Jordan River flows down from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea.

Mountains

There are several important mountains in Old Testament Geography, and two of them are on the map.

Mt. Sinai, where Moses received the Law.

Mt. Ararat, where the Ark of Noah rested (and probably rests to this day).

Cities

On the map, starting at the Persian Gulf, you see the following cities:

- Ur, the city the Abraham came from
- Babylon,
- Haran, where Abraham settled
- Heliopolis, the city across the Nile from the Great Pyramids.

LESSON ELEVEN REVIEW

What are the five principle areas of Old Testament geography?

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_____

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What four bodies of water generally circumscribe the Fertile Crescent?

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What are the four important rivers of Old Testament geography?

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What two mountains are indicated on the map? Mention the events associated with them.

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Using the following page, fill in a rough map of Old Testament geography, and indicate the location of the seas, rivers, regions, cities and mountains of importance.

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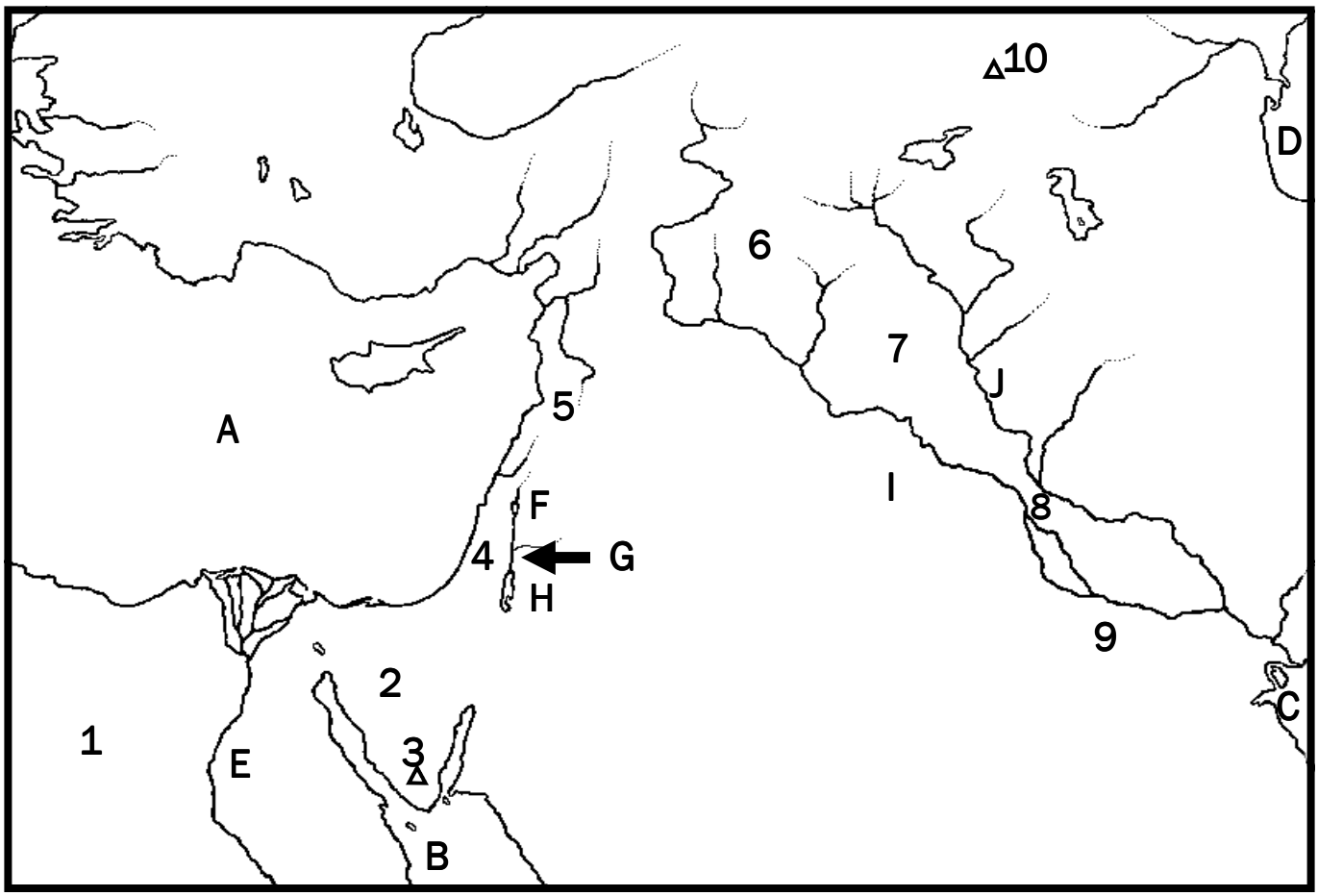


Identify Things:

A_____

B_____

C_____

D_____

E_____

F_____

G_____

H_____

I _____

J _____

Identify Places:

1_____

2_____

3_____

4_____

5_____

6_____

7_____

8_____

9_____

10_____

Lesson Twelve

New Testament Geography

Objectives of this lesson

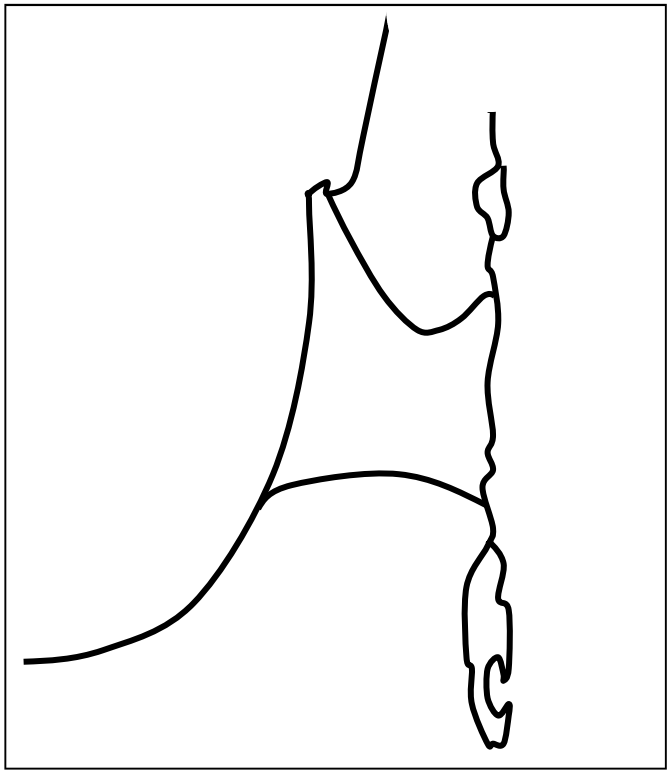
At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- How to draw a map of New Testament Israel
- The basic geography of New Testament Israel
- How to locate seven geographical areas near the Jordan River
- How to locate nine significant population centers, six in Judea, and three in Galilee

Nearly the entire span of Jesus life on earth was spent in Palestine, a small area of the globe east of the Mediterranean Sea.

PALESTINE

Palestine is named for the Philistines (remember them? Samson was always having a run in with them). Study the following map until you can sketch a rough outline of it with four distinct lines. (Practice on scrap paper often!)



You can do it like this:

1. Draw the Mediterranean Coast. Note that the one small jog about a third of the way from the top is the beginning of the border between Samaria and Galilee or Phoenicia.

2. Draw the Jordan River. Place the Sea of Galilee directly opposite the jog on the Mediterranean Coast. Place the Dead Sea at the bottom of the Jordan River.

3. Draw the boundary between Samaria and Galilee.

4. Draw the boundary between Judea and Samaria. It meets the Jordan river about one third of the way up from the Dead Sea to the Sea of Galilee.

Now, there are seven large geographic areas in the vicinity of the Jordan River, four on the west side, and three on the east. We will learn their names, as they are frequently referred to in the Gospels. Learn to identify them by memory.

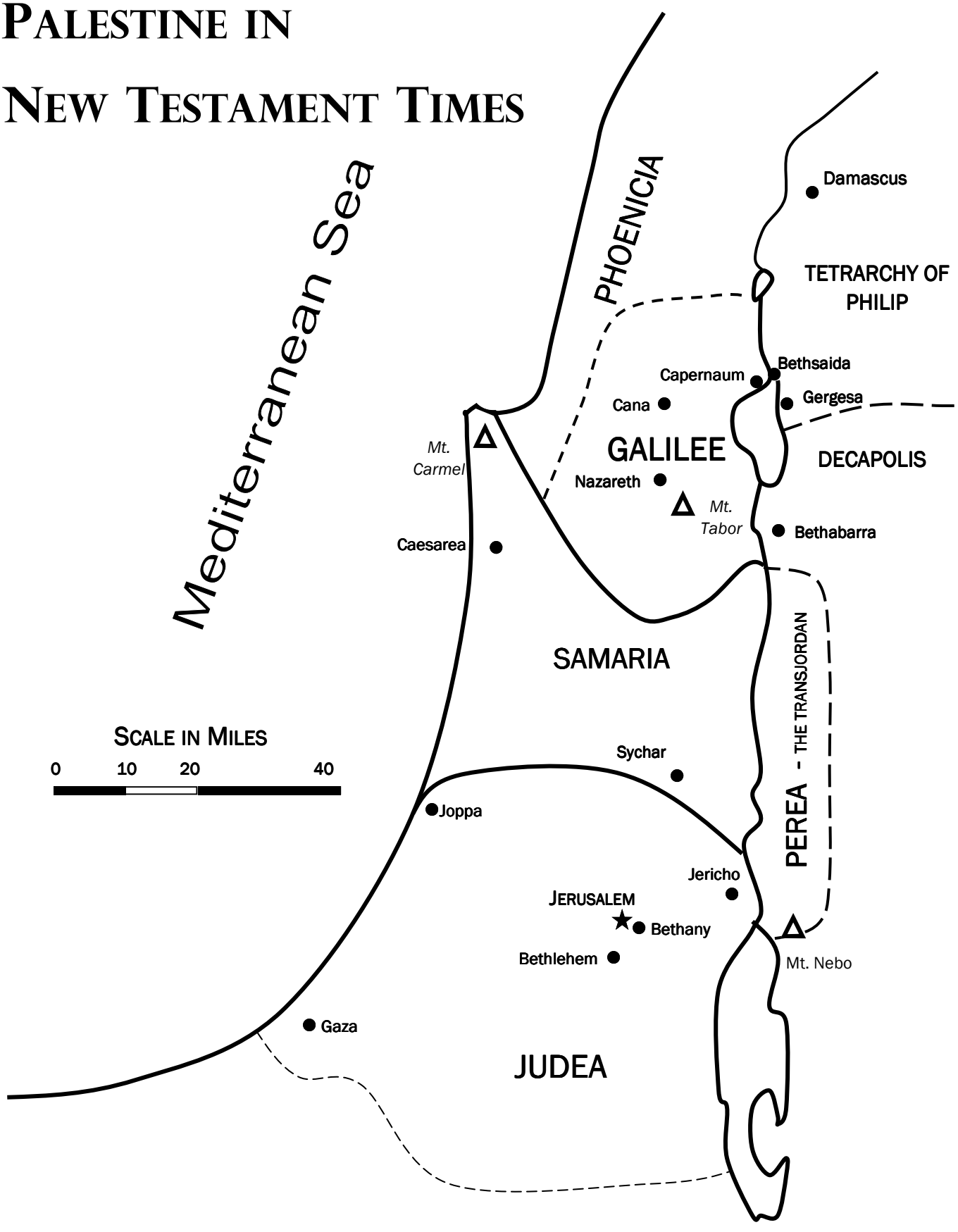
They are:

1. Phoenicia
2. Galilee
3. Samaria
4. Judea
5. Perea, the area of Transjordan
6. Decapolis
7. The Tetrarchy of Philip

Looking at a map of NT Palestine, and starting at the top, these are listed going counter-clockwise around the Jordan River.

Also, we must learn the area well enough to identify and locate the following cities and towns from memory:

Palestine in New Testament Times



IN JUDEA

Jerusalem, the capital of Israel. You place this directly west of the north point of the Dead Sea, about twenty miles in. Jerusalem means "City of Peace."

Bethlehem, where Jesus was born, six miles south of Jerusalem. Bethlehem means "house of bread." It is King David's hometown.

Jericho, about 8 miles north of the Dead Sea, and about 5 miles west of the Jordan river.

Bethany, slightly southeast of Jerusalem, about 3 miles.

Gaza, on the Mediterranean Coast, just inside Judea on the southern border

Joppa, on the Mediterranean Coast at Judea's north border with Samaria.

IN GALILEE

Capernaum, where Jesus first started calling His Disciples. It is located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee

Cana, where Jesus performed His first miracle at the wedding feast there. It is located about 15 miles directly west of the middle of the Sea of Galilee.

Nazareth, where Jesus lived in His youth. It is located directly south of Cana about ten miles.

MOUNTAINS

You can see **Mt. Carmel** (where God came to Elijah) near Caesarea on the coast, **Mt. Tabor**, where Christ was Transfigured, and **Mt. Nebo** (where Moses died) on the northeast coast of the Dead Sea. Though not technically New Testament Geography, they are in this specific region.

Whenever you are studying the Bible, make it a habit to locate on the map each place you find in your studies. This makes each event more easily recalled, and simplifies our understanding of some events in the Scriptures.

You will have many opportunities to do this, if you read the Bible regularly. This will make it easier to remember certain events, and keep them in perspective. It also gives a wonderful sense of continuity to the events of the Bible, as the people, places, and events all become more clearly identified in your mind and heart.

LESSON TWELVE REVIEW

What does the word *Palestine* come from?

_____

What does the name *Jerusalem* mean?

_____

What does the name *Bethlehem* mean?

_____

What are the seven geographic areas around the Jordan River?

_____

_____

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_____

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Using the following page, draw a rough map of New Testament Palestine, and indicate the location of six significant cities and towns in Judea, and three in Galilee.

DRAW A MAP OF NEW TESTAMENT PALESTINE

Lesson Thirteen

The Life of Jesus Christ: Pt 1

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The approximate dates of our Lord's life on earth
- Designations of dates around the Lord's birth
- The five major periods of Christ's life
- Three events from the period of Obscurity

Jesus' earthly life was from about 4 b.c. to 30 a.d., a period of about 33 years. B.C. means "before Christ" and A.D. means *anno domini*, which is Latin for "The Year of Our Lord."

Today, many pagan, agnostic or atheist scholars are trying to replace these designations with B.C.E. (before Common Era), and C.E. (Common Era). The "Common Era", like the year of our Lord, is counted from the birth of Christ. No, it makes no sense, other than to erase references to "Christ" from the vocabulary. This is truly modern haplography!

THE FIVE PERIODS OF CHRIST'S LIFE

Jesus' earthly life can be divided into five distinct periods. These will help us organize the deeds, words, and miracles of our Lord's life. Memorize them now.

1. **Obscurity - approx. 30 yrs.**
2. **Ministry - approx. 3 yrs.**
3. **Persecution - approx. 3 mos.**
4. **Passion - 1 week**
5. **Post-Resurrection - 40 days**

OBSCURITY

The first thirty years of Jesus life were lived in obscurity, hence the naming of this period. Our Lord lived a normal life as a pious Jewish boy being raised by humble and devout parents. This period was a time of preparation, and includes the following three significant events:

- **Birth of Jesus**
- **Flight into & return from Egypt**
- **Baptism of Jesus**

Birth of Christ (Luke 2:1-20)

We celebrate this event as the Nativity of the Lord, or Christmas. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a small village about six miles south of the capital city of Jerusalem.

The Scriptures tell us much about the nativity of Christ. His mother was taken by Joseph from Nazareth into Bethlehem. He was born in a cave, visited by shepherds, and eventually by magi from the east who brought him gifts of tribute fit for a newly born king.

The Scriptures also tell us that King Herod, jealous of his throne, was determined to kill the Christ child.

Flight into/Return from Egypt (Matthew 2:1-23)

To save Jesus from the wrath of Herod the Great, and the fate of the Holy Innocents, Joseph was instructed by an angel to take Jesus, and His mother, into Egypt for safety. Joseph was a carpenter, and could ply his trade there also. Icons of the Flight into Egypt show James, the brother of the Lord, as a teen, helping with the traveling. When Herod the Great was dead, the angel told Joseph that it was safe to return. Short of a brief story about Jesus as a youth at the Temple, we know nothing more about our Lord's life until His Baptism.

Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:1-17)

We celebrate this event as Theophany. Jesus began His work by receiving baptism from John the Baptist. He did not need baptism, as John clearly points out, but He did so to fulfill all righteousness, and to provide an example for us to follow. Immediately afterwards, He was driven by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to fast and be tempted, just as we are, in preparation for His Ministry. This is recorded in the Gospel according to Matthew 4:1-11.

LESSON THIRTEEN REVIEW

Jesus lived during approximately what years?

_____

What does B.C. mean?

_____

What does A.D. stand for, and what does that mean?

_____

_____

What does B.C.E. mean?

_____

What does C.E. mean?

_____

List the five periods of our Lord's life on earth

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

List the three parts of the first thirty years, the period of Obscurity, and where in the Bible they are found

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Lesson Fourteen

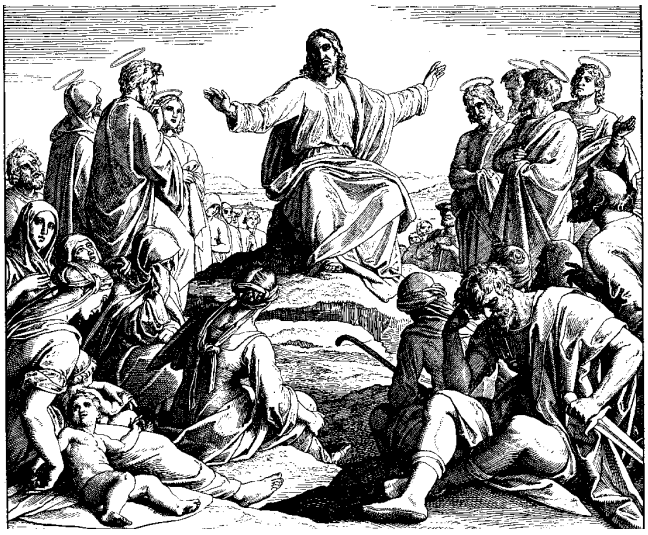
Life of Jesus Christ: Pt 2

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The three periods of Christ's Ministry
- Important events of each period of His Ministry
- The Bible references to each event

You should review items from the last lesson now. This lesson covers the basic outline of Jesus three years of public ministry. The last three periods will be covered in the next lesson.



MINISTRY

The three years of Jesus' public ministry can be divided into three sections also, and we will use these to highlight His accomplishments during this time. They are:

YEAR ONE: Outreach

YEAR TWO: Popularity

YEAR THREE: Opposition

The events listed will certainly not, by any means, be exhaustive, but should provide a basic framework for additional study.

Also by dividing up the time of Jesus' ministry, we can see it's progression from reaching out in obscurity, gaining in popularity, and finally getting too popular for the authorities of that day, who knew that if He really was the Messiah, they would be removed from authority, so they began to seriously oppose Him, and finally plotted His death.

YEAR ONE: Outreach

1. Calling of the 12
2. Marriage Feast in Cana
3. Meeting with Nicodemus
4. Woman of Samaria

The Calling of the 12

This is recorded in various places in the Gospels. You should remember that Jesus called them each by name, one at a time. They left everything, and followed Him without question. You will learn their names in a future lesson.

Marriage Feast in Cana. (John 2:1-11)

This was Jesus first miracle! This Gospel reading begins with the words, "On the third day…"! He changed approximately 150 gallons of water, set aside for the Jewish rites of purification, into the finest wine. Significant at this event are His mother's personal intercession, the presence of His disciples, and the miracle, which is not a wonder to gawk at, but a sign pointing to the manifestation of His glory.

Meeting with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21)

Nicodemus came by night to meet with Jesus, and received a marvelous explanation of being born again. This well known, and well beloved

verse, John 3:16, is given in this discourse, and has been a part of the Divine Liturgy's Anaphora for over a thousand years.

The Woman of Samaria (John 4:1-42)

Jesus met the woman of Samaria at the well of Jacob, on His way back to Galilee. Rabbis would avoid speaking to women in public, to avoid the image of impropriety, but Jesus begins the conversation with her! Through this encounter not only did she come to believe in Him, but all of Sychar as well.

YEAR TWO: Popularity

- Sermon on the Mount
- Sermon on the Plain
- The Lakeside Parables
- Raising two children from the dead

Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

Jesus' famous sermon containing the Beatitudes, and the Lord's Prayer. Jesus was addressing a multitude who came a long way to hear His words.

Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6)

Unlike the Sermon on the Mount, the Sermon on the Plain contains woes, as well as blessings. Many of the sayings in this discourse are without parallel in the Gospels.

The Lakeside Parables (Matthew 13)

Here is something to memorize! Jesus delivered these eight parables together. The parable of the Sower, the wheat and the tares, the mustard seed, the leaven, the Treasure in the field, the Pearl of Great Price, the Net, and the Householder!

4. Raising of children from the dead

The daughter of Jairus, (Mark 5:21-43) The daughter of a well known and influential leader in Capernaum, was raised from the dead by our Lord. Jairus, being so well known, the news of this miracle spread everywhere. This is also recorded in Matthew 9:18-26 .

The son of the Widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17) was also raised from the dead by our Lord. Jesus met the funeral procession, and restored him to life. He was probably not a child, but most likely a young man who was his mother's only source of support.

YEAR THREE: Opposition

- Feeding of the five thousand
- Canaanite woman's daughter
- Confession of St. Peter
- Transfiguration

Feeding of the five thousand (Matthew 14)

All four Gospel accounts record this event. Jesus took five loaves, and two fish, and fed a multitude.

Canaanite woman's daughter (Matthew 15)

Jesus meets a gentile woman, and tells her that His mission is to the Jews, but she desires healing for her daughter, and will not be dissuaded. Jesus rewards her persistence, and heals her daughter, remarking on the greatness of her faith.

Confession of St. Peter (Matthew 16)

Many people considered Jesus a prophet, but St. Peter proclaimed Him as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Jesus told them that the Father Himself revealed this to Peter. He also immediately told them that He would suffer, and die in Jerusalem, and on the third day, rise again from the dead, something the apostles were not quick to hear.

4. Transfiguration (Matthew 17)

One week after St. Peter's confession, Jesus took him, James and John up on Mt. Tabor, and was transfigured before them. They saw Him as He really is, as far as their minds could comprehend it. They also saw Moses and Elijah speaking to Him, revealing Him as the Lord God of the Law and the Prophets, the Living and the Dead. Shortly after this, Jesus entered into His Passion. Note also that once Jesus was revealed as He truly is, the cloud was lifted, and only Jesus remained; Moses (the law) and Elijah (the prophets) were no longer in view. Only Christ, their fulfillment, remained for them to see.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

When the disciples asked Jesus how they should pray, he told them to pray what has come to be called "the Lord's Prayer." You know it by heart already, no doubt. It is located in two places in the Bible. Memorize them.

Matthew 6:9-13

Luke 11:2-4

LESSON FOURTEEN REVIEW

What are the events associated with year ONE of Christ's ministry?

List the Scripture references.

_____

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_____

What are the four events associated with year TWO of Christ's earthly ministry?

List the Scripture references.

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What are the four events associated with year THREE of Christ's earthly ministry?

List the Scripture references.

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List the two locations where you can find the Lord's Prayer in the Bible.

_____

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Lesson Fifteen

Life of Jesus Christ: Pt 3

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The last three periods of Jesus' life
- The events associated with each period
- Post-resurrection appearances of Jesus

At this point, you should quickly review the first two periods of Jesus' life, and the events associated with each, from the last lesson.

It is important to remember that these only make up a basic list, hardly even an outline, of Jesus' many deeds, teachings, and miracles. The Scriptures are loaded with examples of things He did, places He went, people He met, and lessons He taught.

No basic survey could do justice to these.

In this lesson, we will complete our study of Jesus' life and the last three periods of His life.

3. Persecution - approx. 3 mos.

4. Passion - 1 week

5. Post-Resurrection - 40 days

3. Persecution - approx. 3 mos.

Jesus had made many enemies during His three years of ministry in Judea. They had wanted to kill Him before, but now actively began to plot against Him. All the while, His popularity with the people grew and grew. We may associate the following events with this third period of Jesus' life. Commit them to memory.

- **Ten Lepers healed**
- **Rich Young Man**
- **Zacchaeus**
- **Raising of Lazarus**

Ten Lepers Healed - (Luke 17:11-19) Jesus met up with ten lepers. He ordered them to show themselves to the priests, and on the way, they were cured. But only one, a Samaritan, returned to give thanks.

The Rich Young Man - (Luke 18:18-27) A rich, young ruler came to Jesus asking about eternal life. Jesus told him to give everything he had to the poor, and to follow him, which the rich young man would not do. Jesus made it very clear that whoever seeks eternal life must follow Him at all costs.

Zacchaeus - (Luke 19:1-10) This chief tax collector was a terrible sinner, and lived very well by profiting from the misery of his own people. But He wanted to see Jesus. Jesus caught sight of him, came to his house, and Zacchaeus was converted, beginning a lifelong journey of holiness and discipleship.

Raising of Lazarus - (John 11:1-16) This final event took place a week before Jesus' own Resurrection, foretelling what was to happen. Lazarus, who was a friend of Jesus, was already dead for four whole days, but at Jesus' word of command, rose from the tomb, restored to life.

4. Passion - 1 week

- Anointing by Mary of Bethany
- Palm Sunday
- Upper Room
- Betrayal
- Crucifixion

All of the following events are recorded in all four of the Gospels. You should list at least one of the references for each event. Look them up in your Bible, and fill in the blank with one such verse after each event description.

Anointing by Mary of Bethany - While sitting at dinner, Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus, anoints Jesus with very costly ointment.

_____

Palm Sunday - Jesus entered Jerusalem in a royal procession, and immediately went to the Temple and cleansed it. This assured that His enemies would make sure He was condemned to death.

_____

Upper Room - Jesus washes the feet of His disciples, institutes the Holy Eucharist, and predicts both His betrayal, and the betrayer.

_____

Betrayal - Jesus goes to the garden of Gethsemane to pray, and is betrayed there by Judas Iscariot, arrested, and taken before the Sanhedrin.

_____

Crucifixion - Jesus was condemned to death, beaten and tortured mercilessly, and nailed to the cross which He Himself carried to Golgotha. He was buried in a new tomb belonging to a man named Joseph. There He rested from His redeeming labors until His Resurrection.

_____

5. Post-Resurrection - 40 days

- Appearance to Mary Magdalene
- Appearance on the Road to Emmaus
- Appearance to the Apostles
- Appearance to 500 Disciples
- Appearance to Saul of Tarsus

Appearance to the Mary Magdalene

Matthew 28:1-10 - The Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene near the empty tomb, and sent her to the Apostles to tell them that He had risen, as He said. This made her the Apostle to the Apostles, and she is titled "equal-to-the-Apostles" by the Church!

Appearance on the Road to Emmaus

Mark 16:12-13 - Jesus appeared to two of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and revealed Himself to them in the breaking of bread. At this appearance, He opened their minds to the Scriptures, so that their hearts burned within them!

Appearance to the Apostles

Luke 24:36-48 - This would be the first appearance to the Apostles, without St. Thomas present, and the second one, with St. Thomas present, confirming his faith, and erasing his doubt.

Appearance to 500 Disciples

1 Corinthians 15:6. - Jesus appeared to over 500 of His disciples at once! That is a lot of eyewitnesses of His resurrection and glory.

Appearance to Saul of Tarsus

Acts 9 - Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, Syria, after His Ascension, letting him know Who Saul was persecuting. This converted the former persecutor of the Church, turning him into the most zealous and hardest-working Apostle of them all.

LESSON FIFTEEN REVIEW

What was the third period of our Lord's life, and how long did it last?

_____

What was the fourth period of our Lord's life, and how long did it last?

_____

What was the fifth period of our Lord's life, and how long did it last?

_____

List four events from the 3rd period of His life.

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List five events from the 4th period of His life.

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List five events from the fifth period of His life.

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Lesson Sixteen

About the 12 Apostles

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- What the word 'apostle' means
- About the 12 and the 70
- The names of the 12 Apostles
- Something about each of the Twelve apostles
- What the Great Commission is, and where you can find it in the Bible

The Lord chose twelve men to be His 'inner circle' of Apostles, and leaders of His disciples. He chose them early in His ministry, and they accompanied Him everywhere.

The word 'apostle' means 'one who is sent.' Jesus gave this name to His most trusted disciples, and to the 12, because He sent them to be the leaders of His Church, carrying His message and teaching to the world.

There were many other 'apostles', 70 in all, according to the Holy Scriptures. (see Luke 10:1-16) These 70 made up the bulk of Jesus' preachers and ministry workers, just as the 12 made up His inner circle.

Regarding the 70, it is not important to know all of their names, but here are a few of them:

Evangelists Mark and Luke, Gospel authors;

James of Jerusalem, the brother of the Lord;

Timothy and Titus, companions of Paul;

The seven deacons, including St. Stephen.

The Apostles, like the prophets, were inspired. Unlike the prophets, they were eyewitnesses. Remember the meaning of that word. The prophets witnessed to Christ before the Resurrection. The Apostles did so after the Resurrection. The Holy Spirit inspired them and led them into all truth, to infallibly teach Jesus' teaching.

Their inspiration included the power of wonderworking miracles, bearing witness to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in their midst.

There is an easy way to remember the names of the 12 Apostles, which you will not forget, using the following mnemonic.

Memorize it now.

STAMPN 5JS

This list will start and end with the two Simons - Simon Peter, and Simon the Zealot.

STAMPN 5JS

S -	**S**imon Peter	**J** -	**J**ohn
T -	**T**homas	**J** -	**J**ames the Great
A -	**A**ndrew	**J** -	**J**ames the Less
M -	**M**atthew	**J** -	**J**ude Thaddeus
P -	**P**hilip	**J** -	**J**udas Iscariot
N -	**N**athanael	**S** -	**S**imon the Zealot

Here is a little bit about each disciple. You should know where they preached, and where and how they died.

Simon Peter - Prince of the Apostles, their leader, spokesman, and a mighty preacher of the Gospel. He was the founder of the Church in Antioch, where believers were first called "Christians" and later founded the Church in Rome, where he died by being crucified upside down. St. Paul died by beheading on the same day in 67 a.d.

Thomas - called 'the twin' - St. Thomas traveled to India after the Resurrection, founded Christian churches in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Ethiopia and India. For having converted the wife and son of the prefect of the Indian city of Meliapur the holy apostle was locked up in prison, suffered torture, and finally was martyred by being pierced with five spears. Indian Christians still call themselves "Thomas Christians" to this day.

Andrew - the first-called of the Apostles, and brother of St. Peter, he preached in Heraclea (which later became Byzantium), and traveled as far north as the Crimea. He was martyred by being crucified to an 'X' shaped cross, also called a Cross Saltire.

Matthew - the tax collector turned Apostle, he was also called Levi, indicating his family's priestly lineage. He wrote the first Gospel book, calling the Jews to faith in Christ, as He Who fulfilled the Messianic Prophecies. He preached in Syria, Media, Persia, Parthia, and finishing his preaching in Ethiopia with a martyr's death, probably by burning.

Philip - a native of the city of Bethsaida in Galilee, he had a profound knowledge of the Holy Scripture. He preached the Gospel in Hieropolis, Syria, Asia Minor, Lydia, Emessa, and was martyred by crucifixion.

Nathanael - also called Bartholomew, according to the Lord, he was "an Israelite in whom there was no guile." He preached the Gospel in Mesopotamia, Persia, Egypt, Lycaonia, Phrygia, and Armenia. He was martyred by having the skin cut from his body, and being crucified.

John - son of Zebedee, the Apostle whom Christ loved, John was one of Jesus' favorites. He wrote the Gospel ascribed to Him, three epistles which bear his name, and at the very end of his life, the book of Revelation. He died peacefully in Ephesus at the very advanced age of 100. According to the Church's Tradition, he last words were "Little children, love one another."

James the Great - son of Zebedee and brother of the Apostle John. He was present at the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor, and was the first Apostle to die a martyr's death, and the only one of the Twelve whose martyrdom is recorded in Scripture. He died by the sword. (Acts 12:1-2)

James the Less - son of Alphaeus, he preached the Gospel in Edessa, Gaza, Eleutheropolis, and finished his apostolic work In the Egyptian city of Ostrachina, where he was crucified by the pagans.

Jude Thaddeus - author of the Epistle of Jude, and brother of the Lord, and of James of Jerusalem, he traveled to preach the Gospel in Samaria, Idumeia, Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia, and finally to Armenia, and was martyred around the year 80 near Mt. Ararat in Armenia, where he was crucified and pierced by arrows.

Judas Iscariot - This was the Apostle who betrayed the Lord to the corrupt Temple officials. He hated his action, and hanged himself for it. He acted as the "treasurer" of Jesus' ministry.

Simon the Zealot - a Canaanite, Simon preached in many places, including

Samaria, Colchis, Mauritania in Africa, and Persia, and met his death by being tortured and crucified by the pagans in Abkhazia.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

After the Resurrection, all disciples of Christ were given The Great Commission. It is found in Matthew 28:19-20. Memorize it now.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

LESSON SIXTEEN REVIEW

What does the word 'apostle' mean?

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What was the difference between the 12 and the 70?

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Name a few of the 70 Apostles

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List the 12 Apostles

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Who was the only Apostle whose martyrdom is recorded in Scripture?

_____

Who was the only Apostle who did not die a martyr's death?

_____

Where in Scripture is the Great Commission?

_____

Write out the Great Commission

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Lesson Seventeen

About the Christian Life

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- About the beginnings of the Church
- How many souls came into the Church on Pentecost
- What the earliest converts to Christianity did
- About life in Christ today
- About the Mysteries of the Faith

THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

The Church was given power from above to fulfill it's mission (The Great Commission). From the very first day, the preaching of the Apostles brought a multitude of people to a knowledge and life in Jesus Christ. It changed their lives. It changed the world, forever.

We see that at Pentecost, in Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles and Disciples, they immediately went out preaching. St. Peter finishes his sermon, and 3000 souls were added to the faith that very day, after receiving baptism.

What did they do next? In Acts 2:42, the Bible is explicit. They devoted themselves to

- **the apostles' teaching and fellowship,**
- **to the breaking of bread,**
- **and the prayers.**

The Church has always done this, and continues to do this down to this day.

THE HOLY MYSTERIES

Life in Christ means new birth, new ways of thinking, speaking, living. Everything is new to the Christian after conversion. The Mysteries are vehicles of sanctification and grace for the believer, as they have power from above to transform the newly converted.

Baptism - The Great Commission orders Christians to baptize new believers, and Mark 16:16 tells us that "He who believes and is baptized will be saved." Baptism is the mystery of being born again into the Christian life.

Chrismation - Acts 8:17; 19:6 Receiving the Holy Spirit, as the Apostles did at Pentecost is done through Chrismation. "Chrism" means anointing, and in this case, anointing with the Holy Spirit using specially consecrated myrrh, so that the newly baptized may receive the Holy Spirit themselves. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." John 3:5. We do not withhold chrismation even from a day old infant, once baptized.

Eucharist - "Do this in remembrance of Me." This is a command of our Lord. St. John gives us Jesus words about the importance of receiving His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. (John 6:50-59) St. Paul recounts what he has received in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. In verses 27-30 we see what St. Paul says about partaking unworthily. The Church has maintained this teaching in her tradition from the earliest days of the faith to this very day.

Marriage - Our Lord performs His first miracle at the Wedding of Cana, thereby declaring marriage honorable. St. Paul talks about the meaning and mystery of Marriage in Ephesians 5:21-33, and starts with "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ…"

Confession - James 5:16; 1 John 1:9 Even in the Old Testament, confession of sins was important (Sirach 4:26). By confession, God will forgive and absolve us of our sins. This is the accountability of the interior life of the Christian. Many will say "I confess my sins to God alone," even though the Scriptures say "*Confess your sins to one another," (James 5:16)* that "one another" being those in the

Church. Confession is celebrated by priests and bishops who have been trained and ordained for this purpose, safeguarding our accountability. We confess to Christ, but the priest is the witness of our confession.

Unction - James 5:14-15 Here we see the practice of the early Church, calling for the elders, anointing with oil for the forgiveness of sins, and health of soul and body.

Holy Orders - Acts 12:2-3 These verses show the ordination of Paul and Barnabas before their missionary journey. The Lord Himself ordained Apostles, and they, in turn, laid hands on men to be bishops, presbyters, and deacons. (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3)

Other Mysteries

The Great Blessing of Waters, Monastic Tonsure, Consecration and Crowning of a Monarch are also considered Mysteries of the Church. While during medieval times the number landed on seven, the Church did not limit sacramental grace to these seven Sacraments.

LESSON SEVENTEEN REVIEW

How many souls were added to the faith on Pentecost?

_____

In Acts 2:42, we are told of what the new converts did after their baptism. List them.

_____

_____

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_____

List the Sacraments, or Mysteries of the Church. Include Scripture references when possible.

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What are some examples of other Holy Mysteries of the Church, besides these principle seven?

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Lesson Eighteen

The Life of St. Paul

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- A little about Paul's life before his conversion
- Who was Paul's rabbinical teacher
- Where in the Bible is Paul's conversion recorded
- Who baptized Paul
- How many years did Paul pray and study before embarking on missionary work
- Where Paul began his missionary journeys from
- The dates of Paul's missionary journeys
- The date of his trip to Rome

You should review the material from the previous lessons before delving into the life of St. Paul.

ST. PAUL'S LIFE

St. Paul was known as Saul before his dramatic conversion. He grew up in Tarsus in Asia Minor. He was trained as a tentmaker, as well as in the Septuagint Old Testament Scriptures. For advanced study, he went to Jerusalem, where he studied under the renowned and wise rabbi Gamaliel. This wise man influenced the Council of Jews to save the lives of the apostles in the book of Acts 5:33-40. This tolerant attitude was not reflected in Saul, however. His zeal for the faith of the Jews led him to become the chief persecutor of the Church at that time.

ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

While on a trip to Damascus, Syria, Saul had a wondrous encounter with the Risen and Ascended Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 9) He was blinded after the encounter. He was baptized later, received his sight back, and entered the Church as a new convert. The Lord Jesus appeared also to Ananias, one of the 70 Apostles, and ordered him to baptized Paul, which he obediently did, and cared for Paul during his first days as a Christian.

After this he spent many years, about seventeen years in all, in quiet study, and avoiding the persecution of the Jews, who wanted to kill him for his conversion. (Acts 15 and Galatians 2:1-10, relate to the same fact that an interval of seventeen years elapsed between the conversion of Paul and the Apostolic council, at Jerusalem)

He spent his first two years as a Christian in Arabia and Damascus. Barnabas, also an Apostle of the 70, got to know Paul, and convinced the Christians of Jerusalem to accept him by taking him under his wing, so to speak.

From Antioch, where the believers were first called Christians, Paul made his famous missionary journeys.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

45-49 a.d. Paul started his missionary work on the island of Cyprus. He converted many from the start, including the Roman governor, Sergius Paulus.

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

50-53 a.d. This time Paul went by land to visit the mainland churches he founded on his first trip.

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

54-58 a.d. Paul traveled through the upper coasts of Asia Minor revisiting churches from his first trip. He settled in Ephesus for about three years, and then visited Macedonia and Greece.

TRIP TO ROME

60-61 a.d. Realizing that he had no hope of a

fair hearing, Paul, utilizing his right as a Roman citizen, appealed to Caesar. After a period of intense apostolic activity in Rome from 60-66 a.d., Paul was arrested a second time, and martyred in 67 or 68 a.d.

PAUL'S WRITINGS

St. Paul authored 14 of the 21 epistles of the New Testament. We see in his writings a sharp wit, a masterful depth of Old Testament Scripture, and a logical and thorough understanding of the depths of the mystery of Christ. His letters were mostly written to solve problems, give advice, and teach about particular topics. They are treasures of Christian thought, and when accounted with the other books of the New Testament, give us Jesus' doctrine in detail.

PAUL'S MARTYRDOM

St. Paul died a martyr in Rome, probably in 67 a.d. He was beheaded, rather than being crucified, as he was a Roman citizen. According to the Church's Tradition, he died on the same day as St. Peter.

LESSON EIGHTEEN REVIEW

Who was Paul's famous teacher?

_____

Where in the Bible do we see him acting on behalf of the Apostles?

_____

Where is Paul's conversion recorded in the Bible?

_____

Who baptized Paul?

_____

Who was he, and why did he do it?

_____

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_____

How many years did Paul pray and study before embarking on missionary work? List Bible references, if you can.

_____

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_____

Who convinced the Christians in Jerusalem to accept Paul?

_____

_____

From what city did Paul begin all his missionary journeys?

_____

List the dates of Paul's missionary journeys.

_____

_____

_____

_____

How many years was Paul in Rome?

_____

_____

How and when was Paul martyred?

_____

_____

Lesson Nineteen

The First Century Church

Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, you should know:

- *Early heresies in the Church*
- *Early apologists in the Church*
- *Which heresy Islam also falls under*

THE FIRST CENTURY

The first century was a very busy and exciting time for the Church. This is the time of Christ, His Death on the Cross, His Resurrection and Ascension. This is the time of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Church, giving her the power to go forth and bring the world to Christ.

This is the time of the Holy Apostles also. During this century the entire New Testament was written. Many struggles faced the new Israel, and they faced them boldly and glorified God.

We know a lot more about the early Church than you might think at first glance.

Teachers

- **St. Peter and the remainder of the 12**
- **St. Paul and the 70 Apostles**
- **Bishops, presbyters and deacons**
- **The Apostolic Fathers**

The 12

Led by St. Peter, the original apostolic band spread the Gospel throughout the inhabited world, reaching, during their lifetime as far west as Spain (St. James), as far east as India (St. Thomas), as far north as Ukraine (St. Andrew), and everywhere in between. They encountered both massive conversions and acrimonious resistance everywhere they went, both in Jewish and Pagan circles.

The 70

Taking their cue from the 12 and zealously fulfilling the Great Commandment, these eyewitnesses of the ministry and Resurrection of Christ were laboring, converting, healing and challenging the religious, philosophical and social ideas of the time. Their labors are responsible for many Churches which exist to this day. St. Mark, for example, built up a powerful community in Egypt.

The Apostolic Fathers

During this time also, as the Church was exploding on the scene everywhere, the original Apostolic band was being martyred. Their disciples are called the Apostolic fathers, and it was said that many of them still had the voice of the apostles "ringing in their ears." These men wrote many documents, but most of them will be dealt with in the next Chapter.

Writings: The Didache

"The Didache" meaning *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, is the earliest Christian catechism. It is very primitive in its style, and its record of Gospel teachings and sayings. It is very early, and most likely pieced together from several sources *before* the canonical New Testament was written. We have placed it in this chapter because it clearly belongs to the very early Church during the Apostolic era, and is no doubt a product of that early Church. Our best guess is that is was written very early, and compiled in its current form, from several sources or writers, around 50-70 a.d.

Heresies & Heretics

- The Jewish authorities
- The Pagan authorities (& the Caesars)
- The Gnostics, Docetics, and Judaizers

Cerinthus

Cerinthus was the original leader of a late first century heretical sect. He was a contemporary of St. John the Evangelist, who wrote the fourth Gospel to refute his heretical teachings.

The earliest surviving account of Cerinthus is found in Irenaeus' refutation of Gnosticism, *Against Heresies,* which was written about 170 a.d. According to Irenæus, Cerinthus, a man educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians, claimed angelic inspiration. He taught that the visible world and heavens were not made by the Supreme Being, but by a lesser power distinct from him, which he called the Demiurge. The angels have both made the world and given the law. These creator-angels were ignorant of the existence of the Supreme God, and the Jewish law remained in effect for Gentiles and it's observance was essential to salvation.

Cerinthus distinguished between the man Jesus and the Christ. He denied the supernatural birth of Jesus, making him the son of Joseph and Mary, and distinguishing him from Christ, who descended upon him at baptism and left him again at his crucifixion. Cerinthus is also said to have taught that Jesus will be raised from the dead at the Last Day, when all men will rise with Him.

According to Irenaeus, Polycarp told the story that St. John the Evangelist, at an old age, is said to have once entered a bathhouse in Ephesus, and then immediately fled, naked, when he found out Cerinthus was inside, yelling "Let us flee, before the building falls down; Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is inside!"

The Ebionites

The Ebionites (from the Hebrew for "*poor men*") denied the Divinity of Christ and the Virgin birth, considering Jesus the son of Joseph and Mary. They clung to the observance of the Jewish Law, regarding St. Paul as a complete apostate. According to St. Irenaeus, they only used the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Ebionites believed that all followers of Jesus, whether they be Hebrew or Gentile, must adhere to the laws of the Noahide and Mosaic covenants, either through a Essene-style reconstructionist interpretation, or a more progressive, Pharisaic interpretation and observance, tempered with the wisdom teachings of Jesus Christ.

The Nicolaitans

The church at Ephesus (Rev. 2:6) is commended for hating the "deeds" of the Nicolaitans, and the church of Pergamos is blamed for having them who hold their "doctrines"

They were a class of professing Christians, who sought to introduce into the church a false freedom or licentiousness, thus abusing Paul's doctrine of grace (comp. 2 Pet. 2:15, 16, 19) or engaging in acts of licentiousness, living an antinomian (free from any law or restrictions) philosophy. They are mentioned in Rev. 2:14 as those who held the "doctrine of Baalam". Baalam caused the Israelites to sin by inciting them to eat meat sacrificed to idols and to fornicate (Num. 25:1-2), two of the four restrictions placed upon Gentile converts to Christianity by the Council of Jerusalem (recorded in Acts 15:29).

Other Heresies of the Day

Salvation by works alone - St. Paul wrote against this kind of thinking in his letter to the Romans. Many Christians were trying to fulfill the laws of the Old Covenant. St. Paul reminds them that one does not earn one's way into heaven. Our best works are "like filthy rags" compared to God's righteousness, but faith pleases Him greatly. See Romans 3:28; 5:1; 10:4.

Salvation by faith alone - St. James writes against this kind of thinking in his letter to the Church at large. Many Christians decided that if they just had faith, and thought the right way, they needed to do nothing else. St James reminds them that "faith without works is dead." Action is the proof and expression of faith. See James 2:17; 2:24.

To be Christian, you must be Jewish first - the early Church fought this for awhile. Those who held to this teaching were called the Judaizers. Many converts to Christianity had no basis for Biblical morality, and were simply converted without much teaching. Without the moral background of Judaism, the new converts simply had no understanding of right and wrong. St. Paul deals with this kind of mess in his letters to the Corinthians. The solution for many was simply to make them Jews first, so that they could understand the Christian message more clearly. St. Paul reminds them that we are under grace, not the Law. No one needs a babysitter when mom and dad are home. No one needs the Law, once they have accepted Christ. Sadly, many independent heterodox individuals are returning to this kind of thinking, taking up Jewish prayer shawls, blowing shofars, and living a life in line with the prescriptions found in the Biblical book of Leviticus.

Gnosticism - The perennial enemy of Incarnational Christianity, Gnosticism is actually a dualistic understanding of the world that saw spiritual things as good, and material things as evil. Therefore salvation was freedom from the material body. This directly contradicts the teaching of the Incarnation, Resurrection and Ascension. Gnosticism preceded Christianity, but when Christianity appeared on the scene, they immediately tried to make "Gnostic theology" out of it. Gnosticism pervades much of heterodox Christianity today.

Docetism - (from the Greek, *dokeō* [δοκέω], which means "*to seem*") A form of gnosticism, docetism taught that Jesus only *seemed* to have a body, and that, therefore, He only *appeared* to suffer, to die, and to rise again. In other words, the Incarnation is actually an illusion. In reality, Christ was an incorporeal and pure spirit, and therefore could not physically die.

This is a Gnostic belief, as they believed that matter was evil, hence God would not take on a material body. This statement is rooted in the idea that a divine spark is imprisoned within the material body, and that the material body is in itself an obstacle, deliberately created by an evil lesser god to prevent man from seeing his divine origin. Humanity is, in essence, asleep. Docetism largely died out during the first millennium A.D. Docetism denies the Incarnation, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension entirely.

Modern day docetic heresies include Islam which teaches that Jesus' crucifixion was only apparent, an illusion. The Quran says "They did not kill him and they did not crucify him, but it was made to seem so to them..." (4:157) This makes Islam, among anything else, a docetic heresy.

The Liturgical Praxis of the Day

We know that the apostolic tradition was forming the early Church from an early stage.

> *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*. Acts 2:42

This corresponds to catechism and meeting together, the Eucharist, and common prayer, including the Lord's Prayer. This is precisely what takes place today in every Orthodox Church in the world, in this exact pattern, following the Holy Scriptures.

We know that baptisms were widespread, catechism among new converts was varied in its quality and depth, but love and faith permeated the early Church. In many places, those educated in Greek philosophy or Eastern Mystery Cults often tried to co-opt Christianity to support their own mystical systems. This unfortunate habit has never completely died away.

LESSON NINETEEN REVIEW

List the individuals who were the authoritative teachers of Christianity during the 1st century.

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Who was Cerinthus?

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Give a brief statement of his teachings

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What did the Apostle John call him?

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Who were the Ebionites?

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What does the word Ebionite mean? In what language?

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Who were the Nicolaitans?

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Where are the Nicolaitans mentioned in the Bible, and in what context?

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List the four other heresies of the 1st century

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What 1st century heresy does Islam also fall under?

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How do we know this? What source gives us this information?

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Where in the Bible do we find some of the liturgical practice of the Apostolic Church?

_____ _____:_____

Lesson Twenty

The Bible Today

Objectives of this lesson

At the end of this lesson, you should know:

- The purpose of the Holy Scriptures
- The purpose of the Church in the world
- The missionary nature of the Church
- What to do as a disciple of Christ today

Every person in every nation must hear the word of the Gospel, and be blessed by it.

The purpose of the Holy Scriptures is to give us the record of God's interaction with humanity, and the results of that interaction. To tell us what is pleasing to God, It provides us a guide to live our whole lives as Christians!

> **Happy are we, O Israel, for we know what is pleasing to God.** ***Baruch 4:4***

What we have received, we have received for a purpose, for a mission. We must fulfill that mission, as we have been ordered to, and given power and opportunity to do so. This is the purpose of the Church in the world - to take Christ to the world, and take the world to Christ.

MISSIONARY ENDEAVORS

Christ was a missionary. Christ was sent by the Father to redeem mankind, and to reveal the inner Mystery of salvation to the world. Christ sends us, his disciples, to others in need of the Gospel, in like manner (John 20:21)

All the writers of the New Testament were missionaries. Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, James, Jude, Luke, Mark were missionaries, every one of them. They had a mission to offer the Gospel to every person, Jew and Gentile. The New Testament is a powerful witness of that reality. As you read the New Testament, remember that all of the authors were missionaries, and see how that changes your reading of it.

Christians in the Apostolic era were all missionaries. Can you name one Christian in the entire New Testament who was not a missionary? Can you name one? Why not? Because the entire Church was turning it's energy and resources to its true function - getting out the word about Jesus Christ, His Resurrection, and salvation in His name. Even Judas Iscariot did missionary work before the Resurrection (Matt 10:5-15)!

The New Testament is a group of missionary books. Written by missionary men, during missionary times, for a missionary purpose, doing missionary work: this is the definition of a missionary text!

- **The Gospels** tell of Christ's missionary work in the world.
- **Acts** tells of the early missionary work and struggles of the Apostolic Church.
- **The Epistles** were letters written by missionaries to their mission fields.
- Even **Revelation** urges those who respond to God's invitation to extend that invitation to others. (Rev. 22:17)

The Church has been missionary in every age. St. Paul, St. Andrew, St. Mark, St. Thomas,

St. Peter, St. Nina, Ss. Cyril and Methodius, St. Vladimir, St. Patrick, St. Aidan, St. Columban, St. Ninian, St. Dewid, St. Herman, St. Tikhon, St. John Maximovitch, and a great multitude of others (we could go on and on here!) all continued this apostolic missionary work.

The Church is missionary today! Your parish probably contributes to missionaries even now. If not, they should! The Christian missionary machine is powerful. Armed with the Holy Spirit and the Great Commission, Christians across the globe, and down the street, continue touching lives with the peace and joy of Jesus Christ.

You are the Church. You are a missionary. And you are armed with the Holy Spirit. You have been given the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), and you have the Holy Scriptures as your guide. Don't worry, you aren't alone. You may feel you have much to learn, but it is your love of God, and your love for others that will plant itself in the hearts of those who you introduce to a life in Christ, and the safety of His Holy Church.

THE WORLD TODAY

About two thirds of the world's population have yet to receive Christ, or even hear the Gospel. Some areas of the world have been ignored, since historically there have been Christians there - Europe, parts of Africa, parts of India, and more. A fresh missionary effort is beginning in these places, too, and yielding much fruit already.

In every land, even Russia, Greece, Romania and other traditionally Orthodox lands, most all Christians have friends and neighbors who are not Christians. There is as much work to be done next door, as around the world. It is up to you to see that it is not neglected.

Christians by the hundreds of thousands are working diligently to reach them, teach them, and invite them into the Church. To this end, the Bible has been translated into thousands of languages, so that every people may read the Bible, pray, and worship in a language they understand.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

It's a funny thing about how things work. If they don't do what they are supposed to, they stop working at all. A car that isn't started, stops working altogether. A home that isn't lived in falls apart in short order. It's the same with the Church. If the Church is not doing missionary work, it soon shrivels and dies. Individual parishes, dioceses, entire regions and continents have learned this the hard way. Without fulfilling its missionary function, the people in the Church soon attend only to their own desires, needs, and fancies.

On the other hand, even a tiny Church with a missionary spirit changes lives, families, towns, cities, and eventually entire nations. It all starts with meeting the needs of those outside the Church. It all starts with loving those outside Christian community enough to 'risk' telling them about Jesus, and inviting them to worship.

YOUR BEST TOOL

Your best tool in your work as a missionary disciple is the Bible. You do not need to quote chapter and verse to people who don't understand it anyway (this is ill advised).

The best news for those who understand the missionary nature of the Church is that - pay attention to this - **YOU CAN NOT FAIL.** Armed with the knowledge of the Apostolic mission, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the history of God's work among mankind, and the Holy Spirit Himself, you cannot help but have a positive impact in the lives of anyone you meet.

GOOD NEWS!

A recent example of this specific principle can be seen in Africa, where *Islamic* news reports over 6 million African muslims convert to Christianity *every year*. They blame Christian missionary efforts, and ascribe immense influence and power to it. As a result, they say that Africa is now 'lost' to Christianity. What a powerful witness to Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit!

Now, go, today, and tell someone what the Lord has done for you! Let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

LESSON TWENTY REVIEW

What is the purpose of Holy Scripture?

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In what possible ways can the New Testament be considered a missionary set of books?

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What fraction of the world's population is not yet Christian?

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What is the Church doing about it?

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What is the point of missionary activity in traditionally Christian or Orthodox Christian areas?

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What is the best tool for the missionary?

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What is the best news for those who understand that the Church is missionary at its core?

_____

Give a recent example of this specific principle

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_____

THE END!

Called to Serve

FEEDBACK FORM

Send to Fr. John A. Peck 1327 E. Main St. Louisville, Ohio 4441 OR email me at *frjohnpeck@yahoo.com*

Thank you for taking this course. In order to make improvements, I am asking for your help. Please answer the following questions and add any other comments you feel would be helpful to making "Called to Serve" a better survey. Circle one of the options and explain - and just write what you really think.

Rate on a scale of 1-10, and explain if you like.

Difficulty of the material *(circle one)*

1___2___3___4___5___6___7___8___9___10

too easy too hard

_____

_____

Speed the material was covered *(circle one)*

1___2___3___4___5___6___7___8___9___10

too slow too fast

_____

_____

Amount of information covered *(circle one)*

1___2___3___4___5___6___7___8___9___10

too little too much

_____

_____

Was anything unclear?

_____

_____

_____

In your opinion, would the material be better presented with additional illustrations or graphics?

_____

_____

_____

In your opinion, was there something which was not covered OR which you would like to have seen covered in more detail?

_____

_____

_____

In your opinion, was there something which was covered too thoroughly at the expense of other more interesting or more important material? Be as specific as you like.

_____

_____

_____

Would you have interest in a similarly presented, but more detailed, survey of the **New Testament**?

_____

_____

_____

Would you have interest in a similarly presented survey of **Church History and Doctrine**, a sort of century by century survey done in worksheets?

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_____

Thank you for helping me out. Please list anything else you feel would help me develop a better Bible Survey course Please be as specific as you can. Use the back of this sheet if you like.

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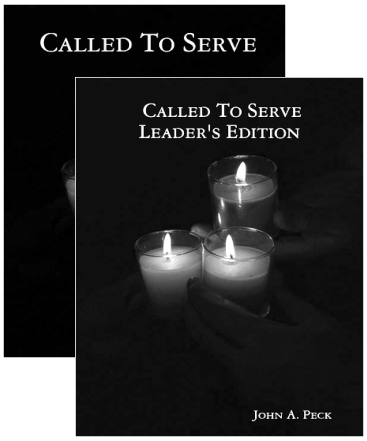

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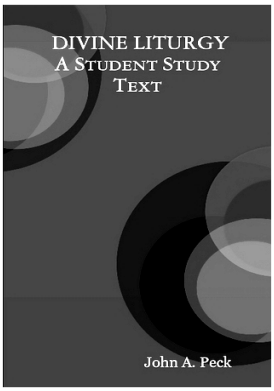

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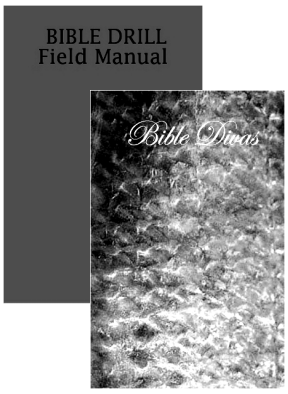

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