

New Testament Survey : 1

[4th Edition, November 2007]

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The New Testament is “part two” of the Bible

Lesson 1

A. Introduction

The first part of the Bible, the Old Testament, records man’s fall from grace into sin, and God’s wonderful promise of salvation through the Messiah, as well as the history of God’s people from their beginning with Abraham to the nation of Israel.

It describes Israel’s captivity in Egypt, deliverance, journey to the Promised Land of Canaan; as well as the nation’s backslidings, division, second captivity and the final return to Jerusalem of a very small group, now known as “Jews”.

The New Testament is neither an interruption in God’s overall plan, nor is it an alternative to God’s original intentions. The New Covenant is a *continuation* of God’s plan for mankind, which began in Genesis.

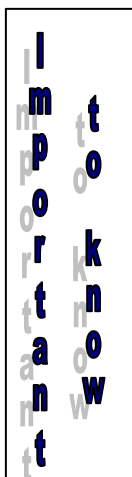
Read Jeremiah 31:31-34

The New Covenant is the fulfilment of Jeremiah’s prophecy.

1. Our goals for this course.

To know the background, purpose, authorship and message of each book.

By the end of our study, you should know:



Who wrote each book?

Who did they write it to?

When did they write it?

What was the purpose in writing it?

What was the point (or points) the author was trying to make?

And finally – How it applies to our lives today.

The above information forms the foundation for a correct perspective of the New Testament in order to become more settled in our faith, to form correct doctrine, and to preach and teach the Word of God accurately.

2. The New Testament covers about one hundred years.

The **Old Testament** covers thousands of years of history.

The events recorded in the **New Testament** cover a period of approximately 100 years, beginning shortly before the death of Herod the Great in 4 BC., and ending with the writing of the book of Revelation about 95 or 96 AD.

This is the period of time that God's promise of a Messiah is fulfilled in Jesus, and continues through the establishment of the early Christian Church.

3. **The New Testament is a New and Better “Covenant”**. (Hebrews 8:6)

The word “**Testament**” in fact means, “**Covenant**”. Therefore, the Bible consists of the “Old Covenant”, and the “New Covenant”.

Atonement for sin in the Old Covenant called for the sacrifice of some living animal. A life for a life!

The guilty person laid his hand on the head of the animal, identifying himself with it. Then the animal was killed, symbolically taking the sinner’s place. (Leviticus 1:4; 3:2; and 4:4)

It is easy to see by this example that sin merits death, but that God had accepted a “substitute sacrifice” – another life in place of the sinner’s.

All the Old Testament sacrifices are a picture of what became a reality in the death of Jesus at Calvary and help us to understand the meaning of His death – Jesus died as the Lamb of God, our substitute. On the basis of His shed blood, God offers full and free forgiveness to all who accept Him by faith.

B. The New Testament fulfils the old

Read Hebrews 10:1-7

Read verse 1 again.

1. **The Law was only a shadow of the good things to come.**

A shadow looks a little like the real thing.

What if we put a chair in the sun so that it casts a shadow?

Would anyone like to sit on the shadow of the chair?

No, of course not! It is only a shadow; it cannot hold a person up.

In the same way, our salvation and relationship with God is *not* established by careful keeping of the law’s detailed instructions, but by faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:20-24)

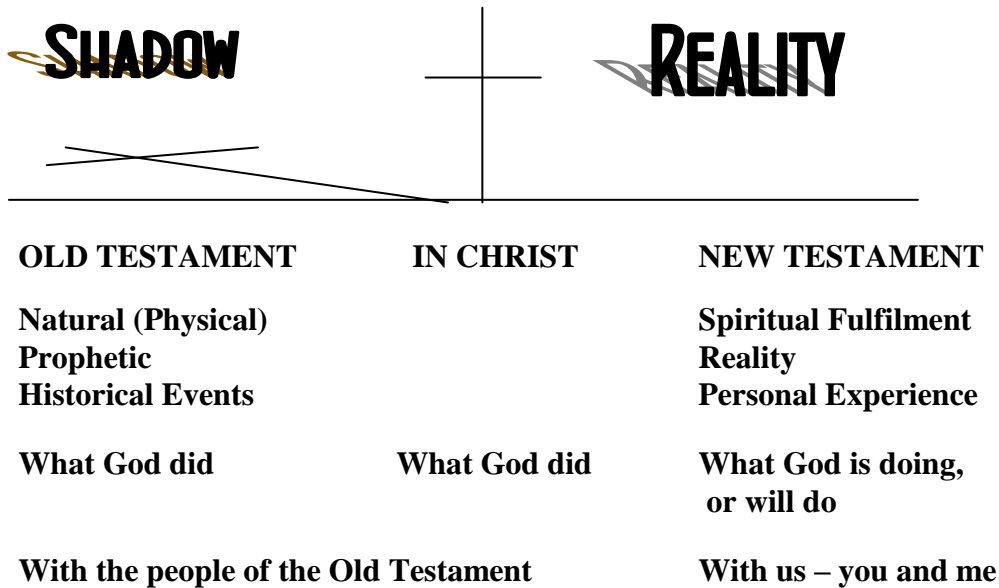
Faith, not law, was always the way to salvation. (Romans 4:18-21)

A personal relationship with God and reliance on the Holy Spirit, not a struggle to keep the law, is the way to live a righteous life. (Hebrews 9:14-15)

2. **The Law is a Shadow. The Reality is in Christ.**

The requirements of the Law should be seen in our lives – not because we are trying to keep a lot of rules, but because the love of Jesus is working to transform us from within, and the Holy Spirit is prompting us to acts of love that fulfil every demand of the law.

C. We can illustrate the Old and New Testaments like this



D. Between the Old and New Testaments

Important Old Testament Review

Please pay close attention to the information in this section. It is important for an accurate understanding of the New Testament.

You will benefit by being familiar with the events and circumstances preceding Jesus' birth.

1. A brief review.

Look carefully at the following summary of Old Testament events:

931 BC King Solomon died and his son, Rehoboam, came to the throne.
And **the nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms:**

The Northern Kingdom	called Israel	capital city – Samaria
The Southern Kingdom	called Judah	capital city – Jerusalem

721 BC The Northern Kingdom, Israel, was conquered by Assyria and scattered throughout the Assyrian Empire.

606 BC The Southern Kingdom, Judah, was conquered by Babylon and exiled.

586 BC The beautiful Temple, built by Solomon, was completely destroyed.

539 BC Babylon was defeated by the Medes and Persians.

- 536 BC King Cyrus of Persia allowed the first group of captives to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.
- 515 BC The Temple was finished.
- 457 BC The second group of captives returned to Jerusalem.
- 444 BC The third group returned.
- 425 BC The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt.
- 400 BC The end of the Old Testament writings.**

2. The “inter-testament” period.

“**Inter-Testament**” – that is, the time between the Old and New Testaments.

a) Four Hundred years of silence.

From the return of Judah (now called “Jews”, a shorter word for Judah) to Jerusalem until the beginning of New Testament times, 400 years passed by.

During this time no prophet spoke or wrote, which is the reason it is called “The Period of Silence”.

As we come to the time that Jesus was born, it is important that we know some of the events that happened during these 400, “inter-testament” years.

b) Remember...

God’s people were defeated and taken captive.

- i) The people of the **northern** kingdom were captured by **Assyria**.
- ii) The **southern** kingdom was conquered by **Babylon**, the nation that defeated Assyria. 136 Years after the northern kingdom was captured, the southern kingdom went into exile in Babylon.

Later, **Babylon** was defeated by a nation called **Persia**.

Seventy years after they were taken captive the Persian King, Cyrus, released any Jews who wanted to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple and the city.

c) Greece defeated the Persians and many other nations, in 358 BC.

i) Alexander the Great.

Alexander was a young king of Greece, determined to conquer the world.

He destroyed the Persian Empire, swept through Syria, Palestine and Egypt, marching his army as far as India before returning to Greece.

Alexander spread Greek culture, called *Hellenism*, and established the Greek language as the common, everyday language of the world at that time. This was called "*koine Greek*".

He died at the age of 33, leaving no heirs. His empire was divided amongst his four generals.

ii) The "Septuagint".

In 285 BC the Old Testament was translated into *koine* Greek.

This version of the Scriptures is called, "The Septuagint".

The Septuagint quickly became the "Scriptures" of the Jews. It later became the Scriptures the early church used as well.

Can you see how God was preparing for the spread of the Gospel? Everyone spoke *one language* and the Old Testament Scriptures were available to everyone.

d) Jewish Persecution.

During the time of Alexander the Great, and after his death, Jews were sometimes treated well, but most of the time they experienced cruelty and persecution.

Alexander's generals, who now controlled the Empire, continually fought with one another. Palestine, sandwiched between two bitter rivals – one controlling Egypt and the other based in Syria – became a victim of their rivalry.

Hellenism (Greek culture) was powerful and invaded Jewish spiritual life. Many Jews abandoned their faith in God entirely in favour of both the Greek religion and Greek lifestyle.

Also, at this time, the office of High Priest was so corrupted that it was common practice to sell it to the highest bidder.

Eventually the Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, gained control of Palestine. His soldiers plundered Jerusalem, tore down its houses and walls and burned the city.

Jews were sold into slavery, the temple was desecrated (defiled), and observance of the Law of Moses was forbidden under threat of death.

Jewish worship almost disappeared as people were forced to sacrifice to idols, but some Jews resisted – this was known as **The Maccabean Revolt** because it was led by a family called Maccabees.

They succeeded in defeating the Syrians, rebuilt the damage done to Jerusalem, and regained their religious freedom.

However, this newfound freedom did not last long before ambition for power among the leaders caused internal strife and weakened the country once more.

Palestine was again conquered in **63 BC** – this time by Rome.

e) The Roman Empire.

The people of Rome developed the last great empire of the ancient world.

Rome conquered most of the known world at that time, including Greece, Spain, Italy, Asia Minor, as well as Egypt, Syria, North Africa and Palestine.

Wherever Roman rule went, it brought good roads and public works, government officials and sometimes entire colonies of Roman citizens.

The Jews had to pay a yearly tax but had some political liberty.

When Rome conquered a nation their aim was to make them good subjects of Rome.

Consequently, Rome granted the countries it had conquered as much self-rule as it could safely allow without encouraging rebellion. (However, if rebellion occurred, Rome responded quickly and ruthlessly.)

In Palestine, Rome nominated a man named Herod (later called “Herod the Great”) to rule over the Jews. Because his ancestry was Idumean (Edomite), the Jews resented him, but Rome conferred on him the title of “king”.

When he died, Palestine was divided amongst his three sons.

Therefore, it is important to realize that **the name “Herod” is a *surname***, or family name. There is more than one “Herod” in the New Testament, just as there is more than one Mr. Ndlovu, or Mr. Jones, or Mr. Lunga.

f) Roman Citizenship.

i) Roman citizenship was highly prized.

A person holding Roman citizenship had ties to the ruling class, though he might otherwise be an unimportant person.

ii) The benefit of Roman citizenship was Rome’s protection of the individual.

- A Roman citizen could not be bound or imprisoned without a trial.
- He could not be beaten.
- If he felt he was not receiving justice under local rule, he could appeal to Rome.

No wonder the Roman authorities in Philippi were so alarmed when they realized that Paul and Silas, whom they had just beaten and thrown into prison, were Romans citizens! (Acts 16:35-39)

Later in Paul's life, he again made use of his Roman citizenship ... but we will learn more about that as we study Acts.

Memory Verse

Hebrews 7:18-19, *“For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God”.*

Teacher's Notes

1. You may remember from the Old Testament Survey study, that when Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, according to their usual policy regarding conquered peoples, they removed Israel from the land and scattered the people throughout the Assyrian empire. Then they imported people from other conquered lands into Israel. Thus the millions of Israelites comprising the northern kingdom were lost, and never returned.

The southern kingdom was captured some 136 years later, and the people were taken to Babylon. Only the very poorest were left in Judea. Of the millions who went into Babylonian captivity, only 52,000 returned to rebuild the Temple and Jerusalem.

The others chose to remain in Babylon – partly because after 70 years of non-oppressive captivity, they were content and comfortable and partly because returning to Jerusalem meant working very hard in very dangerous conditions as the city had been completely destroyed and people from surrounding nations had moved in to occupy the land. By the time Jesus was born, about 700,000 Jews lived in Palestine.

2. There are a group of books known as the *Apocrypha*, written during the inter-testament period (Esdras, Maccabees, etc.) which were not accepted by the early church as having been inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus did not quote from any Apocryphal books, nor did any of the early apostles or disciples. The Jewish community that produced them rejected them, and the historical accounts the books contain are flawed by numerous errors. There is nothing of theological value in them that is not found in Scripture and, therefore, most Bibles do not contain these books.

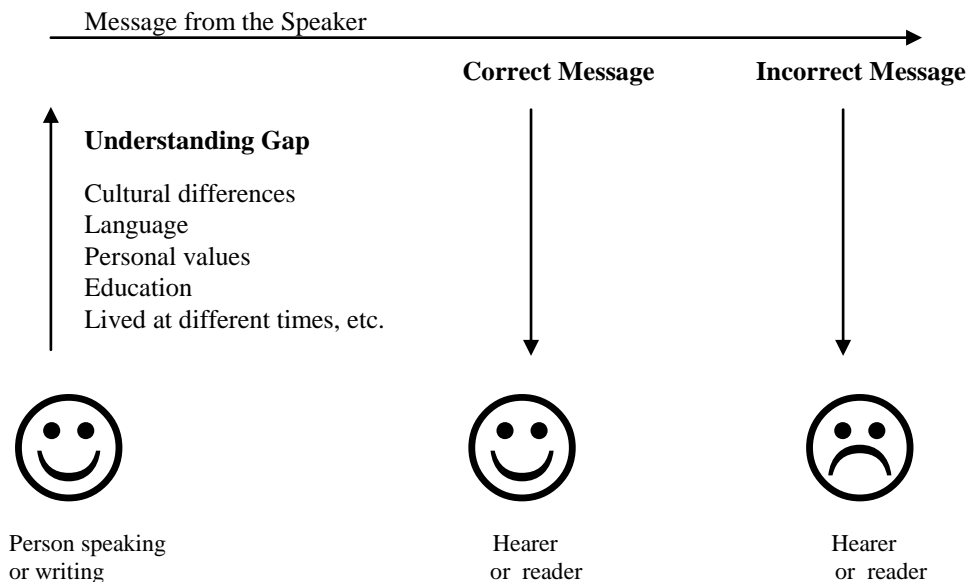
However, the Roman Catholic Church has included them in their own denominational version of the Bible.

Inter-Testament Period, continued

Lesson 2

A. Correct Communication means Correct Understanding

1. Look at the following illustration.



Can you see how communication can break down?

The message was exactly the same for both people. Why did one person understand, and the other one did not understand?

There can be a difference between what a speaker or writer intended to say and what the hearer understood, when there are differences in language, culture or when they lived at different times, etc.

When we apply this to the Bible, we know that there are definite, major differences between how we live today and how people lived in Bible times.

Let us be careful not to read our culture, language and attitudes into what God intended to say through The New Testament writers.

2. A language barrier for the Jews. (a barrier is an obstacle or fence, blocking a path)

The Jews who returned to Jerusalem had a problem: they now spoke Aramaic, the common language of Babylon, but the Old Testament Scriptures were written in *Hebrew* and *Chaldee*.

Therefore, beginning with Ezra (who was the first “scribe”), and the Levites who returned from Babylon, the Scriptures were *translated* into Aramaic so that everyone could understand.

a) A Translation – OR – An Interpretation?

Translation means the literal change of words from one language to another.

For example, the word for “table” in English is “la mesa” in Spanish. (Now you can say that you speak a little Spanish!)

At first the scribes **translated** from Hebrew into Aramaic, but soon they began to **interpret**, *by adding their own understanding and explanation*.

Which meant, if we use the example above, that “table” would not be translated just “la mesa” anymore, but would perhaps be changed to – “a piece of furniture used at meal times. Round flat plates to hold food are placed on it, with a knife and fork at the side of each plate”.

Now, if we used that interpretation, we would never be able to use the table for anything else except having our meals around it – children could not do their homework at the table; mother could not use it to prepare the food, etc. And what about using *bowls* instead of plates? Or *spoons*? Well, those also would be incorrect according to the above definition of the word “table”.

Can you see how the accuracy of what God intended to say can be clouded when personal opinions and rules are added? We will learn more about the scribes’ rules later.

b) The danger.

Interpretations and explanations of the Jewish religious leaders and what they said became more important than what God had said!

3. **A cultural barrier.** (or obstacle)

Since the New Testament is made up of writings and letters written to Jews, Greeks, Romans, etc., it sometimes helps to understand the culture of that day.

However, there is not one Gospel for Jews, another for Greeks, and another for Germans, etc. God’s Word is **trans-cultural** – that is, it is for every country; every nation.

And the culture and traditions of every nation, including yours and mine, must yield to the truth of God’s Word. That is, if the traditions or the culture of a nation contradict what the Bible says, tradition and culture must be put aside.

4. **Your personal “World View” and the Bible.**

What is a “worldview”?

A “worldview” is a set of assumptions that we hold (that is, beliefs, things we suppose to be true), about the basic makeup of the world, or just about life in general.

Note: Everyone has a “worldview”, whether they are conscious of it or not. **Our goal throughout this course is to become conscious of our personal worldview... and then to *change it where it is not rooted in biblical truth.***

5. Your “Worldview” causes you to reach certain conclusions.

Each of us has a worldview... and that view of the world has a great deal to do with our “conduct and actions” and what we “see”.

Example: The Sadducees had a worldview in which there was no such thing as the supernatural.

This belief blinded them to truth.

Read Mark 12:18-27

Read Acts 4:1-2 and Acts 23:8

6. “Worldview” and Culture.

Our personal “worldview” provides us with an explanation of ***how and why things are as they are, and how and why they continue to change.***

These explanations of “how and why” are passed on from generation to generation sometimes through a nation’s history books, or through folklore (legends), myths and stories.

They also give culture a subconscious legitimacy in the minds of the people of that culture. That is, people in a certain culture believe the things that make up their culture are valid and true ... because everyone around them has the same beliefs, the same opinions and the same customs.

7. A “Worldview” serves as a basis for values.

A worldview serves as the basis for values, judging and validating (confirming, authenticating as true or good).

It is a **yardstick**, or measuring line, with which people measure events and circumstances in their culture, providing criteria or standards for acceptability.

8. Coming to a Biblical “Worldview”.

Correcting our inherited worldview brings us to the purpose of the following principles. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we will try to get into the Biblical worldview, the true view of reality ... and become as saturated as possible with its language and thought.

Our purpose is to think the way people thought in Bible times, so that we may see God’s world in God’s way through the “eyes” of revelation.

B. The Jewish religious leaders

Various religious groups of Jews were formed during this inter-testament time.

1. The Scribes.

These were the men who made copies of the Scriptures, and who were the ultimate authority on what Scripture said.

They were called “scribes”, “teachers” or “rabbi”.

And they were sometimes referred to as law-yers ... that is, the official interpreters or explainers of the Law. (Not like the “lawyers” of today, who work with legal systems and courts.)

The scribes provided laws for every possible circumstance of daily life, down to the smallest detail, and rigidly enforced them. These laws dominated the lives of people, laying on them a yoke that was truly unbearable.

2. The Pharisees.

The term “Pharisee” means “separated one” – someone who had separated himself from Greek culture (Hellenism), which was so common at that time.

The Pharisees worked closely with the scribes, and had the greatest influence upon all acts of public worship, prayers and sacrifices that were performed according to their oversight.

They avoided, as far as possible, social contact with anyone who was not a Pharisee because they believed everyone else was unclean. (No wonder they hated Jesus for His free association with “publicans and sinners”.)

The Talmud (a Jewish commentary on the Old Testament) tells (with a good amount of humour) of **7 types of Pharisees**:

- (1) The Schechemite – who simply keeps the law for profit.
- (2) The Tumbling Pharisee – who appears to be humble, always hanging his head.
- (3) The Bleeding Pharisee – who, in order not to see a woman, walked with his eyes closed and so he often bumped into things.
- (4) The Mortar Pharisee – who wore a mortar-shaped cap to cover his eyes in order not to see any impurities or indecencies.
- (5) The What-Am-I-Yet-To-Do Pharisee – who, not knowing much about the law, as soon as he has done one thing, asks, “What shall I do now?”
- (6) The Fearful Pharisee – who keeps the law because he is afraid of judgement.
- (7) The Pharisee from Love – who loves God and believes this is the right thing to do.

Regardless of what kind of Pharisee they were, they scrupulously observed every law they could find, and invented new ones at every opportunity.

For example, the Pharisees forbade spitting on the ground on the Sabbath, in case the action disturbed the dirt, which would amount to ploughing, which is work.

A Pharisee might lawfully eat an egg on a weekday, however an egg laid on the Sabbath was forbidden ... although they did admit they were unsure whether the hen actually knew it was the Sabbath!

In their opinion a man would be guilty of “breaking the Sabbath” if he carried a nail or a piece of string in his pocket on the Sabbath – for those were tools of work.

By the time Jesus ministered, the Pharisees had added some 6,000 laws of their own!

To justify these rules and traditions (*which they gave as being equal in importance to God’s Word*) they claimed they were the “Oral or Spoken Law” – supposedly things God had said to Moses on Mount Sinai, which Moses had not written down.

However, they also invented legal loopholes for their own convenience!

For example, one of their laws was that a person could not carry his clothes in his arms out of his house on the Sabbath, even if the house was on fire. However, he could put on several layers of clothes and bring them out by wearing them.

Jesus and the Pharisees clashed repeatedly over their nonsensical, artificial rules, their overall attitude of *legalism and their real motivation, which was not about loving God, but which was to gain the attention and admiration of men.*

Whereas Jesus had compassion on the friendless, the poor and helpless and loved those who had minds open to the truth; the Pharisees regarded the lower classes of people as those to turn away from, to shun as unclean, and spent their time making disciples who held their own narrow views.

3. **The Sadducees.**

Although the Pharisees and Sadducees are often seen together in the New Testament, it was only their rejection of Jesus as Messiah that they had in common.

The Sadducees were part of the Jewish aristocracy and the high priesthood.

They had made peace with their Roman conquerors and had attained positions of wealth and influence.

Their chief interest was politics, not religion, and they were not really interested in opposing Jesus until the end of His life when it appeared that there was the danger that His ministry would cause conflict with Rome (bad politics)!

Their main area of responsibility was the Temple administration and rituals.

They were unpopular with the common people and held themselves apart from them.

They rejected all Scripture except the Torah (as they called the first five books of

the Bible) as well as any doctrine not found in them – such as *resurrection*.

4. **The Herodians.**

This group was made up of Jews of influence and social standing who accepted Roman rule and who supported Herod. Some of these were called “publicans”, or those who collected taxes.

One example was *Matthew*, one of the 12 disciples.

5. **The Zealots.**

These were super patriots who were determined to resist Rome at all costs. Their fanaticism brought on a war in 70 AD, during which the army of the Roman Emperor, Titus, destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem.

One example of a Zealot was *Simon*, one of the 12 disciples (not Simon Peter – Luke 6:15).

(Can you see what potential there was for anger and arguments among the 12?)

6. **The Sanhedrin.**

This council was the ultimate authority regarding religious instruction.

It was composed of:

- The High Priest
- Heads of the Priesthood
- Scribes
- And Elders

The Synagogues – or “meeting places” – only repeated what the Sanhedrin said. Therefore, when the Sanhedrin rejected Jesus as the Messiah, every Synagogue official also rejected Him.

C. The background of Jesus’ birth

Although the Jews were living as a conquered nation and forced to live under foreign rule, God had prepared the way for the Messiah’s arrival.

There was a common language. Most people spoke “koine Greek”.

The written Law (the Septuagint) had been translated and made available.

Roman roads connected the whole of the empire. Travel was made easier.

The world was under one rule – again travel was made easy.

Can you see how God “worked all things together for good”? Through the most unusual circumstances, everything was ready for a rapid spread of the Good News, The Gospel.

The Timing of Jesus' Birth.

“When the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons”. (Galatians 4:4-5)

1. “The fullness of time...”

In other words, God had an exact time for the Messiah to come.

2. “Born of a woman...”

According to the prophecy given in Isaiah 7:14 that “a virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel”, (which means “God with us”).

3. “... born under the Law”

Read Galatians 4:4-5 again

It is important to remember that Jesus lived as an Old Testament Jew. That is, He lived under the Old Covenant, the Law.

Remember, the new covenant only began with His *death*. His blood is “the blood of the New Covenant”. (Luke 22:20)

Jesus did not deny the Law (the books of Moses), but He certainly directly challenged the religious leaders’ *understanding* of the Law. (Matthew 5:17)

He shifted their focus from *outward behaviour regulated by law, to inner attitudes of the heart*, saying, “You have heard ... but I say to you ...” (Matthew 5:27-48)

His point is clear – Law looks on the outside, God looks at the heart and it is the human *heart* that must be transformed.

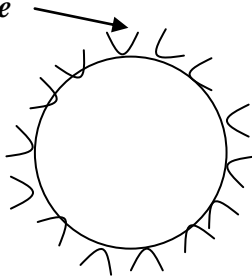
a) Outward behaviour governed by Law.

- i) Is really still governed by the old nature – *self-centred – my wants, my...*
- ii) Thinks of the Bible as a book of rules.
- iii) Sees sin as “breaking the rules”.

b) Outward behaviour governed by the Heart.

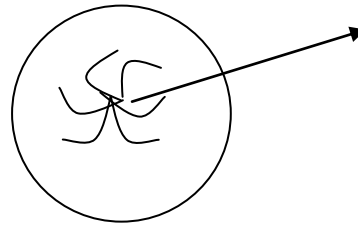
- i) Is governed by the Holy Spirit.
- ii) The Bible is God’s Word – and through it He speaks directly to them personally.
- iii) Their reaction to sin is, “This is wrong, and if I do it, I will disappoint God, and I do not want to disappoint Him”.

The Rabbi started with the outside



The rabbi started with external observance, hopeful of getting to the inner life of the spirit. (Matthew 23:25)

Jesus starts with the inside



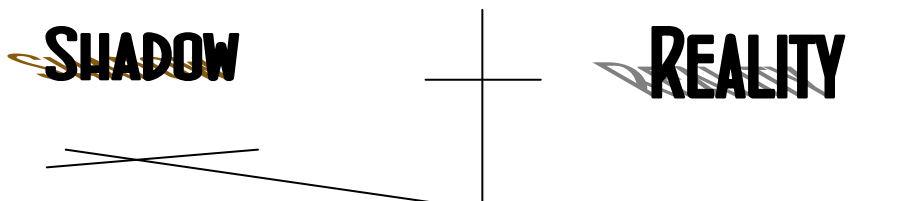
Jesus started with the inner life of the heart as the way to outward conduct – “making the tree good that the fruit might be good”. (Matthew 23:26)

Memory Verse

Galatians 4:4-5, *“When the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons”.*

Teacher’s notes

The New Covenant *begins* with Jesus’ death. This means that most of the events, which occurred during the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, actually happened during the *Old Covenant*. The *New Covenant* only began at the Cross.



Old Testament

Physical event
Historical

Example: Peter walks on water – something which cannot hold him up... he will sink and probably drown!

Peter did what Jesus asked of him, by faith.

New Testament

Spiritual experience
Personal

God calls a New Testament Christian to do some things which may seem impossible and could even result in the person losing everything.

You and I need to do what God asks us to do, by faith, too.

The World at the time of Jesus' birth

Lesson 3

A. The Roman World

Rome ruled the world.

2,000 of the upper-class citizens of Rome owned 1,300,000 (one million, three hundred thousand) slaves, who were treated with great cruelty.

Marriage was almost non-existent. Sex outside of marriage was acceptable.

The Roman emperors were men of horrendous cruelty. Thousands of lives were taken in the Roman arena (a stadium) to entertain the Emperor and the bloodthirsty Roman people.

Children were considered a burden and many newborn infants were put outside the city to die.

People were involved in idol worship and cults.

Crime flourished.

The Roman world was lost in degrading, perverse, immoral behaviour on a scale not seen before in history.

B. The Jewish World

1. Israel's History.

Israel had never been a powerful people; only for a brief period were they a great nation – under King David and under his son Solomon.

After these two Kings died, the nation divided. The two divided kingdoms often fought each other and then were conquered and held by stronger empires.

Yet these people had a glorious past and were destined for greatness.

This nation was meant to be the vehicle and master of God's plan for mankind.

2. Israel's Worship.

There were two parts to Israel's worship: the one was **prophetic**, the other **priestly**.

The nation worshipped and spoke to God through its priests, and God spoke to the nation by His prophets.

3. The last Prophet to speak to the Jews – Malachi.

By the time Malachi was written, a hundred years or so had passed since the Jews

had returned to Jerusalem from Babylon.

Their first enthusiasm on returning from captivity had disappeared and the people were now religiously cold and morally careless.

a) The Priests.

Read Malachi 1:6-8

They offered worthless animals in sacrifice to God.

They had completely lost sight of their high calling.

They refused to work except for money, and even took bribes.

Obedience to the priests only required following a system, or routine.

b) The Prophet Malachi.

The prophets were God's voice, revealing His truths and enforcing His will.

Malachi rebuked the priests and people for their sin and neglect of Jehovah, and encouraged them to return to God.

However, Israel was more ready to follow the priests than to obey the prophet.

c) The People.

Read Malachi 3:5

There was careless, routine worship.

There was sorcery, adultery and perjury, making people work for no payment, oppression of the poor, injustice and no fear of God.

In addition people robbed God of their tithes (Malachi 3:8-9).

In everything there was outward observance and obedience, but no wholehearted love of God.

The true messianic kingdom as foretold by the prophets had deteriorated into a materialistic and political concept and the nation's relationship with God had deteriorated into a system of rituals and traditions.

Please Note: In Lesson 1, we spoke about the 400-year period of time between the Old and New Testaments, a time called "The Silent Years". Do you remember? We said these years were called "silent" because there was no prophetic voice ... do you understand *why* there was no prophetic voice? Why the priesthood grew?

Yes. Prophecy died out because the people did not want to listen to the prophets. Rituals and ceremonies were easier than truly living as God commanded. It was easier just to bring sacrifices to the Temple and then to go home and live as they pleased.

4. Israel's misconceptions.

POSITION The office of the High Priest became a *POSITION*, at one point being sold to the one who offered the most money.

POLITICS Political and civil authority was included in the office of High Priest.

PURPOSE The Jews lost all sense of God's purpose for them as His people – THAT THE WORLD WOULD COME TO KNOW WHO GOD REALLY IS THROUGH HIS PEOPLE.

PATRIOTISM Love of country replaced love for God and Israel mistakenly believed that all enemies of their land were enemies of God.

Many mistakenly believed the struggle to free their nation of Roman oppression was their Godly purpose.

Patriotism (love of their country) narrowed God's plan of salvation for all mankind. Instead, Israel believed that salvation was only for the Jews.

Their patriotism and political ideals prevented them from fulfilling their true, spiritual mission.

C. Israel's Messiah

They looked for a Messiah who would be a "Son of David" and restore the splendour of the Jewish throne.

They believed all heathen kings and lords (which of course would include Rome) were to sink into the dust before Him.

They believed He would be a *human hero*, who would lead them to victory. Very few realized that He would be a heavenly King, a "suffering servant", who would begin a holy kingdom or that His true reign must be in the purified souls of men. Even fewer realized that the true preparation for His coming was not pride, but humility and repentance for sin.

D. The New Testament Books

Number of books 27

Number of authors 9

Time these books were written between 45 AD and 100 AD

1. **Books of History** 4 Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts.
2. **“Epistles” or Letters** 13 written by Paul
 3 by John
 2 by Peter
 1 by Jude
 1 by James
 1 – The author is not known
3. **Prophetic Books** Revelation

As in the Old Testament, the books of the New Testament do not record events in the order in which they occurred. In other words, the books are not in *chronological order*.

Furthermore, there may be a considerable difference between the date the book was written and the period of time the writer is referring to.

Mark, for instance, writes about Jesus’ life, but he wrote his Gospel, which we call “Mark”, sometime between 55 and 60 AD, many years after Jesus’ death.

In order to make our study easier, we will study the books of the New Testament *in chronological order*, that is, according to the historical events they tell us of.

4. **The Three Parts of the New Testament:**

a) **THE PERIOD OF INCEPTION, OR BEGINNING.**

Which covers the lifetime of Jesus Christ, as described in the Four Gospels.

b) **THE PERIOD OF EXPANSION.**

The spread of the Gospel by the early church, as various people went around the world evangelising and starting new churches in a number of important centres.

c) **THE PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION.**

The time when the church was rapidly growing into a recognized institution, rather than consisting of isolated groups of believers.

A. **The Period of Inception: The Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John**

Who the Gospels were written to:

Matthew – to Jews The Jews were immersed in the Old Testament – therefore, it was very important that the Messiah fulfil all that the Law and Prophets said of Him.

Mark – to Romans The Romans were masters of the world at that time. They knew nothing of Old Testament Scripture. They were not interested in Jewish prophets. They were concerned with powerful leaders of authority and wanted to know what Jesus had said and done.

Luke – to Greeks Luke was a Greek doctor. He wrote the Gospel of Luke to his own people; lovers of poetry, beauty and culture. Greeks lived in a world of ideas. Luke’s Gospel is full of poetry – song of Mary; praise of Zacharias; the songs of the angels and shepherds at Jesus’ birth.

John – to all who believe John writes so that “all might believe that Jesus is the Christ”. His writings are full of events that tell of Jesus’ divine character. This Gospel is for the “whosoever” who recognizes his need of God.

PERIOD	DATE	EVENT	HISTORY	BOOKS WRITTEN
<u>INCEPTION</u> 4 BC – 30 AD	6 BC	Birth of Jesus		Although the Gospels tell of events during this time, none of them were written yet. All the Gospels were written much later.
	4 BC	Death of Herod	Matthew Mark Luke John	
	27 AD	Baptism of Jesus		
	30 AD	Crucifixion		

B. The “Synoptic Gospels” – Matthew, Mark and Luke

1. Definitions.

a) **“Synoptic”** Means “viewed together”. Therefore, these three Gospels – Matthew, Mark and Luke – may be “viewed together” because they all give a similar overview of Jesus’ life.

John’s Gospel, as we will see, presents a different picture of Jesus to what these three books do.

b) **“Gospel”** Meaning “good news”. So we have the “good news of Matthew”, the “good news of Mark”, etc.

2. What is the “Good News”?

For Jews it is that He is here! The promised One of whom the prophets foretold, Jesus the *Christ* – which is the Greek word for *Messiah*.

Read Isaiah 7:14 – His name, *Immanuel* – which means “*God with us*”.

However, for Gentiles, who have absolutely no knowledge of Old Testament prophecy, to say “I have great news for you – The Messiah is here!” ... would be meaningless. They might ask you if you are going to play soccer with “Messiah”, or if you are going to cook this Messiah for supper tonight!

The “Good News” for the world is that God has provided a way for the penalty of sin to be paid in full; a way for all men to have a meaningful relationship with the God who created them and loves them.

Please Note: We now begin the study of the books of the New Testament individually.

In considering the Gospels, we will spend more time on Matthew than any other Gospel in order to lay a foundation for the life of Jesus, the Kingdom of God and what “following Jesus” really means.

Memory Verse

Romans 12:9, “*Let love be sincere (without hypocrisy). Hate what is evil; cling to what is good*”.

Teacher's Notes

1. *It is always easier to follow a system than it is to walk by faith.*

Following a system only requires a person to be obedient to a routine.

That is, to bring the correct animal for sacrifice, to go to temple (or church) when required, to say and do whatever the system outlines.

However, Christianity is not a religion based on our obedience to a system! Christianity is a RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD based on Jesus Christ.

Let me say that again – Christianity is not a *religion*; it is a *relationship*.

Out of our relationship with Him flows a life lived to please Him. Living like that, with the aim of pleasing the One who gave everything for me, the One who loves me, the One I love, requires an open, honest, personal, ongoing relationship, not a mechanical adherence to a set of rules.

It means spending time with Him, talking to Him and hearing Him answer. It means putting His desires above our own, giving rather than keeping, loving under all circumstances, following Him even when that means trusting Him for the impossible.

We need always to be aware of the danger of just how easy it is to get caught up in “legalistic thinking”, looking to find the eternal in an outward compliance to rules. It is so easy to get caught up in traditions and ceremonies and then to ignore really and truly loving God from our hearts.

2. The Scribes and Pharisees made the *outward* appearance and the following of their own rules more important than having an intimate relationship with God based on His wonderful love for us.

Read John 5:39-40

Jesus told them that, although they studied the Scriptures and claimed to know them so well as they looked for the way to eternal life, they refused to come to Him, who was the way to eternal life.

Their Messiah was standing right in front of them, and they did not recognize Him because they were so focused on the letter of the Law.

Jesus is the way to eternal life, but the letter of the Law does not bring life, the letter of the Law kills! (Matthew 23:13-39; 2 Corinthians 3:6)

We must be careful not to do the same today, by focusing on rules and laws or our own traditions – what we wear or what we eat or don't eat, rather than on knowing Jesus.

Matthew – Written to Jews

Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah

Lesson 4

AUTHOR Matthew

A man who collected taxes for Rome – the hated foreign power that ruled Palestine.

“Publicans”, as tax collectors were sometimes called, robbed the people of so much money that tax gatherers were outcasts of society and thrown out of the synagogue.

This tax collector, Matthew, was from the tribe of Levi, and both Mark and Luke call him by that name in their Gospels.

DATE Probably between 55 and 68 AD

TIME No king from the “House of David” had been on the throne for over 600 years

1. **Augustus was the Emperor of Rome** (he was formerly called Octavian). He became Rome’s first Emperor, or Caesar, in 30 BC by killing all his opponents.

However, despite the bloody start, he ruled the Roman Empire well and it enjoyed a time of peace.

To consolidate the Empire, Augustus took a census of the population and all property as a basis for recruiting an army and for taxation purposes. Luke dates Jesus’ birth as occurring during this census.

2. **Herod the Great** (37 BC – 4 AD) (known as “Antipater”). He was Idumean by nationality (i.e. an Edomite).

At first he was made Procurator (like a governor) of Judea, but later persuaded the Roman Senate to make him a king.

The history of his kingdom is a drama of extraordinary political deception and atrocious crimes of jealousy, even against his own family.

He had 9 or 10 wives; had his favourite wife killed because he suspected she might have been unfaithful and put all her brothers to death as well. He executed another of his wives and at least three of his own sons.

Augustus Caesar once said that it was better to be Herod’s pig than one of Herod’s sons! The point being that Herod made an outward show of being Jewish and would not eat pork; therefore pigs had a better chance of staying alive.

On his death, his dominion was divided between Archelaus, who governed

Judea; Herod Antipas, who governed Galilee and Perea; and Herod Philip who governed the northern regions.

3. **Herod Archelaus** – A single reference is made of Archelaus in Matthew 2:22, “But when he (Joseph) heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the place of his father, Herod (the Great), he was afraid to go there and he turned aside into Galilee”.

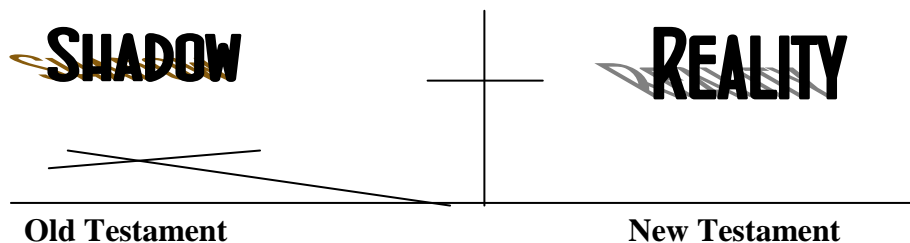
**WRITTEN
TO JEWS**

Matthew links us up with the Old Testament.

On every page he is trying to connect the Gospel with the prophets to show that all of their teaching is being fulfilled in the person and kingdom of Jesus Christ.

It is difficult for us to appreciate how great the change was from the old to the new. It seemed to the Jew that he must give up his religion and accept another.

Matthew (and later Paul) shows Jewish Christians that it is only like giving up the shadow for the real thing.



**THE
PURPOSE**

“That it might be fulfilled as was spoken by the prophets ...” Matthew says.

“The genealogy of Jesus (the) Christ, the son of David (a Messianic title), the son of Abraham (fulfilling God’s promise)”.

1. **Matthew wants to show that Jesus is The Son of David.** Remember, God had promised David a son whose throne would last *forever*.

Note: David’s son Solomon was a king, but not “the king of promise”, as his throne had not lasted. There was another king to come.

2. **He also wants to show that Jesus is The Son of Abraham** – God said that through his seed all the families of the earth will be blessed.

Note: Do not miss the “typology” here. Typology refers to events, people, etc., in the Old Testament, which are intended to show New Testament realities.

David – Israel’s greatest king; Abraham’s son – a willing sacrifice.

**KEY
VERSES**

**Read 1:1
16:15-19
28:18-20**

As we study The New Testament, you will be given “key verses” for each book. These verses sum up, in a general way, what each book is about.

Underline these key verses in your Bible with a coloured pen. This way, you will always have a summary of each book as a quick reminder.

KEY Chapter 12

CHAPTER The turning point in the book of Matthew comes when the Pharisees, acting as the religious leadership of Israel, formally reject Jesus as the Messiah saying that His power does not come from God but from Satan. (Matthew 12:22-37)

Jesus' teaching immediately changes:

1. He begins new teachings in parables – designed to inform and to conceal.
2. He increases His attention to His disciples.
3. He repeatedly makes statements that His death is now near.

MATTHEW'S MESSAGE

1. Read Matthew 6:19-33.

The Kingdom of God is not a materialistic kingdom of possessions and wealth, nor is it governed by worldly principles and order.

2. Read Matthew 22:17-22.

His Kingdom is not a nationalistic kingdom.

3. Read Matthew 23:1-12.

His Kingdom's leadership is not based on *position*, but on *servicing*.

Everything that happens in this Kingdom happens by *voluntary submission to those whom God gifts and puts in authority*, neither from commands nor demands, but from a heart responding to God.

EVENTS:

1. The Presentation of the King – Chapters 1 - 4.

- a) **Jesus' birth** – in the most unexpected place for the birth of a king.

It is not *where* He is born that is important, but *who* He is born of – a virgin (Isaiah 7:14) of the line of David.

And it is the same for us – not *where*, whether a palace or in the poorest home. What is important is – are you born of God; born again?

Matthew tells us nothing more of Jesus' life until at age 30 when Jesus is baptised by John.

We know from reading Luke (Luke 2:41-42) that Jesus went with His family to Jerusalem when He was 12 years old, but even Luke is silent regarding the next 18 years of Jesus' life until His baptism at the age of 30.

What did Jesus do in those years? He learned the skills of carpentry, for He was known as a carpenter (Mark 6:3).

- b) **The Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-2).** This account is only found in Matthew and it emphasizes that Jesus is a *King*.

If you remember from our study of Old Testament Survey, the Jews were waiting for their Messiah at this exact time, specifically prophesied by Daniel.

He is born in Bethlehem to fulfil Micah's prophecy (Micah 5:2).

Herod felt threatened by the birth of the "King of the Jews". Remember, Rome had conferred his kingship. He was not king by birth, or by right.

Herod's response is to slaughter every infant under the age of two years, thus fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy (Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:16-18).

- c) **Read Matthew 3:1-3. John the Baptist** breaks 400 years of prophetic silence. He is "the voice" in the wilderness, shouting out "prepare the way of the Lord".

Read Luke 7:29-30

Note: The "*Baptism of John*" is a *baptism of repentance*. Only those who repent will ever accept the rule of God in their lives or Jesus as King and Lord.

- d) **Jesus' Temptation** as Satan offers Him a way to obtain the Kingdom without the Cross.

EVENTS IN ROME:

Caesar Augustus died in 14 AD, and **Tiberius ruled as Caesar** during Jesus' years of ministry. (Luke 3:1). Tiberius was a wise and capable Administrator and sought to maintain peace. However, because of the corruption of Rome's politics, with frequent plots and assassinations, Tiberius distrusted everyone and his bad temper was well known. This probably helps us to understand Pilate's hesitation to let Jesus go, when the crowd threatened him saying, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar's" (John 19:12).

2. The first teachings of Jesus – Chapters 5 - 7.

- a) **The Sermon on the Mount.**

In which Jesus presents the real laws and standards for God's people.

- b) **Notice Jesus' authority as He deals with the Law of Moses.**

14 times He says, "I say to you". Mark them in your Bible. They show how Jesus deals with the Law and how we must keep it – *not outwardly ... but from our hearts first*. From our true, inner attitude will flow our outward behaviour. (Matthew 5:18, 20, 21, 22, 27, 32, 34, 39, 44; 6:2, 5, 16, 25, 29)

Read Matthew 7:28-29 and notice the effect on the people.

3. The power of the King – Chapters 8 - 11.

a) **Jesus gathers His team – Chapter 10.**

Where does He find these people? Not among the priests, or in the universities, not the mighty and noble ... but the fishermen, the publicans.

b) **Ten miracles** are testimony to Jesus' authority over every area of life: Disease, demons, death and nature.

We see the response of the people in Matthew 12:23, "... after which all the people said, Is this not the Son of David?"

4. The Kingdom of Heaven – Chapter 13 - 15.

Using "**parables**", He describes what the Kingdom of God is like.

a) **Parables.**

- i) Earthly examples, things understood, which teach spiritual truths.
- ii) Easy to understand.
- iii) Interesting, but having immediate impact on the listeners.
- iv) Challenging to those who *want to know* and *hidden* from those who think they *do not need to know*.

b) **The Kingdom of Heaven is like:**

A sower	Leaven in dough
A field of wheat and tares	A hidden treasure
A mustard seed	A pearl of great price

c) **Caring for People and His Disciples.**

- i) Feeding 5,000 *plus* women and children through a little boy who gave his lunch.
- ii) Jesus walks on the water, and so does Peter ... for a short while.

5. The response to the cost of discipleship – Chapters 16 - 22.

a) **Those who accepted Him.**

i) **Read Matthew 16:13-20.**

"Who do you say that I am?" The question everyone must answer.

Peter's reply – "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God".

Jesus' response – You are "*petros*" – masculine, a rock, and upon this

“*petra*” – feminine, rock, “I will build My church”.

What rock? The revelation that Jesus is the Messiah.

In other words, the Church is founded on the revelation that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah, the only One in whom there is salvation.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:11

Only in Matthew’s Gospel is the word “church” used.

ii) **The attitude of a true disciple – Chapter 18.**

- (a) Humility – seen in the attitude towards children and other Christians, especially new ones.
- (b) A heart for the lost.
- (c) Correct attitude and behaviour to sin.
- (d) Forgiving.

iii) **The cost of being a true disciple.**

- (a) Marital Faithfulness – Under Jewish law, even though a man took another wife, his first wife was still bound to her husband until he granted her a religious divorce, even though he had remarried.
- (b) Putting Him first – the parable of the rich young ruler.
- (c) The danger of personal ambition – the examples of the labourers; and the disciples.

iv) **The triumphant entry into Jerusalem.**

The multitudes were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee”.

“The Prophet” – the one Moses had promised. Another prophetic name for the Messiah.

b) **Those who rejected Him.**

i) **Read John 1:11.**

Read Matthew 21:42-45

The kingdom was first presented to the children of Israel. This does not mean it was God’s intention that it would be exclusively theirs but that, as in the Old Covenant, Israel would demonstrate God’s truth to the world. However, they refused the offer, rejected their King and finally crucified Him.

ii) **The Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees, and Lawyers (scribes) try to trap Jesus.**

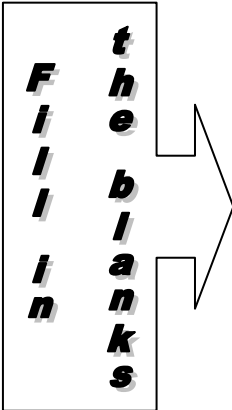
(Matthew 22:15, 16, 23, 34, 35, 41)

6. Chapters 23 - 25.

a) The character of the Jewish Religious Leaders – Chapter 23.

Matthew 23:1-12

In these verses, Jesus says, “Woe to you”, and calls them:

	_____	verse 13
	_____	verse 14
	_____	verse 15
	_____	verse 16
	_____	verse 17
	_____	verse 19
	_____	verse 23
	_____	verse 24
	_____	verse 25
	_____	verse 26
	_____	verse 27
	_____	verse 28
_____	verse 29	
_____	verse 33	

Hypocrite: professing to be what one is not, playing a part as an actor, putting on an outward show. He has two sides:

- i) What he is *really* like – this one he keeps to himself.
- ii) The person he puts on, like he puts on his clothes, to make his appearance before men.

b) The future of the Kingdom.

i) **The Destruction of Jerusalem Prophesied – Chapter 24.**

There will be wars, famines, earthquakes, persecution, false prophets, and false Christs, and a general breakdown of law and order.

Because of these things, people’s love for God will grow cold.

ii) **His Second Coming.**

The faithful servant: who is always ready for the return of his master.

The parable of the ten virgins: *all* of whom fell asleep, but only half of them had enough oil for when the bridegroom (Jesus) returned.

The five foolish virgins were only concerned about the present time and had made no provision for later when the groom would return. They ended up missing the bridegroom when He came later than expected.

The parable of the talents: showing that whatever it is that God has

given us, He has an expectation that we will use it for the glory of God and the good of those around us.

The sheep and the goats: This summarizes the first three parables.

7. **His Death and Resurrection.**

a) **Read Matthew 27:11 and Acts 2:30-36.**

The Son of Abraham died that the nations of the earth might be blessed in Him.

b) **The Crucifixion.**

The Romans never allowed one of their citizens to be crucified and Jewish custom was death by stoning. Crucifixion was used for criminals and slaves. (Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave, and was executed like a slave.)

Scourging, or whipping with leather strips to which pieces of nails or bone etc., were attached, increasing the pain by tearing the flesh, usually preceded a crucifixion.

The victim was usually stripped naked, his garments going to the executioners by lot.

The upright and crossbeam were fixed securely together and then the victim was laid down with arms extended on the crossbar. The arms were nailed to the crossbar with large nails, or spikes, through the wrists, the feet were crossed and nailed with a single iron spike, and the cross was elevated and planted in the ground.

Besides the pain of crucifixion, those on the cross suffered even more by not being able to breathe properly because their outstretched arms had to carry the weight of their body.

i) **Jesus Forgives.**

Read Acts 2:36-38

ii) **“Why have You forsaken Me?”**

For the first time, because He took on the world’s sin, He was separated from the Father – spiritual death.

His physical death soon followed, as He tasted death for every man. (Hebrews 2:9)

iii) **“It is finished!”**

Note: Jesus did not say, “*I* am finished”, but “*it*” is finished.

He used the Greek word, “tetelestai” which was used in commercial life and means the full payment of a price, or complete payment for a debt.

Read Romans 3:25

c) **Accompanying Signs.**

i) **The veil in the Temple is torn.**

The inner curtain separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, tore “from top to bottom” (Matthew 27:51), signifying that Jesus had made it possible for all believers to come boldly into the throne of grace.

ii) **An earthquake.**

The earth, which had come under a curse as a result of Adam’s sin (Genesis 3:17), is to be delivered from bondage (Romans 8:21).

It not only split rocks, but opened many graves. (Matthew 27:52)

iii) **Many dead are resurrected.**

These people appeared to *many*. (Matthew 27:53)

d) **Burial and Resurrection.**

Read Matthew 27:57-60

And Matthew 28:9-10

e) **Read Matthew 28:18-20 – the “Great Commission” for all of us.**

Memory Verse

Matthew 28:18-20, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age”.*

Teacher's Notes

1. Read Matthew 5:27-30. Jesus is speaking about things which may be in our lives that could cause us to sin. Does He literally mean that we might have to cut off one of our hands? Well, it could come to that, but we could probably find a more common application in our daily lives if we consider what causes us to sin.

Let us look at this example:

A young man has a good job. Now what would happen if there is a young lady working in the same place that this young man finds very attractive, and this young lady is married. No matter how hard he tries, the young man finds he keeps imagining things – he imagines her in his arms, and what it would be like to ..., what it would feel like to ... What should he do? Gouge out his eyes? Well, perhaps a better solution would be to leave his job and find another.

“But it is a very good job!” Is that what you are saying? Yes, but it would be better not to have the job but continue to have a good relationship with God which will end in eternal life.

“But he will never get another job that pays as well!” That could possibly happen but it would be better to end up in heaven without some of the things money can buy during your life on earth than to end up in hell.

If you cannot withstand the temptation, whatever it might be, then do not put yourself in temptation's way.

2. In Matthew 5:31, Jesus said that Moses allowed a “certificate of divorce”. What this means is that according to Jewish Law, a woman was bound to her husband until he died, even if he married another woman. He could “divorce” his first wife just by saying, “I divorce you” three times. However, his wife could never re-marry until he died. This meant incredible hardship for many women and so Moses ordered that if any man should divorce his wife in this way, he had to give her a “certificate of divorce”, which would allow her to re-marry.

Later, in Matthew 19:1-12, Jesus again speaks of divorce, pointing out that divorce did not originate with God, but with Moses. Jesus refers to God's original instructions on marriage in Genesis 2:24, that the two become “one”.

The only exception was if one of the marriage partners had committed adultery.

Mark – Written to Romans

Jesus Christ, the Servant of God

Lesson 5

AUTHOR Mark, also called “John Mark”. (Mark is a surname, or last name)
Unlike Matthew, he was not one of the 12 disciples.

He was the son of Mary (not Jesus’ mother), and a cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10).

He is referring to himself in his account of “a certain young man” in Mark 14:51-52, who ran from the Garden of Gethsemane. All the disciples had left Jesus and fled (v.50) therefore this incident must have been a first-hand, personal account.

Peter introduced Mark to Jesus and affectionately spoke of him as “my son” (1 Peter 5:13). (This does not mean Mark *was* Peter’s son, it was a term of affection given to a younger man by his older friend and mentor.)

Mark’s mother had a large house that was used as a meeting place for believers in Jerusalem, according to Acts 12:12.

Later Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Antioch and caused problems between them when he wanted to leave and return home. (Acts 12:25; 13:5, 13)

However, he must have matured, because he became a great help to Paul. (Colossians 4:10-11; 2 Timothy 4:11)

DATE Exact date unknown, but certainly between 55 and 67 AD.

WRITTEN There is evidence that Mark himself was in Rome when he wrote his Gospel.

Romans knew nothing of the Old Testament and Jewish prophets, but were concerned with powerful leaders of authority, and were more interested in knowing what Jesus had *done* than in what He had *said*.

Because it is written to those in Rome, Mark explains Jewish customs.

Read Mark 7:2-4 and 15-42.

He translates Aramaic words – Mark 3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 15:22.

He spends time explaining the cost of following Jesus in Mark 8:34-38; 13:9-13.

This may have a connection to the widespread persecutions of the early church in Rome from 64 – 67 AD.

KEY **Read Mark 10:43-45**

VERSES Remember, Romans were practical people who valued strong common sense. They would have had no interest in tracing the history of Jesus back into the Old Testament. What appealed to them was what Jesus meant *now, today*.

Read Mark 8:34-37

KEY WORD The Greek word “Eutheos”, which is translated as “immediately”, “straight away” or “forthwith”. Mark shows how Jesus’ life was one of order and determination, as well as a Servant’s response to His Master.

Mark these words in your Bible – they appear at least 40 times.

KEY CHAPTER – Chapter 8

As in Matthew, there is a chapter in Mark where we see a clear change in Jesus’ ministry. The event that starts it is Peter’s confession “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”.

After this, Jesus turns His focus onto the disciples, strengthening them for His approaching death at the hands of the religious leaders.

EMPHASIS Mark is the shortest of the Gospels.

Miracles have the leading place, not parables. Remember, the emphasis is on what Jesus *did* rather than on what He said.

Mark tells of 20 miracles – not parables, there are only 4 – whereby Mark lets what Jesus *did* prove that He is the Son of God.

Mark does not mention:

1. Jesus’ genealogy.
2. Details of His birth.
3. The visit of the wise men.
4. The Sermon on the Mount.
5. Jesus at the temple when He was 12.
6. Prophetic quotes from the Old Testament, with the exception of Mark 1:2.

PURPOSE Mark shows Jesus as the Mighty Servant.

Isaiah 53 prophesies that the Son of God would be the Servant of God, in order that He might die to redeem the world.

Mark records how Jesus’ sufferings in Gethsemane and on Calvary fulfilled what Isaiah had spoken of.

OUTLINE:

1. The Servant’s Preparation – Mark 1:1-13.

- a) By John – preparing the way by calling for repentance.
- b) Baptism by John – in obedience.
- c) Receiving the Holy Spirit – giving power and equipping.
- d) Divine call.

Read Acts 10:38

- e) By testing.

Note: “*The Spirit led Him into the wilderness ...*” Mark 1:12.

Sufferings and trials are as much a part of God preparing us as the good things that happen. Jesus’ appointment with the devil was no accident.

God does not tempt us (James 1:12-13), but the path He leads us on often takes us through temptation.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

2. The Servant at Work – Mark 1:14 - 8:30.

- a) **Jesus is introduced as “anointed with power” and doing His Father’s Work.**

Mark moves quickly from one event to the next – You do not need to read each one in the Bible, but look down the list and see how quickly Mark moves from one miracle to the next.

Demons cast out	1:21-28
Fever cured	1:29-31
Many diseases healed	1:32-34
Lepers cleansed	1:40-45
Cripple walks	2:1-12
Withered hand healed	3:1-5
Multitudes healed	3:6-12
Storm at sea calmed	4:35-41
Maniac’s mind healed	5:1-15
Haemorrhage stopped	5:21-34
Child back to life	5:35-43
5,000 fed	6:32-44
Sea calmed	6:45-51
All made whole	6:53-56
Deaf and dumb healed	7:31-37
4,000 fed	8:1-9
Blind healed	8:22-26

- b) **Jesus is the Son of God.**

This is Mark’s opening statement in Mark 1:1.

It is clear as we look at the foregoing list, that Mark’s goal is to let the wonderful, miraculous works Jesus did testify that He really is the Son of God.

- c) **But, Jesus is also fully human (The Son of Man).**

He was disappointed at times	Mark 3:5
He was tired and weary	4:38

Was full of wonder	6:6
Sighed	7:34; 8:12
Was affectionate	10:21

3. **The Servant is Rejected – Mark 8:31 - 15:47.**

“The Son of Man must suffer”, Jesus said in Mark 8:31.

He was to be rejected by the rulers of Israel, killed and would rise again.

a) **Read Zechariah 9:9 and then Mark 11:1-11.**

Jesus claims the Kingdom by presenting Himself at Jerusalem as the Heir of David, fulfilling Zechariah’s prophecy.

b) **The people’s response.**

At first the people welcomed Him because they hoped that He might deliver them from the Romans and free them from the poverty they were living in.

c) **The Religious Leaders’ response.**

i) **Read Mark 7:6** and note “the tradition of the elders”.

ii) *Read Mark 7:13 and be very sure you understand what Jesus is saying.*

iii) **Read verses 6-8.**

Read verse 13 again. The *Word of God is “nullified”, “invalidated”, “made of no effect!”*

Those words are defined as “to abolish, cancel, bring to naught, neutralize, revoked”!

In other words, what God really wants men to understand is hidden underneath all the rules men make up.

iv) **“Traditions of men”** – It is very easy, even for us today, to add rules about clothes, food, sports, prayers, etc. Rules the Bible says nothing about.

Have you ever stopped to think that worldly traditions can make the Word of God ineffective?

d) **Jesus pleads with “His Own”.**

On one day, from morning to night, in a powerful effort to have the Jewish nation acknowledge Him and thus become that glorious nation, blessing the world, for which it had been set apart, Jesus presents the truth again, wanting the Jews to receive Him as their Messiah. (Mark 11:20 – 12:44)

e) **The last conflict with the Jewish leaders.**

At the Temple, which showed His mission to be a spiritual one, He was hated by the religious leaders with a hatred that led them to plot His death. (Mark 14:1)

i) **Chief priests, scribes and elders – 11:28.**

“By what authority do you do these things?”

ii) **Pharisees and Herodians – 12:14.**

“Is it lawful to pay tax to Caesar?”

iii) **The Sadducees – 12:23.**

(Who do not believe in resurrection, remember?)

“In the resurrection ... whose wife will she be?”

iv) **The scribes – 12:28.**

“Which is the most important commandment of all?”

After Jesus answered them all, no one dared to ask Him one more question. 12:34

4. **The Servant is Exalted – Mark 16:1-20.**

a) **Read Mark 16:15-18 & Matthew 28:10-20 and compare the two.**

Mark writes the “Great Commission” but, unlike Matthew, he does not portray Jesus as a King receiving all power and authority.

Mark tells us Jesus’ instructions to His disciples. They are to take His place. They are to serve, and He will serve in and through them.

b) **Read Mark 16:19-20.**

He, who was the greatest Servant, is now highly exalted.

Read Philippians 2:5-16

**FULFILMENT OF
THE LAW AND
PROPHETS**

Read Colossians 2:16-17

Read Hebrews 8:4-5

Read Hebrews 10:1

Mark 15:1
v.14

Day 5

The next morning He was taken to Pilate for questioning.

**Pilate found nothing wrong
(He was examined and found without blemish)**

Jesus was scourged and beaten, dressed in robes, with a crown of thorns placed on His head and hailed as king

v.24

And crucified.

DID JESUS FULFIL THE FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS?

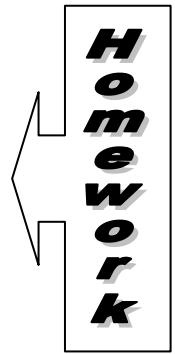
Read 1 Corinthians 15:20

When the resurrected Jesus entered the throne room of heaven, He was an example of the great harvest to come, as God conforms us to “the image of His Son”. (Romans 8:29)

DID JESUS FULFIL PROPHECY?

There are over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the coming Messiah. All of these were fulfilled in Jesus, and they form a solid confirmation that He is indeed the Christ.

**Can you think of 8 Old Testament prophecies that Jesus fulfilled?
Write them in the blank spaces below.**



Luke – Written to Greeks

Jesus, the Perfect Man

Lesson 6

- AUTHOR** Luke, a physician, and like Mark, not one of the 12 disciples.
- He is a companion and loyal friend of Paul, who stayed with him even when others had deserted him. (2 Timothy 4:11)
- He is the only Gentile writer of the New Testament. (He was probably Greek.) He also wrote the Book of Acts.
- DATE** 60 AD.
- TIME** From the birth of John the Baptist to the Ascension of Jesus Christ.
- WRITTEN TO** The Gospel of Luke, which is called “the first account”, (Acts 1:1-5), and the Book of Acts were written to Theophilus, a man of high social standing, since Luke refers to him as, “most excellent”, in chapter 1:3.
- Greeks loved poetry, beauty and culture. Luke’s Gospel is full of poetry – the song of Mary, the praise of Zacharias, the angels’ song at Jesus’ birth, the shepherds’ song of praise.
- Luke translates Aramaic terms into Greek and explains Jewish customs and geography.
- PURPOSE** **Read Luke 1:3-4**
- Luke wanted to create a clear, chronological, comprehensive account of the life of Jesus, the Christ, to strengthen the Gentiles’ faith, and to encourage unbelievers to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.
- KEY VERSES** **Read Luke 1:3-4**
- And Luke 19:10**
- KEY CHAPTER** **Chapter 10**
- 1. Chapters 1 – 9** **Hostile spiritual climate**
 - 2. Chapter 10** **There is a change**
 - 3. Chapters 11 – 24** **Favourable spiritual climate**
- MESSAGE** Luke is the Gospel for every sinner, helping us to understand Christ’s amazing, wonderful, compassionate love, by becoming a man to save man.
- Read Luke 1:35**
- The Deity and, at the same time, humanity of Jesus is one of those

I m p o r t a n t

“mysteries” that is very difficult for our human minds to comprehend. Yet we know Jesus was both God and man. Read John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-7.

In His humanity He was *just like you and I – susceptible to the same temptations, experiencing the same emotions, etc.* (Hebrews 4:15) and with *all the same limitations* we have – He ate, got tired, wept, felt pain, was tempted, etc.

However, He was “the seed of woman”, and therefore did not bear “Adam’s image”. (Genesis 5:3; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Romans 5:12)

He used none of His Godly powers in order to avoid or overcome any situation, although He never ceased being God. (Philippians 2:7)

OUTLINE OF EVENTS

1. An atmosphere of hostility – Chapters 1 - 9.

a) The birth of John the Baptist. Luke 1.

b) The birth of Jesus. Read Luke 1:26-38.

He was born of a virgin named Mary – a young teenager when Gabriel spoke to her. She was of the tribe of Judah, and the line of David, and chosen specifically by God to bear the Messiah. (Luke 1:28-30)

To give birth to a child meant Mary would be pregnant before she was married. Do you remember what the Law said the punishment for fornication was? (sex before marriage). Yes, death! This was a very courageous young lady.

Her reaction to Gabriel’s greeting (verse 29) was one of humility and confusion, which is understandable – how could she become the mother when she was a virgin? However her response, in verse 38, is one of humility and *faith*.

Read verse 45 “Blessed is she who *believed ...*”

c) Growing opposition – Chapters 3 - 9.

i) Read Luke 3:22.

The Voice of the Father spoke from heaven, identifying Jesus as His Son – this was not because Jesus did not know; or that John the Baptist did not know He was “the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:26), but this identified Jesus as the Messiah, “the sinless One”, to Satan and the Kingdom of Darkness.

ii) Read Luke 4:1-2.

As soon as Jesus was identified, Satan attempted to make Him sin.

Read chapter 4, verse 13

iii) **Read Luke 4:16-22 and then read 28-29.**

What changed that caused people to go from praise to rage?
His statement that healing and salvation was not exclusively for the Jews, but for the Gentiles also!

iv) **Growing belief and growing rejection – Chapters 4 - 9.**

- (a) Demons rebuked and people healed 4:33-35 & 41
Great multitudes came to Him 5:15
But the Pharisees opposed Him 5:21, 30; 6:2, 7, 11
- (b) More multitudes came for healing 6:19
But His closest friends began to doubt 7:19
- (c) The storm at sea – devil tried to drown Him 8:22-24
He *rebuked* the wind and waves (the same
language as used against demons)
- (d) **The disciples' attitude.**

Read 8:38-40 then read 19:10

Now read 9:1-2, 6, and verse 10. Note “all that *they had done*”.

Now read chapter 9:12... “send them away...”

Read verse 23 “It is good *for us* to be here, let us stay here”.

Read verse 35 but a voice came out of heaven saying, “*This* is My Chosen One, *listen to Him!*”, and they stopped telling Jesus what *they thought would be a good idea*.

Read verses 38-42 Jesus was annoyed and weary at the disciples' attitude.

What was the disciples' attitude? Read verses 44-46

They were more concerned with who among them might be the greatest, than with people's needs, or with Jesus Himself.

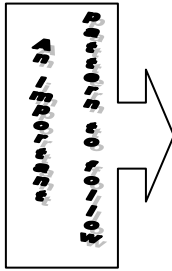
Read verse 51-56 again. Do you see the disciples' attitude?

2. **There is a change – Chapter 10.**

a) **Read Luke 10:1, then verses 3-9.**

Jesus increased His team, sending 70 out “as lambs among wolves”, with these instructions:

- i) **Bring peace** – in other words, bless them, don't curse them.
- ii) **Eat and drink with them** (although they are sinners).
- iii) **Heal those who are sick.**
- iv) **Tell them the Kingdom of God has come.**



Bless them, don't curse them.
 Heal them, don't destroy them.
 And *after* you have blessed them, fellowshipped with them, and healed them, *then* you can preach to them about the Kingdom of God and they will listen to you, for people are not afraid to repent if they receive mercy and grace first.

- b) **Read verses 17-19.** The 70 had a passion for the lost, their focus was the lost and not themselves, and Satan lost his authority.
- c) **Jesus' response – verse 21** – “He rejoiced greatly...”.
- d) **Read Luke 10:25-28** – Do you see the two parts?
 - i) Love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind
and
 - ii) Your neighbour as yourself.

Do this and you will live. (We just want to do the first one!)

3. **The spiritual atmosphere changed – Chapters 11 - 24.**

- a) **Read Luke 11:14** – Now the demons were silent.
Read 13:11-13 – Jesus did not even speak to the demon and it left.
Read 14:3-4 and verse 6 – The Pharisees were silent.
Read 19:10, then 45-48 – The chief priests and scribes were silent, and all the people were “hanging on His words”.
Read 20:8 – Jesus did not even bother to answer their questions anymore.
Read 20:20, verse 26, and then verse 40
- b) **Chapter 23, He was crucified – but not defeated!**
 - i) One of the criminals was saved – 23:42-43.
 - ii) It seems that a Roman centurion realised who Jesus was – 23:47.
 - iii) The multitude went away, quiet and confused and beating their breasts, as if to say, “We don't understand what happened here today. We thought this was right ... but if it was right, why aren't we cheering? Something is wrong”.
- c) **Resurrection! – Chapter 24.**
Read Luke 24:44-53

Important **Read 1 Corinthians 2:8** – Had the devil realised that crucifying Jesus meant salvation for all mankind, he “would not have crucified the Lord of glory!”

Memory Verse
 Luke 6:38, “Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you”.

Teacher's Notes

1. Luke's genealogy of Jesus differs from Matthew's. Matthew writes to Jews and therefore it is important to take the lineage of Jesus back to Abraham and David; these being the two God had made unconditional eternal covenants with, promising a Messiah from their descendants.

Matthew outlines Joseph's lineage and mentions Josiah as the son of Jechoniah (sometimes called "Coniah") who, in Jeremiah 22:24-30, God said would never have a descendant sit on the throne of David or rule anywhere in Judah.

Matthew records Joseph to be the son of Jacob. Luke presents Jesus as the Son of Man, tracing His ancestry back to Adam. He records that Joseph is the son of Heli, but there was no separate word for "son-in-law," which supports the view that this is the lineage of *Mary*. That it is Mary's line makes sense, since her line avoids Jeconiah by coming not from Solomon, a son of David, but from Nathan, one of his other sons.

2. Although most drawings depict *three* wise men, Scripture however does not say how many there were.

3. Here are just *some* of the prophecies about the Messiah:

Born of the seed of woman	Would be a prophet
Born of a virgin	A priest
In Bethlehem	A judge
The Son of God	A king
The seed of Abraham	Anointed with the Holy Spirit
The Son of Isaac	His zeal for God
The Son of Jacob	Ministry began in Galilee
The tribe of Judah	Ministry of miracles
The family of Jesse	Teaching in parables
The house of David	"Stone of stumbling" to Jews
Presented with gifts at birth	"Light" to Gentiles
The children of Bethlehem killed	Resurrection
His pre-existence from eternity	Ascension
He is called Lord and Immanuel	Seated at the right hand of God
His ministry preceded by a messenger	Forsaken by the disciples
He would enter Jerusalem on a donkey	Smitten and spat upon
Betrayed by a friend	Fell under the cross
Sold for 30 pieces, not 20 or 50 of silver; not gold, etc.	Crucified with thieves
The money would be thrown in God's house	Rejected by His own people
And the price would buy a potter's field	Friends stood far off
Accused by false witnesses	Stared at
Would not speak before His accusers	Suffer thirst
Wounded and bruised	His bones not broken
Mocked	His side pierced
Hands and feet would be pierced	Buried in a rich man's tomb
That He would be crucified	Darkness over the land
Made intercession for His persecutors	Heart broken
Hated without cause	Committed Himself to God
People shook their heads	Gall and vinegar offered to Him
	Garments parted and lots cast

John – Written to all nations, the whole world

Jesus, the Son of God

Lesson 7

AUTHOR John, a fisherman, son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of James.

One of the 12 disciples – “the disciple Jesus loved” (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20) and part of the “inner circle” of disciples (Peter, James and John), who were particularly close to Jesus.

He is also the author of 1, 2 and 3 John and the book of Revelation.

He was exiled by Rome to the island of Patmos. (Revelation 1:9)

DATE About 85 AD.

TIME John covers the 4 years from John the Baptist until just before Jesus’ ascension.

John wrote his Gospel long after the others had written theirs.

Paul and Peter had been killed and all the other disciples had died. John was the last, and probably also one of the last remaining who had seen and known Jesus.

Rome had destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Already false teachers had arisen, denying that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and that He had come in the flesh; a human.

WRITTEN TO All mankind, all who believe, wherever they are.

PURPOSE **Read John 20:31** – John has the clearest statement of purpose in the Bible.

KEY VERSES **Read John 1:11-13**

And John 3:16-17

And John 20:30-31

KEY CHAPTER **John 3**

John 3:16 is without doubt the most quoted verse in the Bible.

Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus and the testimony of John the Baptist, clearly point out that being born again is the *only* way to God.

MESSAGE 1. The only way to the Father is through the Son.

2. There is no eternal life apart from the Son.
3. There is a new, wonderful, close relationship with the Father and Son for all those who believe.

OUTLINE The Gospel of John is easily the simplest and yet the most profound of the Gospels.

1. Introduction – John 1:1-18.

- a) John’s Gospel begins almost in the same way the book of Genesis does, with “In the beginning...”

“The Word was with God” – our Lord had no beginning. He is eternal.

“The Word was God” – He is a Person of the Godhead, the Trinity.

- b) **Read verses 1-18** – they summarize Jesus’ life and John’s Gospel.

2. Jesus’ ministry – John 1:19 – 12:50.

- a) **Seven miracles:**

2:1-11	water to wine
4:46-54	healing of the nobleman’s son
5:1-16	healing of the paralytic
6:1-13	feeding the multitude
6:16-21	Jesus walks on water
9:1-7	sight to the blind
11:1-44	raising Lazarus from the dead

b) **Seven witnesses that Jesus is the Son of God:**

F i l l i n t h e b l a n k s	Read John 1:32-34	John the Baptist said
	Read John 1:49	Nathanael said
	Read John 6:69	Peter said
	Read John 11:27	Martha said
	Read John 20:28	Thomas said
	Read John 20:31	John said

And Jesus said of Himself, in John 10:36, **“I am the Son of God”**.

c) **The Seven “I AM’S”:**

F i l l i n t h e b l a n k s	I AM the	6:35
	I AM the	8:12
	I AM before	8:58
	I AM the	10:11

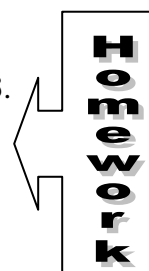
	I AM theand the	11:25
(These last two are from section 3)	I AM the, the, and the	14:6
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3. His private instruction – John 13 - 17.

- a) Read John 13:1 and John 18:28 – The “Last Supper” of 13:1, was not the Passover Meal.
- b) Read John 13:11 and then verse 12.

Even though Jesus knew Judas was going to betray Him, He washed Judas’ feet with the same love as He had shown towards the others. Is this not “loving an enemy”, and “doing good to those who spitefully use you”?

- c) In your Bible reading and prayer time tomorrow read John 13:31 to 16:33.
- d) The following day read Jesus’ prayer in John 17.



4. His triumph over death – John 18 - 21.

- a) Peter’s denial – Peter did not know that when he had said, “I will lay down my life for You”, (13:37) that his statement would be tested by a young servant girl.

It is so often like this – We stand ready to defend our faith against a vicious attack, but when the attack comes it is not from the direction we expect. It is like locking and bolting the main door, but the thief breaks in through a tiny window we had forgotten.

- b) Jesus was brought to Annas and Caiphas, the High Priest. He was found guilty of blasphemy, based on His statement that He is the Son of God.
- c) Then He was taken to Pilate, the Roman governor, because the Jews did not have the authority to execute anyone (John 18:28). Here they changed their charge of blasphemy (which the Romans would not bother about) to Jesus’ claim to be a king – John 19:12.
- d) Jesus’ death and resurrection and the restoration of Peter – John 19 - 21.

TWO VERY SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

It is important to understand the meaning of the following two events.

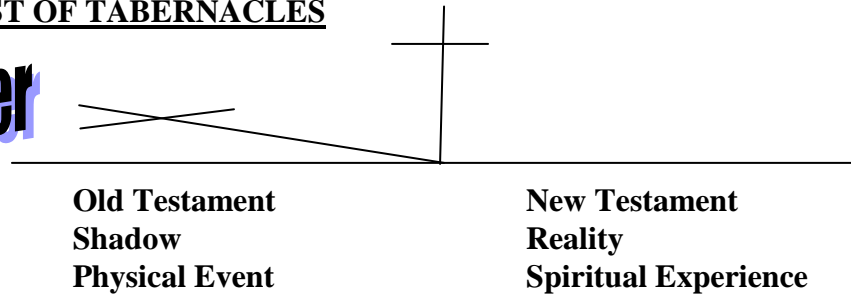
- 1. **“If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me”.**

Read John 7:37-39

Verse 37 – It was the last, great day of the Feast of Tabernacles

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Remember



The Feast of Tabernacles reminded Israel of their experiences in the desert while they were strangers in foreign lands, on their way to the Promised Land. In that desert they had often been thirsty, and God had miraculously provided water again and again.

Jesus had come to give them water *spiritually*.

a) **Celebration of the Feast.**

A large procession, with people waving palm branches, started at the Temple and to the sound of music and followed a priest who carried a golden pitcher, or jug.

The procession went out of the city, through the valley of Kidron to the Pool of Siloam, where the priest filled the pitcher with water. Then everyone went back to the Temple, timing their arrival right at the very moment the priests were laying the pieces of the morning sacrifice on the great Altar of Burnt Offerings, as part of the daily morning sacrifice.

The priest and procession of people entered through the “water gate”, and passed straight into the Court of the Priests, where another priest carrying a jug of wine joined them.

The two priests went up to the altar, one to the left, the other to the right, and poured both water and wine into funnels which led to the base of the altar.

Immediately after this the people sang these Psalms:

Read Psalms 113 and 118:22-29

Then, in the pause after this, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If any man is thirsty let him come to Me and drink”.

b) **The promise.**

“Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him”.

c) **The responses.**

i) **Read John 7:40 and Deuteronomy 18:15:** Some said Jesus was “the Prophet”.

ii) **Read John 7:41:** Others said “He is the Christ”.

- iii) **Read verse 42:** Some rejected Him because they believed He was from Galilee and not from Bethlehem and also that He was not from the line of David.
- iv) **Read verse 44:** Some wanted to seize Him and hand Him over to the authorities.

2. **“I am the light of the world”.**

Read John 8:12-20

It was still the Feast of Tabernacles and again Jesus went to the Temple, to the Court of Women (a sort of “walk through” to the rest of the Temple).

Two huge golden candlesticks, each one 50 cubits high (which is about 20 metres!), were close beside Him.

These candlesticks were used to represent the pillar of fire that led Israel through the desert by night, and symbolized God’s guidance and protection.

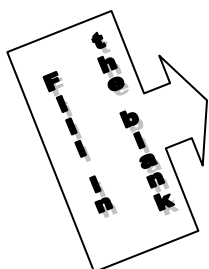
Every night these candlesticks were lit to shed their light all over the city.

Yesterday He had said He was the water of life, satisfying the soul of everyone who came to Him. Now He declares He is the light of *the whole world*.

THE MOST MEANINGFUL PARTS OF THE FEAST:

1. **The lighting of these lamps** signified Israel’s need for guidance from God, the only source of true light.
2. **The pouring out of water** was symbolic of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Pharisees and Sadducees asked people to follow their traditions whereas Jesus invited the thirsty to Himself.
3. The Feast looked back at God’s provision in the past, and also forward to the coming of the Messiah.
4. Next Jesus repeats His claim, “I am the light of the world”, and demonstrates that He is the Messiah by bringing light to a blind man.
5. **Read John 9:1-7.**

He “spat on the ground”; water from His own mouth, and told the man to wash.



Where was the blind man to wash?

In His courage, confidence, and unswerving commitment to truth Jesus demonstrated what it really meant to know God and follow His ways.

He lived truth in every-day, practical illustrations which were, and still are, always to the point and often wonderfully humorous.

Memory Verses

John 7:37-38, *“If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water’ ”.*

John 8:12, *“I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life”.*

Teacher’s Notes

1. Jesus – His humanity and Deity.

Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:45-50

He is the “last Adam”, but is not an exact duplicate of the first Adam: the first Adam was never God, was not born of a woman, but was formed by God from the dust of the earth and, of course, the great difference between Christ and us is that while He was always fully God, we will never be. We are sons of God; He is **The Son of God**.

2. As humans, we are born in “Adam’s image”, (an image that reflects Adam’s fall into sin), and are therefore sinners right from birth – which is sometimes known as “the doctrine of original sin”. However, this does not mean that when a baby dies it is judged guilty and sent to hell. An infant is not responsible to keep the Law, nor can a baby make quality decisions, or have faith in God.

Several passages refer to little children in a special way. In Matthew 19:13-15 Jesus said “the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these”; Luke 18:17, to enter the Kingdom one must be as a little child; the “greatest” is the little child, etc. Therefore it seems clear that babies, and little children, have not reached an “age of accountability”.

3. The Herod referred to is Herod Antipas, younger brother of Herod Archelaus. Herod Antipas, although already married to another, married Herodias, his half-brother Philip’s wife. It was this relationship that John the Baptist denounced when he said to Antipas, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife”. (Mark 6:18) Salome, Herodias’s daughter, asked for John the Baptist’s head as a gift to her mother and to end John’s disapproval.

Jesus was not afraid of the Pharisees’ threats. His answer was that they could tell Herod exactly what His movements would be. His remark, “Go and tell *that fox*, behold I cast out devils ...” shows that He was fully aware of Antipas’ character, for foxes are cunning and sly, and Antipas was a sly, ambitious man.

4. There are many interesting details of Christ’s life in John. Just one example is found in John 18:5. When Judas led the detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees, Jesus went out and asked them who they were looking for and when they said Jesus of Nazareth, He replied “I am He”, whereupon they all staggered backwards and fell down! It must have been quite a sight – the Romans in their soldier’s uniforms carrying weapons; the priests and Pharisees in their long robes all falling down in a heap!