

The Life of Christ

Part 1

**From His birth to the start of his
public teaching**

Classroom Lessons by Ted Gatzka

The Early Life of Christ

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The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

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As the title indicates, the historical period in the life of Israel extends from the cessation of Old Testament prophecy to the beginning of the Christian era.

I. The Period in General.

The Exile left its ineffaceable stamp on Judaism as well as on the Jews. Their return to the land of their fathers was marked by the last rays of the declining sun of prophecy. With Malachi it set. Modern historical criticism has projected some of the canonical books of the Bible far into this post-exilic period. Thus Kent (HJP, 1899), following the lead of the Wellhausen-Kuenen hypothesis, with all its later leaders, has charted the period between 600 BC, the date of the first captivity, to 160 BC, the beginning of the Hasmonean period of Jewish history, in comparative contemporaneous blocks of double decades. Following the path of Koster, the historical position of Ezra and Nehemiah is inverted, and the former is placed in the period 400-380 BC, contemporaneously with Artaxerxes II; Joe is assigned to the same period; portions of Isa (chapters 63-66; 24-27) are placed about 350 BC; Zec is assigned to the period 260-240, and Da is shot way down the line into the reign of the Seleucids, between 200 and 160 BC. Now all this is very striking and no doubt very critical, but the ground of this historical readjustment is wholly subjective, and has the weight only of a hypothetical conjecture. Whatever may be our attitude to the critical hypothesis of the late origin of some of the Old Testament literally, it seems improbable that any portion of it could have reached far into the post-exilic period. The interval between the Old and the New Testaments is the dark period in the history of Israel. It stretches itself out over about four centuries, during which there was neither prophet nor inspired writer

in Israel. All we know of it we owe to Josephus, to some of the apocryphal books, and to scattered references in Greek and Latin historians. The seat of empire passed over from the East to the West, from Asia to Europe. The Persian Empire collapsed, under the fierce attacks of the Macedonians, and the Greek Empire in turn gave way to the Roman rule.

II. A Glance at Contemporaneous History.

For the better understanding of this period in the history of Israel, it may be well to pause for a moment to glance at the wider field of the history of the world in the centuries under contemplation, for the words "fullness of time" deal with the all-embracing history of mankind, for whose salvation Christ appeared, and whose every movement led to its realization.

1. The Egyptian Empire:

In the four centuries preceding Christ, The Egyptian empire, the oldest and in many respects the most perfectly developed civilization of antiquity, was tottering to its ruins. The 29th or Mendesian Dynasty, made place, in 384 BC, for the 30th or Sebennitic Dynasty, which was swallowed up, half a century later, by the Persian Dynasty. The Macedonian or 32nd replaced this in 332 BC, only to give way, a decade later, to the last or 33rd, the Ptolemaic Dynasty. The whole history of Egypt in this period was therefore one of endless and swiftly succeeding changes. In the Ptolemaic Dynasty there was a faint revival of the old glory of the past, but the star of empire had set for Egypt, and the mailed hand of Rome finally smote down a civilization whose beginnings are lost in the dim twilight of history. The Caesarian conquest of 47 BC was followed, 17 years later, by the annexation of Egypt to the new world-power, as a Roman province. Manetho's history is the one great literary monument of Egyptian history in this period. Her priests had been famous for their wisdom, to which Lycurgus and Solon, the Greek legislators, had been attracted, as well as Pythagoras and Plato, the world's greatest philosophers.

2. Greece:

In Greece also the old glory was passing away. Endless wars sapped the strength of the national life. The strength of Athens and Sparta, of Corinth and Thebes had departed, and when about the beginning of our period, in 337 BC, the congress of Greek states had elected Philip of Macedon to the hegemony of united Greece, the knell of doom sounded for all Greek liberty. First Philip and after him Alexander wiped out the last remnants of this liberty, and Greece became a fighting machine for the conquest of the world in the meteoric career of Alexander the Great. But what a galaxy of illustrious names adorn the pages of Greek history, in this period, so dark for Israel! Think of Aristophanes and Hippocrates, of Xenophon and Democritus, of Plato and Apelles, of Aeschines and Demosthenes, of Aristotle and Praxiteles and Archimedes, all figuring, amid the decay of Greek liberty, in the 4th and 3rd centuries before Christ! Surely if the political glory of Greece had left its mark on the ages, its intellectual brilliancy is their pride.

3. Rome:

Rome meanwhile was strengthening herself, by interminable wars, for the great task of world-conquest that lay before her. By the Latin and Samnite and Punic wars she trained her sons in the art of war, extended her territorial power and made her name dreaded everywhere. Italy and north Africa, Greece and Asia Minor and the northern barbarians were conquered in turn. Her intellectual brilliancy was developed only when the lust of conquest was sated after a fashion, but in the century immediately preceding the Christian era we find such names as Lucretius and Hortentius, Cato and Cicero, Sallust and Diodorus Siculus, Virgil and Horace. At the close of the period between the Testaments, Rome had become the mistress of the world and every road led to her capital.

4. Asia:

In Asia the Persian empire, heir to the civilization and traditions of the great Assyrian-Babylonian world-power, was fast collapsing and was ultimately utterly wiped out by the younger Greek empire and civilization. In far-away India the old ethnic religion of Brahma a century or more before the beginning of our period passed through the reformatory crisis inaugurated by Ghatama Buddha or Sakya Mouni, and thus Buddhism, one of the great ethnic religions, was born. Another reformer of the Tauistic faith was Confucius, the sage of China, a contemporary of Buddha, while Zoroaster in Persia laid the foundations of his dualistic world-view. In every sense and in every direction, the period between the Testaments was therefore one of political and intellectual ferment.

III. Historical Developments.

As regards Jewish history, the period between the Testaments may be divided as follows:

- (1) the Persian period;
- (2) the Alexandrian period;
- (3) the Egyptian period;
- (4) the Syrian period;
- (5) the Maccabean period;
- (6) the Roman period.

1. The Persian Period:

The Persian period extends from the cessation of prophecy to 334 BC. It was in the main uneventful in the history of the Jews, a breathing spell between great national crises, and comparatively little is known of it. The land of Palestine was a portion of the Syrian satrapy, while the true government of the Jewish people was semi-theocratic, or rather sacerdotal, under the rule of the high priests, who were responsible to the satrap. As a matter of course, the high-priestly office became the object of all Jewish ambition and it aroused the darkest passions. Thus John, the son of Judas, son of Eliashib, through the lust of power, killed his brother Jesus, who was a favorite of Bagoses, a general of Artaxerxes in command of the district. The guilt of the fratricide was enhanced, because the crime was committed in the temple itself, and before the very altar. A storm of wrath, the only notable one of this period, thereupon swept over Judea. The Persians occupied Jerusalem, the temple was defiled, the city laid waste in part, a heavy fine was imposed on the people and a general persecution followed, which lasted for many years (Ant., XI, 7; Kent, HJP, 231). Then as later on, in the many persecutions which followed, the Samaritans, ever pliable and willing to obey the tyrant of the day, went practically scot free.

2. The Alexandrian Period:

The Alexandrian period was very brief, 334-323 BC. It simply covers the period of the Asiatic rule of Alexander the Great. In Greece things had been moving swiftly. The Spartan hegemony, which had been unbroken since the fall of Athens, was now by destroyed by the Thebans under Epaminondas, in the great battles of Leuctra and Mantinea. But the new power was soon crushed Philip of Macedon, who was thereupon chosen general leader by the unwilling Greeks. Persia was the object of Philip's ambition and vengeance, but the dagger of Pausanias (Ant., XI, viii, 1) forestalled the execution of his plans. His son Alexander, a youth of 20 years, succeeded him, and thus the "great he-goat," of which Daniel had spoken (Daniel 8:8; 10:20), appeared on the scene. In the twelve years of his reign (335-323 BC) he revolutionized the world. Swift as an eagle he moved. All Greece was laid at his feet. Thence he moved to Asia, where he defeated Darius in the memorable battles of Granicus and Issus. Passing southward, he conquered the Mediterranean coast and Egypt and then moved eastward again, for the complete subjugation of Asia, when he was struck down in the height of his power, at

Babylon, in the 33rd year of his age. In the Syrian campaign he had come in contact with the Jews. Unwilling to leave any stronghold at his back, he reduced Tyre after a siege of several months, and advancing southward demanded the surrender of Jerusalem. But the Jews, taught by bitter experience, desired to remain loyal to Persia. As Alexander approached the city, Jaddua the high priest, with a train of priests in their official dress, went out to meet him, to supplicate mercy. A previous dream of this occurrence is said to have foreshadowed this event, and Alexander spared the city, sacrificed to Yahweh, had the prophecies of Daniel concerning him rehearsed in his hearing, and showed the Jews many favors (Ant., XI, viii, 5) From that day on they became his favorites; he employed them in his army and gave them equal rights with the Greeks, as first citizens of Alexandria, and other cities, which he founded. Thus the strong Hellenistic spirit of the Jews was created, which marked so large a portion of the nation, in the subsequent periods of their history.

3. The Egyptian Period:

The Egyptian period (324-264 BC). The death of Alexander temporarily turned everything into chaos. The empire, welded Thrace together by his towering genius, fell apart under four of his generals-- Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander, and Selenus (Daniel 8:21,22). Egypt fell to the share of Ptolemy Soter and Judea was made part of it. At first Ptolemy was harsh in his treatment of the Jews, but later on he learned to respect them and became their patron as Alexander had been. Hecataeus of is at this time said to have studied the Jews, through information received from Hezekiah, an Egyptian Jewish immigrant, and to have written a Jewish history from the time of Abraham till his own day. This book, quoted by Josephus and Origen, is totally lost. Soter was succeeded by Ptolemy Philadelphus, an enlightened ruler, famous through the erection of the lighthouse of Pharos, and especially through the founding of the celebrated Alexandrian library. Like his father he was very friendly to the Jews, and in his reign the celebrated Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures, the Septuagint, was made, according to tradition (Ant., XII, ii). As however the power of the Syrian princes, the Seleucids, grew, Palestine increasingly became the battle ground between them and the Ptolemies. In the decisive battle between Ptolemy Philopator and Antiochus the Great, at Raphia near Gaza, the latter was crushed and during Philopator's reign Judea remained an Egyptian province. And yet this battle formed the turning-point of the history of the Jews in their relation to Egypt. For when Ptolemy, drunk with victory, came to Jerusalem, he endeavored to enter the holy of holies of the temple, although he retreated, in confusion, from the holy place. But he wreaked his vengeance on the Jews, for opposing his plan, by a cruel persecution. He was succeeded by his son Ptolemy Epiphanes, a child of 5 years. The long-planned vengeance of Antiochus now took form in an invasion of Egypt. Coele-Syria and Judea were occupied by the Syrians and passed over into the possession of the Seleucids.

4. The Syrian Period:

The Syrian period (204-165 BC). Israel now entered into the valley of the shadow of death. This entire period was an almost uninterrupted martyrdom. Antiochus was succeeded by Seleucis Philopator. But harsh as was their attitude to the Jews, neither of these two was notorious for his cruelty to them. Their high priests, as in former periods, were still their nominal rulers. But the aspect of everything changed when Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 BC) came to the throne. He may fitly be called the Nero of Jewish history. The nationalists among the Jews were at that time wrangling with the Hellenists for the control of affairs. Onias III, a faithful high priest, was expelled from office through the machinations of his brother Jesus or Jason (2 Macc 4:7-10). Onias went to Egypt, where at Heliopolis he built a temple and officiated as high priest. Meanwhile Jason in turn was turned out of the holy office by the bribes of still another brother, Menelaus, worse by far than Jason, a Jew-hater and an avowed defender of Greek life and morals. The wrangle between the brothers gave Antiochus the opportunity he craved to wreak his bitter hatred on the Jews, in the spoliation of Jerusalem, in the wanton and total defilement of the temple, and in a most horrible persecution of the Jews (1 Macc 1:16-28; 2 Macc 5:11-23; Daniel 11:28; Ant, XII, v, 3.4). Thousands were slain, women and children were sold into captivity, the city wall was torn down, all sacrifices ceased, and in the temple on the altar of burnt offering a statue was

erected to Jupiter Olympius (1 Macc 1:43; 2 Macc 6:1-2). Circumcision was forbidden, on pain of death, and all the people of Israel were to be forcibly paganized. As in the Persian persecution, the Samaritans again played into the hands of the Syrians and implicitly obeyed the will of the Seleucids. But the very rigor of the persecution caused it to fail of its purpose and Israel proved to be made of sterner stuff than Antiochus imagined. A priestly family dwelling at Modin, west of Jerusalem, named Hasmonean, after one of its ancestors, consisting of Mattathias and his five sons, raised the standard of revolt, which proved successful after a severe struggle.

See ASMONEANS.

5. The Maccabean Period:

The Maccabean period (165-63 BC). The slaying of an idolatrous Jew at the very altar was the signal of revolt. The land of Judea is specially adapted to guerilla tactics, and Judas Maccabeus, who succeeded his father, as leader of the Jewish patriots, was a past master in this kind of warfare. All efforts of Antiochus to quell the rebellion failed most miserably, in three Syrian campaigns. The king died of a loathsome disease and peace was at last concluded with the Jews. Though still nominally under Syrian control, Judas became governor of Palestine. His first act was the purification and rededication of the temple, from which the Jews date their festival of purification (see PURIFICATION). When the Syrians renewed the war, Judas applied for aid to the Romans, whose power began to be felt in Asia, but he died in battle before the promised aid could reach him (Ant., XII, xi, 2). He was buried by his father's side at Modin and was succeeded by his brother Jonathan. From that time the Maccabean history becomes one of endless cabals. Jonathan was acknowledged by the Syrians as meridarch of Judea, but was assassinated soon afterward. Simon succeeded him, and by the help of the Romans was made hereditary ruler of Palestine. He in turn was followed by John Hyrcanus. The people were torn by bitter partisan controversies and a civil war was waged, a generation later, by two grandsons of John Hyrcanus, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. In this internecine struggle the Roman general Pompey participated by siding with Hyrcanus, while Aristobulus defied Rome and defended Jerusalem. Pompey took the city, after a siege of three months, and entered the holy of holies, thereby forever estranging from Rome every loyal Jewish heart.

6. The Roman Period:

The Roman period (63-4 BC). Judea now became a Roman province. Hyrcanus, stripped of the hereditary royal power, retained only the high-priestly office. Rome exacted an annual tribute, and Aristobulus was sent as a captive to the capital. He contrived however to escape and renewed the unequal struggle, in which he was succeeded by his sons Alexander and Antigonus. In the war between Pompey and Caesar, Judea was temporarily forgotten, but after Caesar's death, under the triumvirate of Octavius, Antony and Lepidus, Antony, the eastern triumvir, favored Herod the Great, whose intrigues secured for him at last the crown of Judea and enabled him completely to extinguish the old Maccabean line of Judean princes.

IV. Internal Developments in This Period.

One thing remains, and that is a review of the developments within the bosom of Judaism itself in the period under consideration. It is self-evident that the core of the Jewish people, which remained loyal to the national traditions and to the national faith, must have been radically affected by the terrible cataclysms which mark their history, during the four centuries before Christ. What, if any, was the literary activity of the Jews in this period? What was their spiritual condition? What was the result of the manifest difference of opinion within the Jewish economy? What preparation does this period afford for the "fullness of time"? These and other questions present themselves, as we study this period of the history of the Jews.

1. Literary Activity:

The voice of prophecy was utterly hushed in this period, but the old literary instinct of the nation asserted itself; it was part and parcel of the Jewish traditions and would not be denied. Thus in this period many writings were produced, which of although they lack canonical authority, among Protestants at least, still are extremely helpful for a correct understanding the life of Israel in the dark ages before Christ.

(a) The Apocrypha.

First of all among the fruits of this literary activity stand the apocryphal books of the Old Testament. It is enough here to mention them. They are fourteen in number:

1 and 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, 2 Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, in Baruch, So of the Three Holy Children, History of Susannah, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasses, 1 and 2 Maccabees. As 3 and 4 Maccabees fall presumably within the Christian era, they are not here enumerated. All these apocryphal writings are of the utmost importance for a correct understanding of the Jewish problem in the day which they were written. For fuller information, see APOCRYPHA.

(b) Pseudepigrapha.

Thus named from the spurious character of the authors' names they bear. Two of these writings very probably belong to our of period, while a host of them evidently belong to a later date. In this class of writings there is a mute confession of the conscious poverty of the day. First of all, we have the Psalter of Solomon, originally written in Hebrew and translated into Greek--a collection of songs for worship, touching in their spirit, and evincing the fact that true faith never died in the heart of the true believer. The second is the Book of Enoch, a production of an apocalyptic nature, named after Enoch the patriarch, and widely known about the beginning the Christian era. This book is quoted in the New Testament (Jude 1:14). It was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic and translated into Greek as there is no trace of a Christian influence in the book, the presumption is that the greater part of it was written at an earlier period. Both Jude and the author of Revelation must have known it, as a comparative study of both books will show. The question of these quotations or allusions is a veritable crux interpretum:

how to reconcile the inspiration of these books with these quotations?

(c) The Septuagint.

The tradition of the Septuagint is told by Josephus (Ant., XII, ii, 13). Aristeas and Aristobulus, a Jewish priest in the reign of Ptolemy Philometor (2 Macc 1:10), are also quoted in support of it by Clement of Alexandria and by Eusebius. See \SEPTUAGINT\ . The truth of the matter is most probably that this great translation of the Old Testament Scriptures was begun at the instance of Ptolemy Philadelphus 285-247 BC, under the direction of Demetrius Phalereus, and was completed somewhere about the middle of the 2nd century BC. Internal evidence abounds that the translation was made by different hands and at different times. If the translation was in any way literal, the text of the Septuagint raises various interesting questions in regard to the Hebrew text that was used in the translation, as compared with the one we now possess. The Septuagint was of the utmost missionary value and contributed perhaps more than any other thing to prepare the world for the "fullness of time."

2. Spiritual Conditions:

The return from Babylon marked a turning point in the spiritual history of the Jews. From that time onward, the lust of idolatry, which had marked their whole previous history, utterly disappears. In the

place of it came an almost intolerable spirit of exclusiveness, a striving after legal holiness, these two in combination forming the very heart and core of the later Pharisaism. The holy books, but especially the law, became an object of almost idolatrous reverence; the spirit was utterly lost in the form. And as their own tongue, the classic Hebrew, gradually gave way to the common Aramaic, the rabbis and their schools strove ever more earnestly to keep the ancient tongue pure, worship and life each demanding a separate language. Thus, the Jews became in a sense bilingual, the Hebrew tongue being used in their synagogues, the Aramaic in their daily life, and later on, in part at least, the Greek tongue of the conqueror, the lingua franca of the period. A spiritual aristocracy very largely replaced the former rule of their princes and nobles. As the core of their religion died, the bark of the tree flourished. Thus, tithes were zealously paid by the believer (compare Matthew 23:23), the Sabbath became a positive burden of sanctity, the simple laws of God were replaced by cumbersome human inventions, which in later times were to form the bulk of the Talmud, and which crushed down all spiritual liberty in the days of Christ (Matthew 11:28; 23:4,23). The substitution of the names "Elohim" and "Adonai" for the old glorious historic name "Yahweh" is an eloquent commentary on all that has been said before and on the spiritual condition of Israel in this period (Ewald, History of Israel, V, 198), in which the change was inaugurated. The old centripetal force, the old ideal of centralization, gave way to an almost haughty indifference to the land of promise. The Jews became, as they are today, a nation without a country. For, for every Jew that came back to the old national home, a thousand remained in the land of their adoption. And yet scattered far and wide, in all sorts of environments, they remained Jews, and the national consciousness was never extinguished. It was God's mark on them now as then. And thus they became world-wide missionaries of the knowledge of the true God, of a gospel of hope for a world that was hopeless, a gospel which wholly against their own will directed the eyes of the world to the fullness of time and which prepared the fallow soil of human hearts for the rapid spread of Christianity when it ultimately appeared.

3. Parties:

During the Greek period the more conservative and zealous of the Jews were all the time confronted with a tendency of a very considerable portion of the people, especially the younger and wealthier set, to adopt the manners of life and thought and speech of their masters, the Greeks. Thus the Hellenistic party was born, which was bitterly hated by all true blooded Jews, but which left its mark on their history, till the date of the final dispersion 70 AD. From the day of Mattathias, the Chasids or Hasidians (1 Macc 2:42) were the true Jewish patriots. Thus the party of the Pharisees came into existence (Ant., XIII, x, 5; XVIII, i, 2; BJ, I, v, 2). See PHARISEES. They were opposed by the more secular-minded Sadducees (Ant., XIII, x, 6; XVIII, i, 3; BJ, II, viii, 14), wealthy, of fine social standing, wholly free from the restraints of tradition, utterly oblivious of the future life and closely akin to the Greek Epicureans. See SADDUCEES. These parties bitterly opposed each other till the very end of the national existence of the Jews in Palestine, and incessantly fought for the mastery, through the high-priestly office. Common hatred for Christ, for a while, afforded them a community of interests. 4. Preparation for Christianity:

Throughout this entire dark period of Israel's history, God was working out His own Divine plan with them. Their Scriptures were translated into Greek, after the conquest of Alexander the Great the common language in the East. Thus the world was prepared for the word of God, even as the latter in turn prepared the world for the reception of the gift of God, in the gospel of His Son. The Septuagint thus is a distinct forward movement in the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise (Genesis 12:3; 18:18). As the sacrificial part of Jewish worship declined, through their wide separation from the temple, the eyes of Israel were more firmly fixed on their Scriptures, read every Sabbath in their synagogues, and, as we have seen, these Scriptures, through the rendering of the Septuagint, had become the property of the entire world. Thus, the synagogue everywhere became the great missionary institute, imparting to the world Israel's exalted Messianic hopes. On the other hand, the Jews themselves, embittered by long-continued martyrdoms and suffering, utterly carnalized this Messianic expectation in an increasing ratio as the yoke of the oppressor grew heavier and the hope of deliverance grew fainter. And thus

when their Messiah came, Israel recognized Him not, while the heart-hungry heathen, who through the Septuagint had become familiar with the promise, humbly received Him (John 1:9-14). The eyes of Israel were blinded for a season, 'till the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in' (Romans 9:32; 11:25).

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The Life of Christ

Part 1

From His birth to the start of his public teaching

Lesson 1

Pre-existence of Christ (Part 1)

John 1:1-10	
1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.	7 The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him.
2 The same was in the beginning with God.	8 He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light.
3 All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made.	9 There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world.
4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.	10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not.
5 And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not.	
6. There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John.	

Lesson 1

Pre-existence of Christ (Part 1)

Questions

1. Who was the Word? _____
2. What does vs. 1 suggest about the birth of Jesus? _____

3. What does vs. 1 tell us about the nature of Jesus? _____

4. What part of the creation did Jesus play? _____

5. What type of life was found in him? _____

6. What type of life is the light of men? _____

7. What is the darkness referred to in vs. 5? _____
8. Why did the darkness not apprehend the light? _____

9. Does one have an option to go, if sent by God? Why? _____

10. By what means was John able to bear witness of the light? _____

11. What was the importance of John's preaching? _____

12. How far reaching would this light be? _____

13. What does vs. 10 show us about the Creator and the created? _____

Lesson 2

The Pre-existence of Christ (part 2)

<p style="text-align: center;">John 1:11-18</p> <p>11 He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not.</p> <p>12 But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name:</p> <p>13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.</p> <p>14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.</p>	<p>15 John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me: for he was before me.</p> <p>16 For of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace.</p> <p>17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.</p> <p>18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him .</p>
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Lesson 2

The Pre-existence of Christ (part 2)

Questions

1. Who were "his own"? _____

2. What was the reaction of the people to him? _____

3. What was the gift to those who did receive him? _____

4. Define the four types of birth mentioned in vs. 3. _____

5. What was the Word subjecting himself to when he became flesh? _____

6. What was the glory that was beheld by man? _____

7. What does "crieth" indicate about John's preaching? _____

8. How was Jesus after John, yet before him? _____

9. What does the statement "grace for grace" mean? _____

10. Were grace and truth found in the law given through Moses? _____
11. In what respect was the grace and truth of Jesus to the law of Moses? _____

12. What was the unique about Jesus that placed him above all other men? _____

Lesson 3 The Geneology of Christ

Matt.1:1-17	Luke 3:23-38
<p>1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.</p> <p>2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren;</p> <p>3 and Judah begat Perez and Zerah of Tamar; and Perez begat Hezron; and Hezron begat Ram;</p> <p>4 and Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon; and Nahshon begat Salmon;</p> <p>5 and Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab; and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;</p> <p>6 and Jesse begat David the king. And David begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Uriah;</p> <p>7 and Solomon begat Rehoboam; and Rehoboam begat Abijah; and Abijah begat Asa;</p> <p>8 and Asa begat Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Uzziah;</p> <p>9 and Uzziah begat Jotham; and Jotham begat Ahaz; and Ahaz begat Hezekiah;</p> <p>10 and Hezekiah begat Manasseh; and Manasseh begat Amon; and Amon begat Josiah;</p> <p>11 and Josiah begat Jechoniah and his brethren, at the time of the carrying away to Babylon.</p> <p>12 And after the carrying away to Babylon, Jechoniah begat Shealtiel; and Shealtiel begat Zerubbabel;</p> <p>13 and Zerubbabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;</p> <p>14 and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;</p> <p>15 and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;</p> <p>16 and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.</p> <p>17 So all the generations from Abraham unto David are fourteen generations; and from David unto the carrying away to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the carrying away to Babylon unto the Christ fourteen generations.</p>	<p>23 And Jesus himself, when he began to teach , was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,</p> <p>24 the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,</p> <p>25 the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,</p> <p>26 the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda,</p> <p>27 the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,</p> <p>28 the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,</p> <p>29 the son of Jesus, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,</p> <p>30 the son of Symeon, the son of Judas, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,</p> <p>31 the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,</p> <p>32 the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,</p> <p>33 the son of Amminadab, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,</p> <p>34 the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,</p> <p>35 the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah,</p> <p>36 the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,</p> <p>37 the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan,</p> <p>38 the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.</p>

Lesson 3
The Geneology of Christ

Questions

1. Why do you suppose that Matthew's genealogy begins with Abraham and Luke's begin with Adam? _____

2. With what individual do the genealogies begin to differ? _____
3. Why do you suppose that Matthew says that Joseph was begotten of Jacob and Like says that Joseph was the son of Heli? _____

4. What tribe was Jesus a decedent of? _____
5. What four women are mentioned in Matthew's genealogy? _____

6. What part did Tamar have in the genealogy of Jesus? _____

7. What is significant about Rahab's and Ruth's part in this genealogy? _____

8. What three kings are omitted from Matthew's genealogy? (1 Chron. 3:11-12) _____

9. In vs. 11, why do you suppose Matthew says that Josiah begat Jechoniah? Jechoniah was his grandson. (1 Chron. 3:15) _____

10. Looking at this genealogy, what can we determine about the family of Jesus? _____

11. What king in this genealogy was told his seed would never sit on David's throne again? (Jer. 22:30) _____

Lesson 4

Gabriel Announces John's Birth (Part 1)

<p style="text-align: center;">Luke 1:1-11</p> <p>1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us,</p> <p>2 even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word,</p> <p>3 it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus;</p> <p>4 that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.</p> <p>5 ¶ There was in the days of Herod, king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.</p>	<p>6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.</p> <p>7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.</p> <p>8 Now it came to pass, while he executed the priest_s office before God in the order of his course,</p> <p>9 according to the custom of the priest_s office, his lot was to enter into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.</p> <p>10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the hour of incense.</p>
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Lesson 4

Gabriel Announces John's Birth (Part 1)

Questions

1. Who were the many that wrote about Jesus in vs. 1? _____

2. What does Luke acknowledge about the prophecies concerning Jesus? _____

3. What was Luke purpose for writing this book? _____

4. Who was Theophilus? _____
5. What do we know about Theophilus? _____

6. What tribe was Zacharias and Elisabeth from? _____
7. Explain the "course of Abijah"? (1 Cron. 24:1-10) _____

8. What was Zacharias's responsibility as priest? _____

9. What was the symbolic thought of praying while burning incense? (Rev. 8:3-4) _____

10. What time of day was the hour of prayer? (Acts 3:1) _____

Lesson 5

Gabriel Announces John's Birth (Part 2)

Luke 1:12-25	
<p>11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of altar of incense.</p>	<p>19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak unto thee, and to bring thee these good tidings.</p>
<p>12 And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him , and fear fell upon him.</p>	<p>20 And behold, thou shalt be silent and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou believedst not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.</p>
<p>13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: because thy supplication is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.</p>	<p>21 And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and they marvelled while he tarried in the temple.</p>
<p>14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.</p>	<p>22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: and he continued making signs unto them, and remained dumb.</p>
<p>15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother_s womb.</p>	<p>23 And it came to pass, when the days of his ministration were fulfilled, he departed unto his house.</p>
<p>16 And many of the children of Israel shall be turn unto the Lord their God.</p>	<p>24 And after these days Elisabeth his wife conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying,</p>
<p>17 And he shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just; to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him .</p>	<p>25 Thus hath the Lord done unto me in the days wherein he looked upon me , to take away my reproach among men.</p>
<p>18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.</p>	

Lesson 5

Gabriel Announces John's Birth (Part 2)

Questions

1. Why do you suppose Zacharias was troubled and fearful when he saw the angel? _____

2. What had Zacharias and Elisabeth often prayed for? _____
3. What specific information did the angel give concerning Zacharias's child? _____

4. What was to be special about John before his birth? _____

5. What was to be John's responsibility in life? _____

6. What does it mean to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children"? _____

7. What are we told about this angel? _____

8. What was Zacharias's reaction to the news Gabriel brought to him? _____

9. What were the "days of his ministration"? _____

10. What was he not allowed to do during the time of ministration? _____

11. At what time did Elisabeth conceive? _____

12. Why do you suppose Elisabeth hid herself for five months? _____

13. What was considered a reproach among men? _____

Lesson 6

Gabriel Visits Mary

<p style="text-align: center;">Luke 1:26-38</p> <p>26 ¶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,</p> <p>27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.</p> <p>28 And he came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee.</p> <p>29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this might be.</p> <p>30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.</p> <p>31 And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.</p> <p>32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:</p>	<p>33 and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.</p> <p>34 And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?</p> <p>35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.</p> <p>36 And behold, Elisabeth thy kinswoman, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren.</p> <p>37 For no word from God shall be void of power.</p> <p>38 And Mary said, Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.</p>
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Lesson 6

Gabriel Visits Mary

Questions

1. What time frame is the sixth month started from? _____

2. What could be the significance of identifying Joseph from the house of David and not from one of the twelve tribes? _____

3. What can we conclude about Mary since she was "highly favored"? _____

4. How did Mary react to the angel's salutation? _____

5. What was to happen to Mary? _____

6. What would be given to Jesus and what would be the extent of his authority? _____

7. When did Mary understand that the conception would take place? _____

8. Describe the nature of Mary's conception. _____

9. What was revealed to Mary concerning Elisabeth? _____

10. If Elisabeth was of the daughters of Aaron, and Mary was a kinswoman, what can we conclude about Mary's genealogy? _____

11. What promise do we have concerning God's word? _____

12. How did Mary respond to all of these events? _____

Lesson 7
Mary Visits Elizabeth, John's Mother

Luke 1:39-56

39 ¶ And Mary arose in these days and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah;

40 and entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit;

42 and she lifted up her voice with a loud cry, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?

44 For behold, when the voice of thy salutation came into mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a fulfilment of the things which have been spoken to her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaid: For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; And holy is his name.

50 And his mercy is unto generations and generations On them that fear him.

51 He hath showed strength with his arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart.

52 He hath put down princes from their thrones, And hath exalted them of low degree.

53 The hungry he hath filled with good things; And the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath given help to Israel his servant, That he might remember mercy

55 (As he spake unto our fathers) Toward Abraham and his seed for ever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned unto her house.

Lesson 7
Mary Visits Elizabeth, John's Mother

Questions

1. Why did Mary go with haste to Judah? _____

2. What did Elisabeth experience when greeted by Mary? _____

3. How did Elisabeth learn of Mary's condition? _____

4. Does being blessed among women make her superior to other women? _____

5. What does vs. 43 show us about Elisabeth's nature? _____

6. How does Mary's reception of Gabriel's announcement compare to that of Zacharias's? _____

7. What was Mary's soul and spirit doing? _____

8. What is the extent of God's mercy? _____

9. What does it mean to "scatter the proud"? _____

10. What had God done to the powerful and the humble? _____

11. What would be one of the blessings that Israel would receive through Mary's child? _____

12. What prophecy does Mary acknowledge was now being fulfilled? _____

13. At what month of Elisabeth's pregnancy did Mary leave to go back home? _____

Lesson 8

Birth of John the Baptist

<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Birth of John the Baptist Luke 1:57-80</p> <p>57 ¶ Now Elisabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.</p> <p>58 And her neighbors and her kinsfolk heard that the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her; and they rejoiced with her.</p> <p>59 And it came to pass on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him Zacharias, after the name of the father.</p> <p>60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.</p> <p>61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.</p> <p>62 And they made signs to his father, what he would have him called.</p> <p>63 And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.</p> <p>64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, blessing God.</p> <p>65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.</p> <p>66 And all that heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, What then shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him.</p> <p>67 ¶ And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,</p> <p>68 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people,</p>	<p>69 And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of his servant David</p> <p>70 (As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old),</p> <p>71 Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;</p> <p>72 To show mercy towards, our fathers, And to remember his holy covenant;</p> <p>73 The oath which he spake unto Abraham our father,</p> <p>74 To grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies Should serve him without fear,</p> <p>75 In holiness and righteousness before him all our days.</p> <p>76 Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High: For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways;</p> <p>77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people In the remission of their sins,</p> <p>78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, Whereby the dayspring from on high shall visit us,</p> <p>79 To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; To guide our feet into the way of peace.</p> <p>80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.</p>
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Lesson 8

Birth of John the Baptist

Questions

1. Does vs. 58 seem to indicate that this is the first time Elisabeth's neighbors and kinsmen knew of her condition? _____

2. Why was this circumcision done on the eighth day? _____

3. Why was Zacharias not able to speak until 8 days after the birth of John? _____

4. How far did the events of John's birth travel and what reaction did it have upon the people? _____

5. What kind of fear does vs. 65 indicate? _____

6. What does it mean to be redeemed? _____

7. What does the "horn" signify? _____
8. Who were the enemies that Jesus would save them from? _____

9. What does Zacharias acknowledge that God had not forgotten? _____

10. How should we serve God? _____

11. What was John to be, and what was his responsibility? _____

12. Who was the dayspring and what did it represent? (Mal. 4:2) _____

13. From vs. 80, what can we surmise John not do, that was his right by birth? _____

14. What do we know about John's early years? _____

Lesson 9

Angel Visits Joseph in a Dream

<p style="text-align: center;">Matt. 1:18-25</p> <p>18 ¶ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.</p> <p>20 But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>21 And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins.</p> <p>22 Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,</p> <p>23 Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, And they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us.</p> <p>24 And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife;</p> <p>25 and knew her not till she had brought forth a son: and he called his name JESUS.</p>
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Lesson 9

Angel Visits Joseph in a Dream

Questions

1. What can we learn about the betrothal process during this time? _____

2. When was the conception of Jesus? _____

3. Why do you think that Matthew states that the child was of the Holy Spirit? _____

4. What options did Joseph have in dealing with Mary in respect to the Law of Moses?
(Deut. 22:23-24; Deut. 24:1) _____

5. What made Joseph a righteous man since he could have, by the Law, made her a public
example? _____

6. When did the angel appear unto Joseph and what was the purpose of the visit? _____

7. What does the angel remind Joseph of? _____

8. What do you suppose Joseph could have been fearful of by not putting away Mary? _____

9. What does the angel reveal to Joseph about Mary's conception? _____

10. What statement in vs. 21 indicates that Joseph was to be a father to the child? (Lk. 1:60-63)

11. Who are "his people" that he would save from their sins? _____

12. How did Joseph react to these instructions from God? _____

13. How did Joseph treat Mary? _____

Lesson 10

Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-7	
1 Now it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled.	5 to enrol himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him, being great with child.
2 This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria.	6 And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered.
3 And all went to enrol themselves, every one to his own city.	7 And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.
4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David;	

Lesson 10
Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem

Questions

1. Who was Caesar Augustus? _____

2. To what extent did the "world" encompass in vs. 1? _____

3. What do we know about Quirinius? (Josephus Ant. 18,1:1) _____

4. What were the people required to do for enrollment? _____

5. How did some people react to this enrollment? (Acts 5:37) _____

6. What determined Bethlehem to be the place for Joseph to go and be registered? _____

7. How far was Bethlehem from Nazareth? _____

8. Who took care of the child after his birth? _____

9. What was the manger? _____

10. How well established was Bethlehem for travelers? _____

Lesson 11

Shepherds Visit Jesus

Luke 2:8-20

8 ¶ And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock.

9 And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people:

11 for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this is the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.

15 And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

17 And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child.

18 And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

Lesson 11

Shepherds Visit Jesus

Questions

1. What indication does vs. 8 give us as to the time of the year of these events? _____

2. What part of the country were these shepherds tending their flock? _____

3. Why was it important to watch over the flock at night? _____

4. What caused the shepherds to be afraid? _____

5. What is significant of the phrase "for there is born to you"? _____

6. Why was the angel's description of Jesus and his location considered a sign? _____

7. What is the heavenly host? _____

8. Who was God well pleased of? _____

9. What was the shepherds reaction after the angel's visit? _____

10. What did the shepherds reveal to those present with Jesus? _____

11. What does it mean to keep the sayings and ponder them in your heart? _____

12. Where did the shepherds go after their visit with Jesus? _____

Lesson 12

Circumcision of Jesus and His Presentation in the Temple

<p style="text-align: center;">Luke 2:21-38</p> <p>21 ¶ And when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising him, his name was called JESUS, which was so called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.</p> <p>22 And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord</p> <p>23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord),</p> <p>24 and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.</p> <p>25 ¶ And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him.</p> <p>26 And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.</p> <p>27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law,</p> <p>28 then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,</p> <p>29 Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord, According to thy word, in peace;</p>	<p>30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,</p> <p>31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;</p> <p>32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of thy people Israel.</p> <p>33 And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning him;</p> <p>34 and Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against;</p> <p>35 yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.</p> <p>36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher (she was of a great age, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity,</p> <p>37 and she had been a widow even unto fourscore and four years), who departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day.</p> <p>38 And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks unto God, and spake of him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.</p>
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Lesson 12

Circumcision of Jesus and His Presentation in the Temple

Questions

1. Where in the law of Moses can we find the law governing circumcision? _____

2. How long were Mary's days of purification? _____

3. Why did they present Jesus to the Lord? (Num.3:40-51; Num 18:15-16) _____

4. What was the consolation that Simeon was looking for? _____

5. What does the word parents indicate about Joseph? _____

6. Why was Simeon happy when he held Jesus? _____

7. What does Simeon say that Jesus would be to the Jews and Gentiles? _____

8. Why would Jesus be set for the falling and rising of many in Israel? _____

9. What type of sign would Jesus be? _____

10. Why would a sword pierce through Mary's soul? _____

11. How would the thoughts of many hearts be revealed? _____

12. Who was Anna? _____

13. Approximately how old was Anna? _____

14. Where Did she live? _____

15. What did she reveal to the people at this time? _____

Lesson 13

Wise Men Bring Gifts

<p style="text-align: center;">Matt. 2:1-12</p> <p>1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, Wise-men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying,</p> <p>2 Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw his star in the east, and are come to worship him.</p> <p>3 And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.</p> <p>4 And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ should be born.</p> <p>5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written through the prophet,</p> <p>6 And thou Bethlehem, land of Judah, art in no wise least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come forth a governor, who shall be shepherd of my people Israel.</p>	<p>7 Then Herod privily called the Wise-men, and learned of them exactly what time the star appeared.</p> <p>8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search out exactly concerning the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word, that I also may come and worship him.</p> <p>9 ¶ And they, having heard the king, went their way; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.</p> <p>10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.</p> <p>11 And they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and they fell down and worshipped him; and opening their treasures they offered unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.</p> <p>12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.</p>
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Lesson 13

Wise Men Bring Gifts

Questions

1. What do we know about this Herod who was king? _____

2. What eastern countries could these wise men have been from? _____

3. Do you suppose these Wise-men were Jews or Gentiles? _____
4. What knowledge did they have of Jesus? _____

5. Why do you suppose they were interested in worshipping him? _____

6. Why was Herod and all Jerusalem worried? _____

7. Who did Herod inquire for information about the birthplace of Jesus? _____

8. What prophet is quoted in answer to Herod's question? _____
9. What request did Herod make of the Wise-men? _____

10. How were the Wise-men able to locate Jesus? _____

11. Who was present when they finally located Jesus? _____

12. What did they do when they saw Jesus? _____
13. What were the gifts that they brought to him? _____

14. Why did they not return to Herod? _____

15. What can we conclude about these Wise-men and their knowledge of God? _____

Lesson 14

Joseph's Family Escapes to Egypt / Herod's Wrath on Bethlehem's Children

Matt. 2:13-18

13 ¶ Now when they were departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I tell thee: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 And he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt;

15 and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son.

16 ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the Wise-men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had exactly learned of the Wise-men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

18 A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; And she would not be comforted, because they are not.

Lesson 14

Joseph's Family Escapes to Egypt / Herod's Wrath on Bethlehem's Children

Questions

1. How did the angel speak unto Joseph? _____

2. What does the word "flee" tells us? _____

3. How would he know it would be safe to return from Egypt? _____

4. What danger was associated with the young child? _____

5. When did Joseph take his family to Egypt? _____

6. Why was Egypt a safe place for Jesus and his family? _____

7. How was Jesus called out of Egypt? _____

8. How long were they in Egypt? (Josephus Ant. 17.6.1,5,7,8) _____

9. How did the Wise-men mock Herod? _____

10. What did Herod attempt to do in his anger? _____

11. Who suffered during this ordeal? _____

12. How did Herod know what age group he needed to attack? _____

13. What do you suppose is significant about Ramah? _____

14. Why was Rachel the one weeping? _____

Lesson 15

Joseph's Family Settles in Nazareth

Matt. 2:19-23

19 ¶ But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying,

20 Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead that sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned of God in a dream, he withdrew into the parts of Galilee,

23 and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene.

Luke 2:39

39 And when they had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

Lesson 15

Joseph's Family Settles in Nazareth

Questions

1. How did the angel speak to Joseph? _____

2. What was Joseph told to do? _____

3. What news did the angel give to Joseph? _____

4. Where did Joseph go when he returned to Israel? _____

5. What caused him to be afraid to go back to Judea? _____

6. What do you suppose the warning of God was about? _____

7. Who was Archaleus? _____

8. Why was it safe for Joseph to go to Galilee? _____

9. Why did they dwell in Nazareth? _____

Lesson 16

Childhood of Jesus

<p style="text-align: center;">Luke 2:40-52</p> <p>40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.</p> <p>41 ¶ And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover.</p> <p>42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast;</p> <p>43 and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not;</p> <p>44 but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance:</p> <p>45 and when they found him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him.</p>	<p>46 And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions:</p> <p>47 and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.</p> <p>48 And when they saw him, they were astonished; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing.</p> <p>49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?</p> <p>50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.</p> <p>51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.</p> <p>52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.</p>
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Lesson 16

Childhood of Jesus

Questions

1. How can we describe Jesus' early years of his life? _____

2. What set him apart from the other children? _____

3. How observant were his parents to the Law of Moses? _____

4. How long were these days that were fulfilled? (Ex. 12:15) _____
5. What did Jesus do that his parents were not aware of? _____

6. How far had his parents traveled back home before they realized Jesus was missing? _____

7. Who were his parents traveling with? _____

8. How long did it take for his parents to find him? _____
9. What was Jesus doing? _____

10. What was the teacher's reaction to Jesus? _____

11. What was the emotional state of his parents and why did his mother reveal this to him? _____

12. What does Jesus understand about himself at the age of twelve? _____

13. Why do you suppose his parents not understand what Jesus told them? _____

14. What did Jesus do when they returned home to Nazerath? _____

15. How did Jesus continue to grow? _____

Lesson 17

Ministry of John the Baptist (Part 1)

Mat. 3:1-6	Mark 1:1-8	Luke 3:1-6
<p>1 And in those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, saying,</p> <p>2 Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.</p> <p>3 For this is he that was spoken of through Isaiah the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.</p> <p>4 Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey.</p> <p>5 Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about the Jordan;</p> <p>6 and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.</p>	<p>1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.</p> <p>2 Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, Who shall prepare thy way.</p> <p>3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight;</p> <p>4 John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.</p> <p>5 And there went out unto him all the country of Judaea, and all they of Jerusalem; And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.</p> <p>6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and did eat locusts and wild honey.</p> <p>7 And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.</p> <p>8 I baptized you in water; But he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,</p> <p>2 in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.</p> <p>3 And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins;</p> <p>4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight.</p> <p>5 Every valley shall be filled, And every mountain and hill shall be brought low; And the crooked shall become straight, And the rough ways smooth;</p> <p>6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.</p>

Lesson 17

Ministry of John the Baptist (Part 1)

Questions

1. When did John begin his work? _____

2. What was the purpose of his work? _____

3. Where did he begin his preaching? _____

4. How was John dressed and what did he eat? _____

5. What was John's message that he preached? _____

6. Why "baptism for the remission of sins"? (Lev.16:26-28; 17:15; 22:6) _____

7. How did this baptism differ from the purifications of the Law? _____

8. Did the people have a problem with understanding purification through water? _____

9. What effect did John's preaching have upon the people? _____

10. What effect do you suppose John's appearance had on the people? _____

11. What did John tell the people about Jesus? _____

12. Explain Isaiah's prophecy in Luke 3:5? _____

13. Explain the contrast in the baptisms of John and Jesus found in Mark 1:8. _____

Lesson 18

Ministry of John the Baptist (Part 2)

Mat. 3:7-12	Luke 3:7-20
<p>7 ¶ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?</p>	<p>7 He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized of him, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?</p>
<p>8 Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance:</p>	<p>8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.</p>
<p>9 and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.</p>	<p>9 And even now the axe also lieth at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.</p>
<p>10 And even now the axe lieth at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.</p>	<p>10 And the multitudes asked him, saying, What then must we do?</p>
<p>11 I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire:</p>	<p>11 And he answered and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise.</p>
<p>12 whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.</p>	<p>12 And there came also publicans to be baptized, and they said unto him, Teacher, what must we do?</p>
	<p>13 And he said unto them, Extort no more than that which is appointed you.</p>
	<p>14 And soldiers also asked him, saying, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort from no man by violence, neither accuse any one wrongfully; and be content with your wages.</p>
	<p>15 ¶ And as the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ;</p>
	<p>16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire:</p>
	<p>17 whose fan is in his hand, thoroughly to cleanse his threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.</p>
	<p>18 With many other exhortations therefore preached he good tidings unto the people;</p>
	<p>19 but Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother's wife, and for all the evil things which Herod had done,</p>
	<p>20 added this also to them all, that he shut up John in prison.</p>

Lesson 18

Ministry of John the Baptist (Part 2)

Questions

1. Who were part of the multitude that came to him for baptism? _____

2. Why do you think it interesting that some of the religious leaders were willing to submit to John's baptism? _____

3. Why does John call the religious leaders "offspring of vipers"? _____

4. What did John tell the Pharisees and Sadducees to do? _____

5. What is significant about raising up stones as children to Abraham? _____

6. What phrase tells us about changes that were about to happen? _____

7. What is about to happen to those who do not bear good fruit? _____

8. What did John tell the religious leaders was an example of good fruit? _____

9. What was the Publicans job? _____
10. What were the Publicans guilty of? _____
11. What did John tell the soldiers that they must do? _____

12. What did John tell the people about the authority of Jesus? _____

13. What would Jesus do among the people? _____

14. What kind of ruler was Herod the tetrarch? _____

15. What did John rebuke him for and what was the result? _____

Lesson 19

John Baptizes Jesus

Matt. 3:13-17	Mark 1:9-11	Luke 3:21-23
<p>13 ¶ Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.</p> <p>14 But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?</p> <p>15 But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffereth him.</p> <p>16 And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him;</p> <p>17 and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.</p>	<p>9 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan.</p> <p>10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him:</p> <p>11 And a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.</p>	<p>21 ¶ Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,</p> <p>22 and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.</p> <p>23 And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,</p>

Lesson 19

John Baptizes Jesus

Questions

1. Where did Jesus come from to be baptized of John and how far away was it? _____

2. How did John receive Jesus' request? _____

3. What did John tell Jesus? _____

4. Was Jesus' baptism a solitary event? _____
5. Why did Jesus tell John to suffer it now? _____

6. Who's responsibility was it to fulfill all righteousness? _____

7. What was Jesus doing during his baptism? _____
8. What does "coming up out of the water" indicate to us? _____

9. What happened to the heavens and what descended up Jesus? _____

10. What did the voice from heaven say? _____

11. From this event, what can we conclude about the Godhead? _____

12. Do you suppose that the multitude saw these events? _____

13. Why was God pleased with Jesus? _____

14. How old was Jesus when he began his public teaching? _____

15. Why does Luke say that people supposed that Jesus was the son of Joseph? _____

Lesson 20 The Temptation of Christ

Matt. 4:1-11	Mark 1:12-13	Luke 4:1-13
<p>1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.</p> <p>2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered.</p> <p>3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.</p> <p>4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.</p> <p>5 Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple,</p> <p>6 and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and, On their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.</p> <p>7 Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God.</p> <p>8 Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;</p> <p>9 and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.</p> <p>10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.</p> <p>11 Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.</p>	<p>12 And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness.</p> <p>13 And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; And he was with the wild beasts; And the angels ministered unto him.</p>	<p>1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led in the Spirit in the wilderness</p> <p>2 during forty days, being tempted of the devil. And he did eat nothing in those days: and when they were completed, he hungered.</p> <p>3 And the devil said unto him, if thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become bread.</p> <p>4 And Jesus answered unto him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone.</p> <p>5 And he led him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.</p> <p>6 And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.</p> <p>7 If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine.</p> <p>8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.</p> <p>9 And he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:</p> <p>10 for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee:</p> <p>11 and, On their hands they shall bear thee up, Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.</p> <p>12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God.</p> <p>13 And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season.</p>

Lesson 20

The Temptation of Christ

Questions

1. Why does Mark say that Jesus was driven by the Spirit when Matthew and Luke say that he was led by the Spirit? _____

2. Was Jesus temptation during the forty days of fasting or afterward? _____

3. Who else besides Jesus fasted for forty days and Nights? (Ex. 34:28; Deut. 9:9; I Kings 19:8) _____
4. Who do each of the writers say tempted Jesus? _____
5. What is the first recorded temptation and result did Satan hope to get? _____

6. How did Jesus confront this temptation? _____

7. What was the second temptation as recorded by Matthew and what result did Satan hope to get? _____

8. How did Jesus confront this temptation? _____

9. What was the third temptation as recorded by Matthew and what result did Satan hope to get? _____

10. How did Jesus confront this temptation? _____

11. Explain the authority of Satan in Lk. 4:6. (Rom. 13:1-2; 1 Pet.2:13-14; Job 1:6-12) _____

12. How many temptations did Jesus undergo during this time? (Heb. 4:15) _____

13. What happened after Satan left Jesus? _____
14. How would you classify each of these three temptations? _____

Lesson 21

John's Testimony about Christ

John 1:19-28

19 ¶ And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent unto him from Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No.

22 They said therefore unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet.

24 And they had been sent from the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why then baptizest thou, if thou art not the Christ, neither Elijah, neither the prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize in water: in the midst of you standeth one whom ye know not,

27 even he that cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Lesson 21

John's Testimony about Christ

Questions

1. Why were the Jews in Jerusalem the ones asking John who he was? _____

2. What was it about the priest and Levites that they were the ones sent? _____

3. What seemed to be the question on the Priest and Levites mind? _____

4. How was John truthful in his answer of not being Elijah? (Matt. 11:13-14; Lk. 1:17) _____

5. Who was "the prophet" referred to in vs. 21? _____

6. What did they request of John? _____

7. What was John's answer in reference to his mission? (Is. 40:3) _____

8. Why did they question his baptizing people? _____

9. How would being the Christ, Elijah, or the prophet make his baptism understandable to them? _____

10. What does the word "in" suggest about baptism in vs. 26? _____

11. What was it about Jesus character that caused these people to not know he was among them? _____

12. where did this event take place? _____

Lesson 22

John Recounts Christ's Baptism

<p style="text-align: center;">John 1:29-34</p> <p>29 ¶ On the morrow he seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!</p> <p>30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man who is become before me: for he was before me.</p> <p>31 And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing in water.</p>	<p>32 And John bare witness, saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him.</p> <p>33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>34 And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.</p>
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Lesson 22

John Recounts Christ's Baptism

Questions

1. Why do you suppose Jesus was coming unto John? _____

2. What did John reveal about Jesus at this time? _____

3. What does the word "behold" tell us about John's statement? _____

4. Why does John refer to Jesus as the Lamb of God? _____

5. Who would be the recipient of having their sins removed? _____
6. John and Jesus were related. How did he not know Jesus until this time? _____

7. What does this show about John's faith, that he should proclaim his coming, yet know not who he was? _____

8. What does John recount about the baptism of Jesus? _____

9. Who does John say sent him to baptize? _____

10. What does John say was revealed to him and how was this done? _____

11. What does John finally say for the first time concerning Jesus? _____

Antiquities of the Jews - Book XVIII

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF THIRTY-TWO YEARS. FROM THE BANISHMENT OF ARCHELUS TO THE DEPARTURE FROM BABYLON.

CHAPTER 1.

HOW CYRENIUS WAS SENT BY CAESAR TO MAKE A TAXATION OF SYRIA AND JUDEA; AND HOW COPONIUS WAS SENT TO BE PROCURATOR OF JUDEA; CONCERNING JUDAS OF GALILEE AND CONCERNING THE SECTS THAT WERE AMONG THE JEWS.

1. NOW Cyrenius, a Roman senator, and one who had gone through other magistracies, and had passed through them till he had been consul, and one who, on other accounts, was of great dignity, came at this time into Syria, with a few others, being sent by Caesar to be a judge of that nation, and to take an account of their substance. Coponius also, a man of the equestrian order, was sent together with him, to have the supreme power over the Jews. Moreover, Cyrenius came himself into Judea, which was now added to the province of Syria, to take an account of their substance, and to dispose of Archelaus's money; but the Jews, although at the beginning they took the report of a taxation heinously, yet did they leave off any further opposition to it, by the persuasion of Joazar, who was the son of Beethus, and high priest; so they, being over-persuaded by Joazar's words, gave an account of their estates, without any dispute about it. Yet was there one Judas, a Gaulonite, (1) of a city whose name was Gamala, who, taking with him Sadduc, (2) a Pharisee, became zealous to draw them to a revolt, who both said that this taxation was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert their liberty; as if they could procure them happiness and security for what they possessed, and an assured enjoyment of a still greater good, which was that of the honor and glory they would thereby acquire for magnanimity. They also said that God would not otherwise be assisting to them, than upon their joining with one another in such councils as might be successful, and for their own advantage; and this especially, if they would set about great exploits, and not grow weary in executing the same; so men received what they said with pleasure, and this bold attempt proceeded to a great height. All sorts of misfortunes also sprang from these men, and the nation was infected with this doctrine to an incredible degree; one violent war came upon us after another, and we lost our friends which used to alleviate our pains; there were also very great robberies and murder of our principal men. This was done in pretense indeed for the public welfare, but in reality for the hopes of gain to themselves; whence arose seditions, and from them murders of men, which sometimes fell on those of their own people, (by the madness of these men towards one another, while their desire was that none of the adverse party might be left,) and sometimes on their enemies; a famine also coming upon us, reduced us to the last degree of despair, as did also the taking and demolishing of cities; nay, the sedition at last increased so high, that the very temple of God was burnt down by their enemies' fire. Such were the consequences of this, that the customs of our fathers were altered, and such a change was made, as added a mighty weight toward bringing all to destruction, which these men occasioned by their thus conspiring together; for Judas and Sadduc, who excited a fourth philosophic sect among us, and had a great many followers therein, filled our civil government with tumults at present, and laid the foundations of our future miseries, by this system of philosophy, which we were before unacquainted withal, concerning which I will discourse a little, and this the rather because the infection which spread thence among the younger sort, who were zealous for it, brought the public to destruction.

Antiquities of the Jews - Book XVII

CHAPTER 6.

CONCERNING THE DISEASE THAT HEROD FELL INTO AND THE SEDITION WHICH THE JEWS RAISED THEREUPON; WITH THE PUNISHMENT OF THE SEDITIOUS.

1. NOW Herod's ambassadors made haste to Rome; but sent, as instructed beforehand, what answers they were to make to the questions put to them. They also carried the epistles with them. But Herod now fell into a distemper, and made his will, and bequeathed his kingdom to [Antipas], his youngest son; and this out of that hatred to Archclaus and Philip, which the calumnies of Antipater had raised against them. He also bequeathed a thousand talents to Caesar, and five hundred to Julia, Caesar's wife, to Caesar's children, and friends and freedmen. He also distributed among his sons and their sons his money, his revenues, and his lands. He also made Salome his sister very rich, because she had continued faithful to him in all his circumstances, and was never so rash as to do him any harm; and as he despaired of recovering, for he was about the seventieth year of his age, he grew fierce, and indulged the bitterest anger upon all occasions; the cause whereof was this, that he thought himself despised, and that the nation was pleased with his misfortunes; besides which, he resented a sedition which some of the lower sort of men excited against him, the occasion of which was as follows.

2. There was one Judas, the son of Saripheus, and Matthias, the son of Margalothus, two of the most eloquent men among the Jews, and the most celebrated interpreters of the Jewish laws, and men well beloved by the people, because of their education of their youth; for all those that were studious of virtue frequented their lectures every day. These men, when they found that the king's distemper was incurable, excited the young men that they would pull down all those works which the king had erected contrary to the law of their fathers, and thereby obtain the rewards which the law will confer on them for such actions of piety; for that it was truly on account of Herod's rashness in making such things as the law had forbidden, that his other misfortunes, and this distemper also, which was so unusual among mankind, and with which he was now afflicted, came upon him; for Herod had caused such things to be made which were contrary to the law, of which he was accused by Judas and Matthias; for the king had erected over the great gate of the temple a large golden eagle, of great value, and had dedicated it to the temple. Now the law forbids those that propose to live according to it, to erect images (6) or representations of any living creature. So these wise men persuaded [their scholars] to pull down the golden eagle; alleging, that although they should incur any danger, which might bring them to their deaths, the virtue of the action now proposed to them would appear much more advantageous to them than the pleasures of life; since they would die for the preservation and observation of the law of their fathers; since they would also acquire an everlasting fame and commendation; since they would be both commended by the present generation, and leave an example of life that would never be forgotten to posterity; since that common calamity of dying cannot be avoided by our living so as to escape any such dangers; that therefore it is a right thing for those who are in love with a virtuous conduct, to wait for that fatal hour by such behavior as may carry them out of the world with praise and honor; and that this will alleviate death to a great degree, thus to come at it by the performance of brave actions, which bring us into danger of it; and at the same time to leave that reputation behind them to their children, and to all their relations, whether they be men or women, which will be of great advantage to them afterward.

3. And with such discourses as this did these men excite the young men to this action; and a report being come to them that the king was dead, this was an addition to the wise men's persuasions; so, in the very middle of the day, they got upon the place, they pulled down the eagle, and cut it into pieces with axes, while a great number of the people were in the temple. And now the king's captain, upon hearing what the undertaking was, and supposing it was a thing of a higher nature than it proved to be, came up thither, having a great band of soldiers with him, such as was sufficient to put a stop to the multitude of those who pulled down what was dedicated to God; so he fell upon them unexpectedly, and as they were upon this bold attempt, in a foolish presumption rather than a cautious circumspection, as is usual with the multitude, and while they were in disorder, and incautious of what was for their advantage; so he caught no fewer than forty of the young men, who had the courage to stay behind when the rest ran away, together with the authors of this bold attempt, Judas and Matthias, who thought it an ignominious thing to retire upon his approach, and led them to the king. And when they were come to the king, and he asked them if they had been so bold as to pull down what he had dedicated to God, "Yes, (said they,) what was contrived we contrived, and what hath been performed we performed it, and that with such a virtuous courage as becomes men; for we have given our assistance to those things which were dedicated to the majesty of God, and we have provided for what we have learned by hearing the law; and it ought not to be wondered at, if we esteem those laws which Moses had suggested to him, and were taught him by God, and which he wrote and left behind him, more worthy of observation than thy commands. Accordingly we will undergo death, and all sorts of punishments which thou canst inflict upon us, with pleasure, since we are conscious to ourselves that we shall die, not for any unrighteous actions, but for our love to religion." And thus they all said, and their courage was still equal to their profession, and equal to that with which they readily set about this undertaking. And when the king had ordered them to be bound, he sent them to Jericho, and called together the principal men among the Jews; and when they were come, he made them assemble in the theater, and because he could not himself stand, he lay upon a couch, and enumerated the many labors that he had long endured on their account, and his building of the temple, and what a vast charge that was to him; while the Asamoneans, during the hundred and twenty-five years of their government, had not been able to perform any so great a work for the honor of God as that was; that he had also adorned it with very valuable donations, on which account he hoped that he had left himself a memorial, and procured himself a reputation after his death. He then cried out, that these men had not abstained from affronting him, even in his lifetime, but that in the very day time, and in the sight of the multitude, they had abused him to that degree, as to fall upon what he had dedicated, and in that way of abuse had pulled it down to the ground. They pretended, indeed, that they did it to affront him; but if any one consider the thing truly, they will find that they were guilty of sacrilege against God therein.

4. But the people, on account of Herod's barbarous temper, and for fear he should be so cruel and to inflict punishment on them, said what was done was done without their approbation, and that it seemed to them that the actors might well be punished for what they had done. But as for Herod, he dealt more mildly with others [of the assembly] but he deprived Matthias of the high priesthood, as in part an occasion of this action, and made Joazar, who was Matthias's wife's brother, high priest in his stead. Now it happened, that during the time of the high priesthood of this Matthias, there was another person made high priest for a single day, that very day which the Jews observed as a fast. The occasion was this: This Matthias the high priest, on the night before that day when the fast was to be celebrated, seemed, in a dream, (7) to have conversation with his wife; and because he could not officiate himself on that account, Joseph, the son of Ellemus, his kinsman, assisted him in that sacred office. But Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and burnt the other Matthias, who had raised the

sedition, with his companions, alive. And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon. (8)

5. But now Herod's distemper greatly increased upon him after a severe manner, and this by God's judgment upon him for his sins; for a fire glowed in him slowly, which did not so much appear to the touch outwardly, as it augmented his pains inwardly; for it brought upon him a vehement appetite to eating, which he could not avoid to supply with one sort of food or other. His entrails were also ex-ulcerated, and the chief violence of his pain lay on his colon; an aqueous and transparent liquor also had settled itself about his feet, and a like matter afflicted him at the bottom of his belly. Nay, further, his privy-member was putrefied, and produced worms; and when he sat upright, he had a difficulty of breathing, which was very loathsome, on account of the stench of his breath, and the quickness of its returns; he had also convulsions in all parts of his body, which increased his strength to an insufferable degree. It was said by those who pretended to divine, and who were endued with wisdom to foretell such things, that God inflicted this punishment on the king on account of his great impiety; yet was he still in hopes of recovering, though his afflictions seemed greater than any one could bear. He also sent for physicians, and did not refuse to follow what they prescribed for his assistance, and went beyond the river Jordan, and bathed himself in the warm baths that were at Callirrhoe, which, besides their other general virtues, were also fit to drink; which water runs into the lake called Asphaltiris. And when the physicians once thought fit to have him bathed in a vessel full of oil, it was supposed that he was just dying; but upon the lamentable cries of his domestics, he revived; and having no longer the least hopes of recovering, he gave order that every soldier should be paid fifty drachmae; and he also gave a great deal to their commanders, and to his friends, and came again to Jericho, where he grew so choleric, that it brought him to do all things like a madman; and though he were near his death, he contrived the following wicked designs. He commanded that all the principal men of the entire Jewish nation, wheresoever they lived, should be called to him. Accordingly, they were a great number that came, because the whole nation was called, and all men heard of this call, and death was the penalty of such as should despise the epistles that were sent to call them. And now the king was in a wild rage against them all, the innocent as well as those that had afforded ground for accusations; and when they were come, he ordered them to be all shut up in the hyppodrome, (9) and sent for his sister Salome, and her husband Alexas, and spake thus to them: "I shall die in a little time, so great are my pains; which death ought to be cheerfully borne, and to be welcomed by all men; but what principally troubles me is this, that I shall die without being lamented, and without such mourning as men usually expect at a king's death. For that he was not unacquainted with the temper of the Jews, that his death would be a thing very desirable, and exceedingly acceptable to them, because during his lifetime they were ready to revolt from him, and to abuse the donations he had dedicated to God that it therefore was their business to resolve to afford him some alleviation of his great sorrows on this occasion; for that if they do not refuse him their consent in what he desires, he shall have a great mourning at his funeral, and such as never had any king before him; for then the whole nation would mourn from their very soul, which otherwise would be done in sport and mockery only. He desired therefore, that as soon as they see he hath given up the ghost, they shall place soldiers round the hippodrome, while they do not know that he is dead; and that they shall not declare his death to the multitude till this is done, but that they shall give orders to have those that are in custody shot with their darts; and that this slaughter of them all will cause that he shall not miss to rejoice on a double account; that as he is dying, they will make him secure that his will shall be executed in what he charges them to do; and that he shall have the honor of a memorable mourning at his funeral. So he deplored his condition, with tears in his eyes, and obtested them by the kindness due from them, as of his kindred, and by the faith they owed to God, and begged of them that they would not hinder him of this honorable mourning at his

funeral. So they promised him not to transgress his commands.

6. Now any one may easily discover the temper of this man's mind, which not only took pleasure in doing what he had done formerly against his relations, out of the love of life, but by those commands of his which savored of no humanity; since he took care, when he was departing out of this life, that the whole nation should be put into mourning, and indeed made desolate of their dearest kindred, when he gave order that one out of every family should be slain, although they had done nothing that was unjust, or that was against him, nor were they accused of any other crimes; while it is usual for those who have any regard to virtue to lay aside their hatred at such a time, even with respect to those they justly esteemed their enemies.

CHAPTER 7.

HEROD HAS THOUGHTS OF KILLING HIMSELF WITH HIS OWN HAND; AND A LITTLE AFTERWARDS HE ORDERS ANTIPATER TO BE SLAIN.

1. AS he was giving these commands to his relations, there came letters from his ambassadors, who had been sent to Rome unto Caesar, which, when they were read, their purport was this: That Acme was slain by Caesar, out of his indignation at what hand, she had in Antipater's wicked practices; and that as to Antipater himself, Caesar left it to Herod to act as became a father and a king, and either to banish him, or to take away his life, which he pleased. When Herod heard this, he was some-what better, out of the pleasure he had from the contents of the letters, and was elevated at the death of Acme, and at the power that was given him over his son; but as his pains were become very great, he was now ready to faint for want of somewhat to eat; so he called for an apple and a knife; for it was his custom formerly to pare the apple himself, and soon afterwards to cut it, and eat it. When he had got the knife, he looked about, and had a mind to stab himself with it; and he had done it, had not his first cousin, Achiabus, prevented him, and held his hand, and cried out loudly. Whereupon a woeful lamentation echoed through the palace, and a great tumult was made, as if the king were dead. Upon which Antipater, who verily believed his father was deceased, grew bold in his discourse, as hoping to be immediately and entirely released from his bonds, and to take the kingdom into his hands without any more ado; so he discoursed with the jailer about letting him go, and in that case promised him great things, both now and hereafter, as if that were the only thing now in question. But the jailer did not only refuse to do what Antipater would have him, but informed the king of his intentions, and how many solicitations he had had from him [of that nature]. Hereupon Herod, who had formerly no affection nor good-will towards his son to restrain him, when he heard what the jailer said, he cried out, and beat his head, although he was at death's door, and raised himself upon his elbow, and sent for some of his guards, and commanded them to kill Antipater without tiny further delay, and to do it presently, and to bury him in an ignoble manner at Hyrcania.

CHAPTER 8.

CONCERNING HEROD'S DEATH, AND TESTAMENT, AND BURIAL.

1. AND now Herod altered his testament upon the alteration of his mind; for he appointed Antipas, to whom he had before left the kingdom, to be tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, and granted the kingdom to Archclaus. He also gave Gaulonitis, and Trachonitis, and Paneas to Philip, who was his son, but own brother to Archclaus (10) by the name of a tetrarchy; and

bequeathed Jarnnia, and Ashdod, and Phasaelis to Salome his sister, with five hundred thousand [drachmae] of silver that was coined. He also made provision for all the rest of his kindred, by giving them sums of money and annual revenues, and so left them all in a wealthy condition. He bequeathed also to Caesar ten millions [of drachmae] of coined money, besides both vessels of gold and silver, and garments exceeding costly, to Julia, Caesar's wife; and to certain others, five millions. When he had done these things, he died, the fifth day after he had caused Antipater to be slain; having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven. (11) A man he was of great barbarity towards all men equally, and a slave to his passion; but above the consideration of what was right; yet was he favored by fortune as much as any man ever was, for from a private man he became a king; and though he were encompassed with ten thousand dangers, he got clear of them all, and continued his life till a very old age. But then, as to the affairs of his family and children, in which indeed, according to his own opinion, he was also very fortunate, because he was able to conquer his enemies, yet, in my opinion, he was herein very unfortunate.

2. But then Salome and Alexas, before the king's death was made known, dismissed those that were shut up in the hippodrome, and told them that the king ordered them to go away to their own lands, and take care of their own affairs, which was esteemed by the nation a great benefit. And now the king's death was made public, when Salome and Alexas gathered the soldiery together in the amphitheater at Jericho; and the first thing they did was, they read Herod's letter, written to the soldiery, thanking them for their fidelity and good-will to him, and exhorting them to afford his son Archelaus, whom he had appointed for their king, like fidelity and good-will. After which Ptolemy, who had the king's seal intrusted to him, read the king's testament, which was to be of force no otherwise than as it should stand when Caesar had inspected it; so there was presently an acclamation made to Archelaus, as king; and the soldiers came by bands, and their commanders with them, and promised the same good-will to him, and readiness to serve him, which they had exhibited to Herod; and they prayed God to be assistant to him.

3. After this was over, they prepared for his funeral, it being Archelaus's care that the procession to his father's sepulcher should be very sumptuous. Accordingly, he brought out all his ornaments to adorn the pomp of the funeral. The body was carried upon a golden bier, embroidered with very precious stones of great variety, and it was covered over with purple, as well as the body itself; he had a diadem upon his head, and above it a crown of gold: he also had a scepter in his right hand. About the bier were his sons and his numerous relations; next to these was the soldiery, distinguished according to their several countries and denominations; and they were put into the following order: First of all went his guards, then the band of Thracians, and after them the Germans; and next the band of Galatians, every one in their habiliments of war; and behind these marched the whole army in the same manner as they used to go out to war, and as they used to be put in array by their muster-masters and centurions; these were followed by five hundred of his domestics carrying spices. So they went eight furlongs (12) to Herodium; for there by his own command he was to be buried. And thus did Herod end his life.

4. Now Archelaus paid him so much respect, as to continue his mourning till the seventh day; for so many days are appointed for it by the law of our fathers. And when he had given a treat to the multitude, and left off his motoring, he went up into the temple; he had also acclamations and praises given him, which way soever he went, every one striving with the rest who should appear to use the loudest acclamations. So he ascended a high elevation made for him, and

took his seat, in a throne made of gold, and spake kindly to the multitude, and declared with what joy he received their acclamations, and the marks of the good-will they showed to him; and returned them thanks that they did not remember the injuries his father had done them to his disadvantage; and promised them he would endeavor not to be behindhand with them in rewarding their alacrity in his service, after a suitable manner; but that he should abstain at present from the name of king, and that he should have the honor of that dignity, if Caesar should confirm and settle that testament which his father had made; and that it was on this account, that when the army would have put the diadem on him at Jericho, he would not accept of that honor, which is usually so much desired, because it was not yet evident that he who was to be principally concerned in bestowing it would give it him; although, by his acceptance of the government, he should not want the ability of rewarding their kindness to him and that it should be his endeavor, as to all things wherein they were concerned, to prove in every respect better than his father. Whereupon the multitude, as it is usual with them, supposed that the first days of those that enter upon such governments declare the intentions of those that accept them; and so by how much Archelaus spake the more gently and civilly to them, by so much did they more highly commend him, and made application to him for the grant of what they desired. Some made a clamor that he would ease them of some of their annual payments; but others desired him to release those that were put into prison by Herod, who were many, and had been put there at several times; others of them required that he would take away those taxes which had been severely laid upon what was publicly sold and bought. So Archelaus contradicted them in nothing, since he pretended to do all things so as to get the good-will of the multitude to him, as looking upon that good-will to be a great step towards his preservation of the government. Hereupon he went and offered sacrifice to God, and then betook himself to feast with his friends.