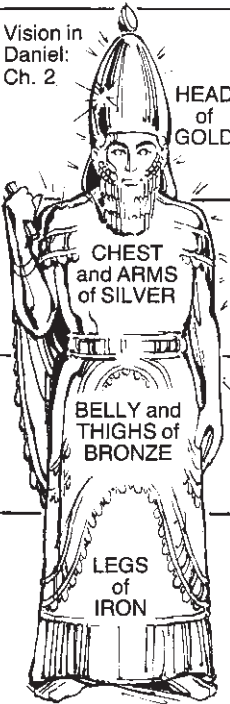


the Visions of Daniel

	Vision in Daniel: Ch. 2	Vision in Ch. 7	Vision in Ch. 8	IDENTIFICATION	626 B.C.
		LION		BABYLON 2:48	BABYLONIA
					539 B.C.
					500
					MEDO-PERSIA
		BEAR	RAM	MEDO- PERSIA 8:20	400
					330 B.C.
					300
					GREECE (Including Ptolemies and Seleucids)
					200
		LEOPARD	GOAT	GREECE 8:21	(167 B.C. Maccabees and Hasmoneans)
					100
					63 B.C.
					ROME
					A.D. 70 Fall of Jerusalem
		TERRIFYING and FRIGHTENING BEAST		ROME	100

The Gospels

Matthew - John

I. The Intertestament Period - between Malachi and Matthew

"We would not say that a knowledge of the period between the Old and New Testaments is vital to one's understanding of the four Gospels, but it is very desirable, and indeed quite necessary, if we would fully appreciate many of the scenes and incidents on which Matthew lifts the curtain. It gives a background against which we can see with sharpened clearness the connections or relevances of the sayings and doings which occupy the earlier pages of our New Testament." J. Sidlow Baxter

1. The period between Malachi and Matthew covers 400 years. The Old Testament canon closed with Malachi at about 397 B.C. Jewish history during those four centuries runs in six periods.

A. The Persian Period - 536 – 333 B.C.

- Under Persian rule 60 years after the end of Malachi
- During this time Jews (in the south) and Samaritans (north) became totally separated
- The high priest led the country under the governor

B. The Greek Period - 333 – 323 B.C.

- Alexander the Great marched on Jerusalem
- He spared the Jews

C. Egyptian Period - 323 – 204 B.C.

- Under Ptolemy, one of 4 generals who took over after Alexander the Great died
- Jews were treated roughly
- The Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament) was translated during this time under a later ruler

D. Syrian Period - 204 – 165 B.C.

- Captured by Antiochus the Great of Syria
- Very harsh to the Jews
- The temple was desecrated, copies of the Law were burned, the Holy of Holies was stolen from, circumcision was prohibited under penalty of death
- In 168 B.C. a sow (pigs were 'unclean' to the Jews) was sacrificed on the sacred altar.

E. Maccabean Period - 165 – 63 B.C.

- The people were provoked by the abuses of the Syrian Period
- A revolt led by the high priest and his son (Judas Maccabeus) brought the country back under Jewish control. Many Jews were martyred in this revolt.
- Judas Maccabeus led the country followed by two of his brothers, Jonathan and Simon.
- Simon's son John Hyrcanus became high priest and led the people
- Antipater (not a Jew) brokered a deal with the Roman general Pompey

II. I. The Intertestament Period - between Malachi and Matthew (cont)

F. Roman Period - 63 B.C. onwards

- Pompey takes Jerusalem
- Herod the son of Antipater is appointed as governor
- Herod goes to Rome and is appointed king of the Jews.
- Herod builds the temple which was the center of worship at the time of Christ
(see appendix page A-13)

2. Changes in the lives of the Jewish people

- A. They were cured of their idolatry because they realized in their captivity through fulfilled prophecy and the testimony of the life of Daniel that Jehovah God was God over all the nations. He could humble any sovereign ruler.
- B. The remnant that returned under Zerubbabel were the most devout Jews. They were willing to make the sacrifice and take the risk to return. They held firmly in their hearts what they wanted to accomplish, the rebuilding of the temple and the nation.
- C. When they returned there was no king, no temple, no independence. All they had was the Scriptures and the promise of a coming Messiah! The Jews over those 400 years departed from their lack of attention to the Scriptures in the past and became so focused on Scripture that their interpretations and commentary on the Scripture (called the Mishna or Oral Law) became as important as the Scriptures themselves. The pendulum swung from neglect of the Scriptures to believing their interpretations of Scripture were as authoritative as Scripture itself.
- D. Synagogues as places to hear, discuss and be instructed from the Scriptures came about during this time. "The great institution of preaching – one entirely unknown in heathenism – took its rise in the synagogue; and that zeal for the Law, by which Israel was so strikingly marked from the period of the return from Bablylon to the coming of Christ, was cherished and increased by its arrangements (the synagogue) more than any other agency." J. Sidlow Baxter
- E. There were also groupings of leaders which began and became dominant in Jewish society during this period.
- i. The Scribes - a new body of men who became the guardians, expounders and doctors of the law.
 - ii. The Pharisees - were Separatists with an extreme loyalty to the Law and religion of Jehovah including the Mishna or Oral Law. Many of the scribes were Pharisees as well.
 - iii. The Saducees - This group rose from the priests and were motivated politically. They were the aristocracy of the society. The Pharisees and the Saducees provoked each other. The Pharisees influenced from the people upward while the Saducees influenced from the Sanhedrin downward.
 - iv. The Herodians - A political group established to further the cause of the Herod government.

I. The Intertestament Period - between Malachi and Matthew (continued)

- v. The Zealots - The Jewish nationalist party. They were ready and willing to fight anyone including Rome for the Jewish cause.
- vi. The Sanhedrin - The supreme religious and civil tribunal of the Jewish nation. The Sanhedrin had 71 members including the high priest, 24 chief priests, 24 elders from the laity and 22 scribes.

II. The New Testament

"The New Testament is a fulfillment of the Old; or to be more precise the Christ of the New Testament is the fulfillment. He is the fulfillment of all that the prophets saw, and psalmists sang, and godly hearts hoped for."
J. Sidlow Baxter

- 1. Look at appendix page A-14 called "The Historical Highway of the New Testament". Note the divisions in the New Testament, the historical, the letters and the prophecy. The history is covered in Matthew through Acts. Then Paul, Peter and John and other authors write to churches begun during this historical period. Look also at appendix page A-15 for a timeline of the New Testament books.
- 2. The Gospels were written in the order given in our New Testament. Matthew was written primarily to a Jewish audience and connects the New Testament with the Old. Mark was written for a Roman audience and Luke was written to the Greeks. John was written later than the other three and he focuses on teaching and insight that the others omitted.
- 3. For information on the chronology of Jesus' life see appendix pages A-16 & A-17.

III. The Gospels - Matthew

"...the four gospels are the very crux of the Bible. They are the historical focus of the Old Testament prophecy, and the factual basis of New Testament theology." **J. Sidlow Baxter**

- 1. Look at Matthew 1, it is a genealogy of the Christ. Why would Matthew who is writing to Jews begin with a genealogy of the Messiah? Who does he start with and why?

III. The Gospels - Matthew (continued)

2. What does Matthew tell us about Jesus' birth and early life? (Matthew 1:18-2:23) Why is Herod afraid of a Jewish king?



3. As you read through the book of Matthew, the Old Testament is quoted continuously beginning with the prophecy from Isaiah 7:14 (Matthew 1:22,23). Why would Matthew quote the Old Testament over and over? (see 1:23; 2:6; 2:15; 2:18; 3:3; 4:4; 4:6; 4:7; 4:10; 4:15,16; 5:21; 5:27; 5:31; 5:38; 5:43 as examples)

After being announced by John the Baptist and baptized, Jesus is tested by the devil and overcomes. He then begins his ministry in Galilee. Matthew highlights his teaching, his miracles and the reactions of people to him.

III. The Gospels - Matthew (continued)

4. *What Jesus Taught*. In Matthew 5-7 is Christ's Sermon on the Mount, a whole new ethic which focused on internal transformation rather than external behaviors. Read one of the chapters (either 5, 6 or 7). From the chapter you read, how does Jesus focus his teaching on heart issues? Does being a follower of Jesus mean you just have to change your behavior or is it something more?



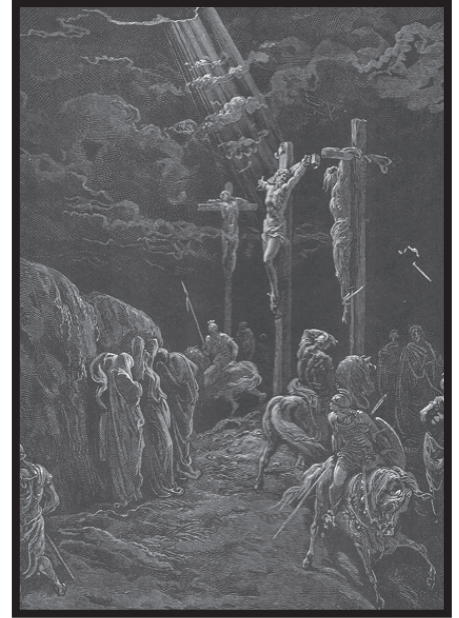
5. *What Jesus Wrought* is in Matthew 8-10. Here Jesus heals many. How does Matthew 9:35-38 summarize the ministry of Jesus and his compassion for people. What problem does Jesus bring to his disciples and what is the solution? In response to this problem what does Jesus do? (see Matthew 10:1-10)
6. *What People Thought* is in Matthew 11-18. Look through Matthew 11-18, pick a story of one person or a group of people. Who were they and what is their reaction to Jesus? Who do they believe Him to be?

III. The Gospels - Matthew (continued)

7. The kingdom of heaven is a key theme in Matthew. Matthew is presenting Jesus as the Messiah who has come to bring in His kingdom. Read one of these parables in Matthew 13. Its called the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:1-23) Why does Jesus tell parables anyway? (see verses 13-15) What is the meaning of the parable of the sower? Look at one other parable in Matthew 13 what is its significance?
8. Read Matthew 19:1. Up to this time, Jesus' ministry has predominately been in Galilee and now he heads to Jerusalem. Read Matthew 20:17-19. What does Jesus tell his disciples will happen in Jerusalem?
9. Jesus enters Jerusalem presenting himself as the Messiah (see Matthew 21:2-5). How to the people respond? What is the response of the Jewish leaders (see Matthew 21:23-27 and Matthew 26:3-5).

III. The Gospels - Matthew (continued)

10. Read Matthew 26:6-27:66. This portion of Matthew details the betrayal, trial, crucifixion and death of Christ. In light of what is written here and what you've studied in the Old Testament. Why did God's Messiah have to die?



11. In Matthew 28, Jesus rises from the dead and appears to the women who followed Him and to the disciples. When Jesus appears to the disciples in Galilee what does He tell them about Himself? (see Matthew 28:18,20) In light of who He is what does He call His disciples to do? (see Matthew 28:19)
12. In Matthew 28, God sends the disciples to all nations. Trace through these verses, how do you see God's passion for all peoples in these Scriptures? (Genesis 12:1-3; 26:2-4; 28:12-14; Exodus 12:48; 20:10; 22:21; Leviticus 17:8,9; 19:10; 34; 24:22; Numbers 9:14; 15:15; Deuteronomy 1:16; Joshua 4:24; I Kings 8:41-43; Psalm 67; 96:1-3; Isaiah 11:10; 25:7,8; 55:4,5; 60:1-5; Daniel 7:14; Jonah 4:11; Micah 4:2; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 20:21; Acts 1:8 and II Peter 3:9)

III. The Gospels - Matthew (continued)

13. Dawson Trotman (founder of The Navigators) said “World vision is getting on your heart what is on God’s heart, the world.” Would you consider yourself to be a person with world vision? What can you do to get on your heart what is on God’s heart?

At this writing there are over 6.5 billion people in the world. How do you think the eternal destiny of 6.5 billion souls affects the heart of God?

*“If we could see the value of the human soul as Christ saw it,
our ministry would approach the effectiveness of Christ’s.” – Anonymous*

IV. The Gospels - Mark

“We need only to read Mark two or three times and his uppermost purpose captures us. He wants us to see Jesus at work. It is as though he says ‘Look! What Jesus did proves who He was.’ What He wrought authenticates what He taught. His mighty works verify the startling words.”

J. Sidlow Baxter

1. In Chapter 1 of Mark he covers Matthew 1-8 and in chapter 2 he covers Matthew 9-18. Mark focuses on what Jesus did and omits much of what He said. Mark’s goal is to present Christ as Servant. Look at Mark 1, where does he begin his gospel?
2. The key word of Mark is “immediately” or “straightway” [eutheos in Greek]. It is used 42 times in Mark and only 7 times in Matthew and just once in Luke. Why would be “immediately” be key in describing the action of a servant?

IV. The Gospels - Mark (continued)

3. What does Mark bring out as the responses of people to the serving, working Christ?

Mark 1:22-

Mark 1:27-

Mark 1:28-

Mark 1:45-

Mark 2:2-

Mark 2:12-

Mark 2:13-

Mark 3:7,8-

Mark 3:9-

Mark 3:11-

Mark 3:20-

Mark 4:1-

Mark 4:41-

Mark 5:21-

Mark 5:42-

Mark 6:33-

Mark 6:55,56-

Mark 7:37-

4. Mark 1:21-8:30 are about the works of Christ. Mark 8:31-15:47 detail his supreme servant action. Read Mark 10:45. How does this verse summarize well the message of Mark?

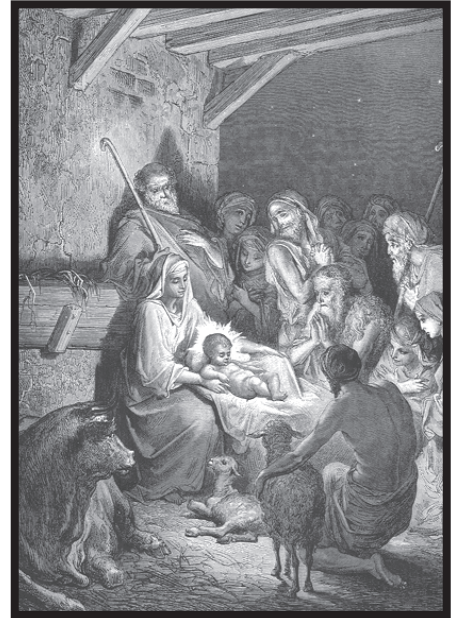
5. Look again at Jehovah's Servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. How does what Mark stresses about Jesus connect with this passage?

V. The Gospels - Luke

“Luke is peculiarly concerned with the human nature, the manhood of our Lord, so he must needs tell us more particularly about the wonderful birth and babyhood and boyhood...”

His focus is on Jesus the man “...whereas the emphasis in Matthew is on what Jesus said (important to Jews) and in Mark on what Jesus did (important to Romans) here in Luke it is rather on Jesus Himself (important to Greeks).”

1. Read Luke 1 and 2. What does Luke tell us about the infancy and early years of Jesus? What is remarkable about the childhood of Jesus?



2. In Luke 3 we read Jesus' genealogy. How is it different from Matthew's? Who does Luke begin with in his genealogy? Who does he end with? In light of Luke's focus on the perfect man why would he do this?

3. In the gospel of Luke there is a great emphasis on prayer. What does Jesus teach about prayer by word and example? (see Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 9:28,29; 11:1; 11:5-10; 18:1-8; 18:9-14; 21:36; 22:32; 22:44; 22:46; 23:34,36)

V. The Gospels - Luke (continued)

4. From Luke 4:14-9:50, Luke tells us about Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Unique to Luke is his focus on Jesus' ministry as he leaves Galilee and travels to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51-19:44) What Matthew or Mark cover in 1 or 2 chapters Luke expands into 10 chapters. In it he includes 30 stories that are not mentioned in the other gospels. Look through this section (9:51-19:44) Consider especially these passages (Luke 9:23-27; 9:57-62 and 14:25-34). What does Jesus say it means to be His disciple?
5. Read Luke 23:44-45, when Jesus dies what occurs in the temple? Why does this happen and in light of your study of the temple why is this so significant?
6. Read Luke 24:13-53. Focus on verses 25-32. After studying the Old Testament and the gospels how does the experience of these two disciples connect with your experience?

VI. The Gospels - John

The purpose of John is that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing you might have life in his name (John 20:31). Matthew, Mark and Luke "...set forth the facts, and leave them to make their own impression on the reader. Not so John, all is statedly selected and directed to the screening of a verdict. He is concerned not only with the facts but with the issues."

J. Sidlow Baxter

Matthew, Mark and Luke (the Synoptic gospels)

- the outer facts of the Lord's life
- the human aspects of the Lord's life
- the public discourses (largely)
- the Galilean ministry (mainly)

John

- the inner facts of the Lord's life
- the divine aspects of the Lord's life
- the private conversations (largely)
- the Judean ministry (mainly)

1. Read John 1:1-18. John's purpose is to present Christ as the Son of God. Matthew's Genealogy goes back to Abraham, because he presents Jesus as the Messiah. Mark has no Genealogy because he presents Jesus as God's Servant. Luke's presentation of Christ is as the perfect man and he traces his lineage to Adam, the son of God. In John's opening to his gospel what does he accentuate about Christ? Who does he say that Jesus is? Matthew goes back to Abraham, Luke goes back to Adam, how far does John go back?

2. Read John 5:16-27. What is Jesus judged for in this passage? In what ways does Jesus reveal His equality with the Father?

3. Look at these seven key metaphors that Christ uses to describe Himself. What are they and what is their significance?

John 6:35,41,48,51 -

John 8:12-

John 10:7,9-

John 10:11,14-

John 11:25-

John 14:6-

John 15:1,5-

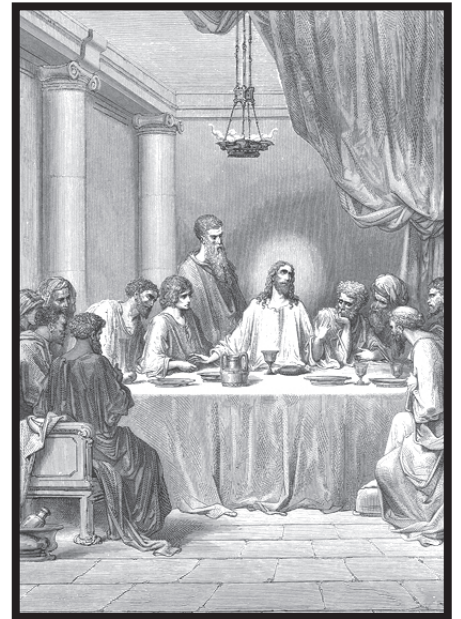
VI. The Gospels - John (continued)

4. Look at one of the personal accounts of the private ministry of Jesus to an individual. Select one of the following passages. (John 3:1-21; 4:1-26; 5:1-15; 9:1-12; 11:1-43; 12:1-11) How does Jesus minister to this person? What is the result of his ministry in their life and the lives of others they touch? What does it mean to you that Jesus was willing to focus on individual people and their specific problems?

5. In John 13-17, Jesus ministers to the Twelve the night before he went to the cross. It is a study all in itself. Pick one of the chapters, read through it and ask yourself these questions. Why was what Jesus communicated here of the utmost importance? How would the message of His words help the disciples in the days ahead?

6. After Jesus dies on the cross, he again ministers to individuals. In John 20:10-18 its Mary Magdalene , in John 20:24-31 its Thomas and in John 21:15-23 it is Peter. Pick one of the three and consider these questions. What is this person's problem? How does Jesus meet their need?

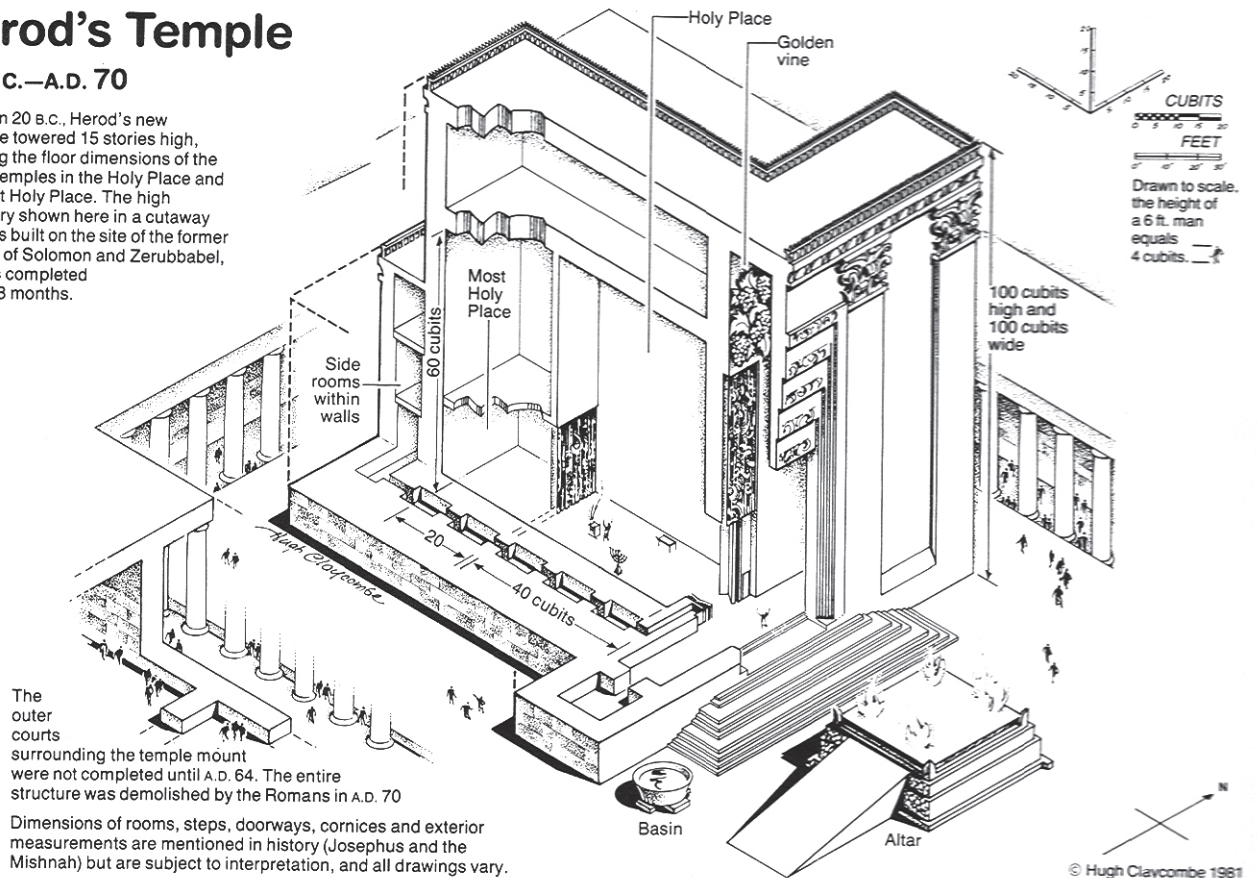
7. Read the last verse in John (John 21:25). John states that he and the gospel writers could have told more about what Jesus did (but they didn't have room). What Matthew, Mark, Luke and John did under the inspiration of God was to choose the stories, teachings and experiences they and others had with Christ and weaved them together to communicate a specific story to us. After looking at the gospel accounts as the fulfillment of the Old Testament history, poetry and prophecy, write out a prayer to God thanking and praising Him for your wonderful Savior.



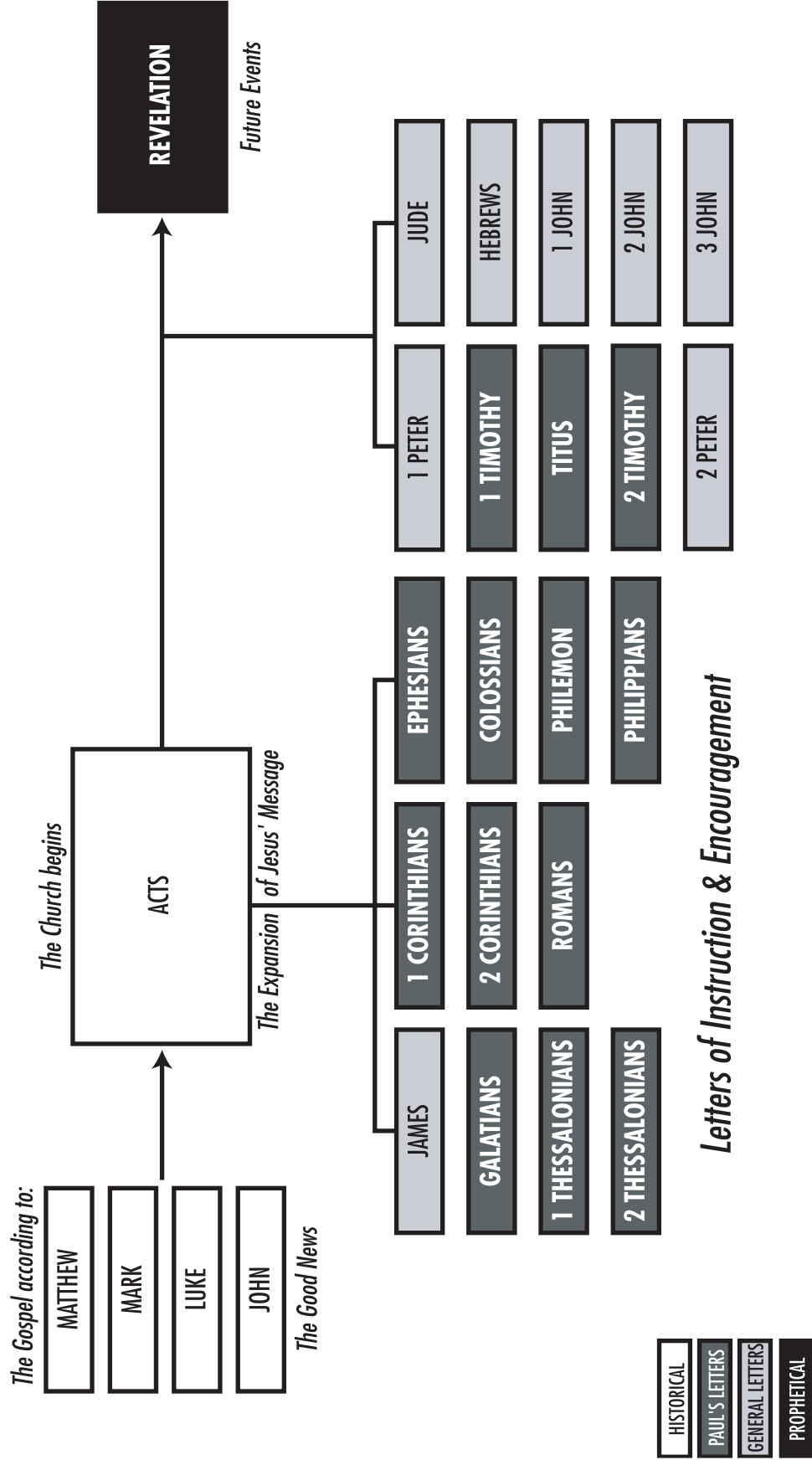
Herod's Temple

20 B.C.—A.D. 70

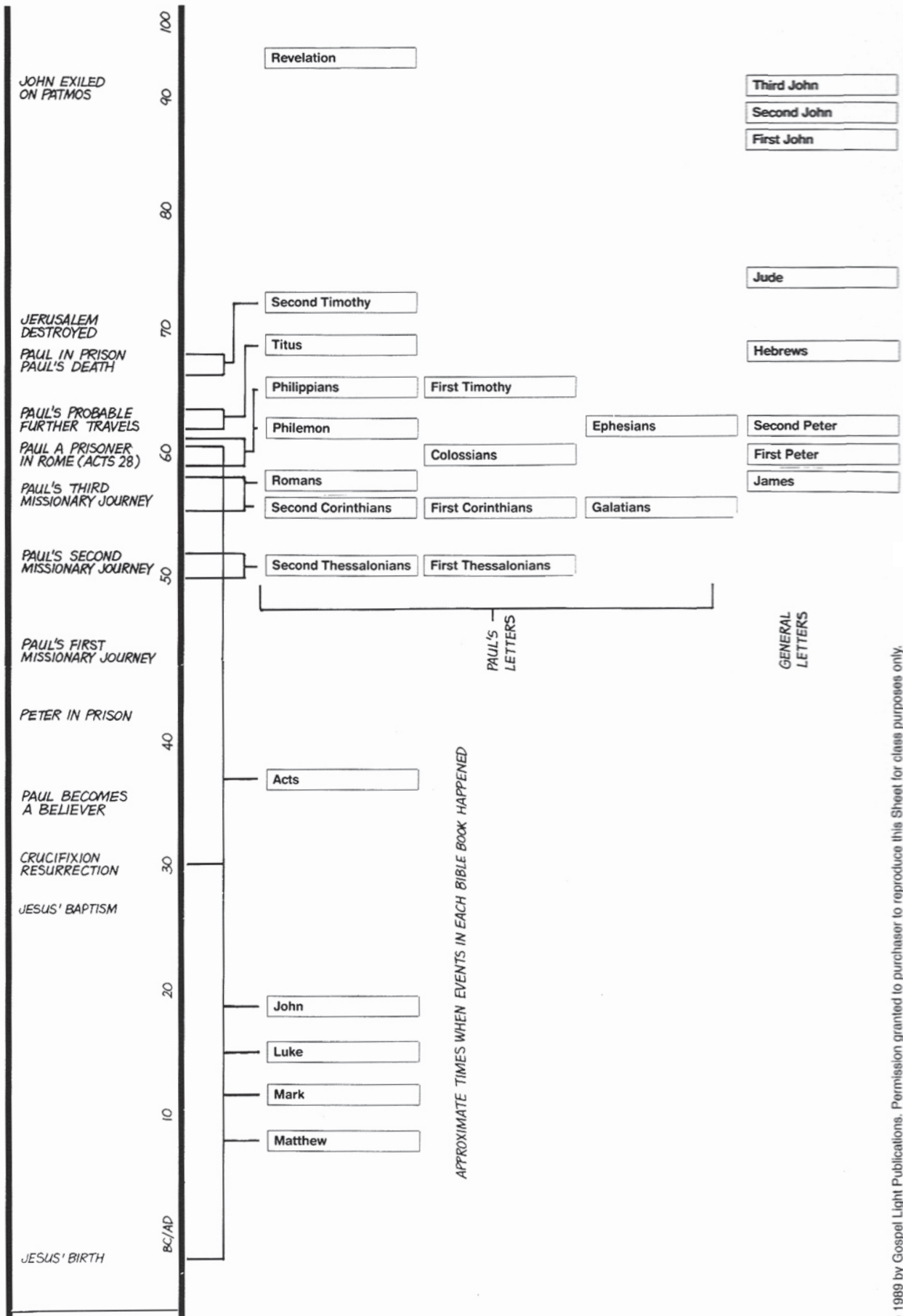
Begun in 20 B.C., Herod's new structure towered 15 stories high, following the floor dimensions of the former temples in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The high sanctuary shown here in a cutaway view was built on the site of the former temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel, and was completed in just 18 months.



HISTORICAL HIGHWAY of the New Testament



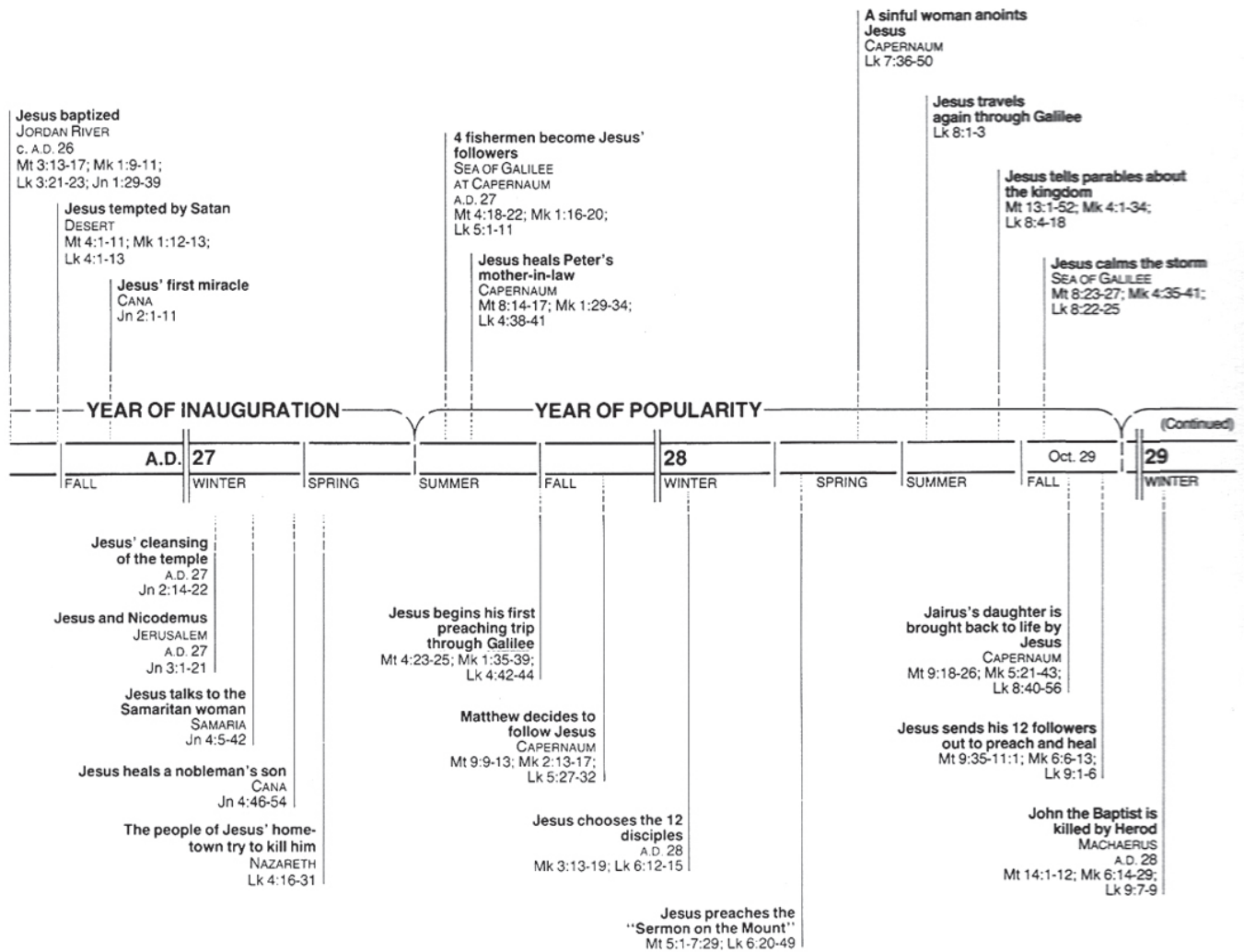
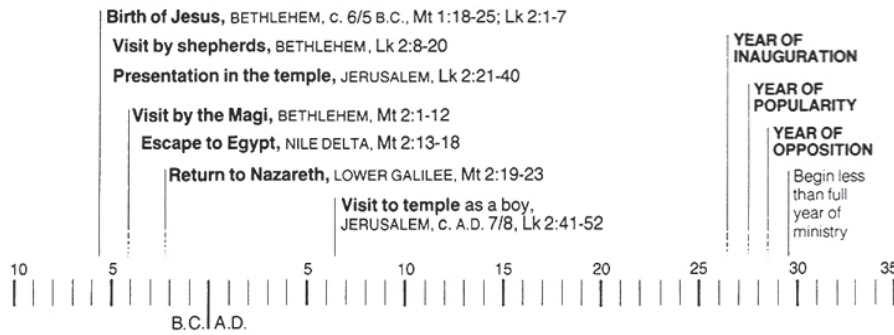
When New Testament Events Happened



The Life of Christ

CHILDHOOD

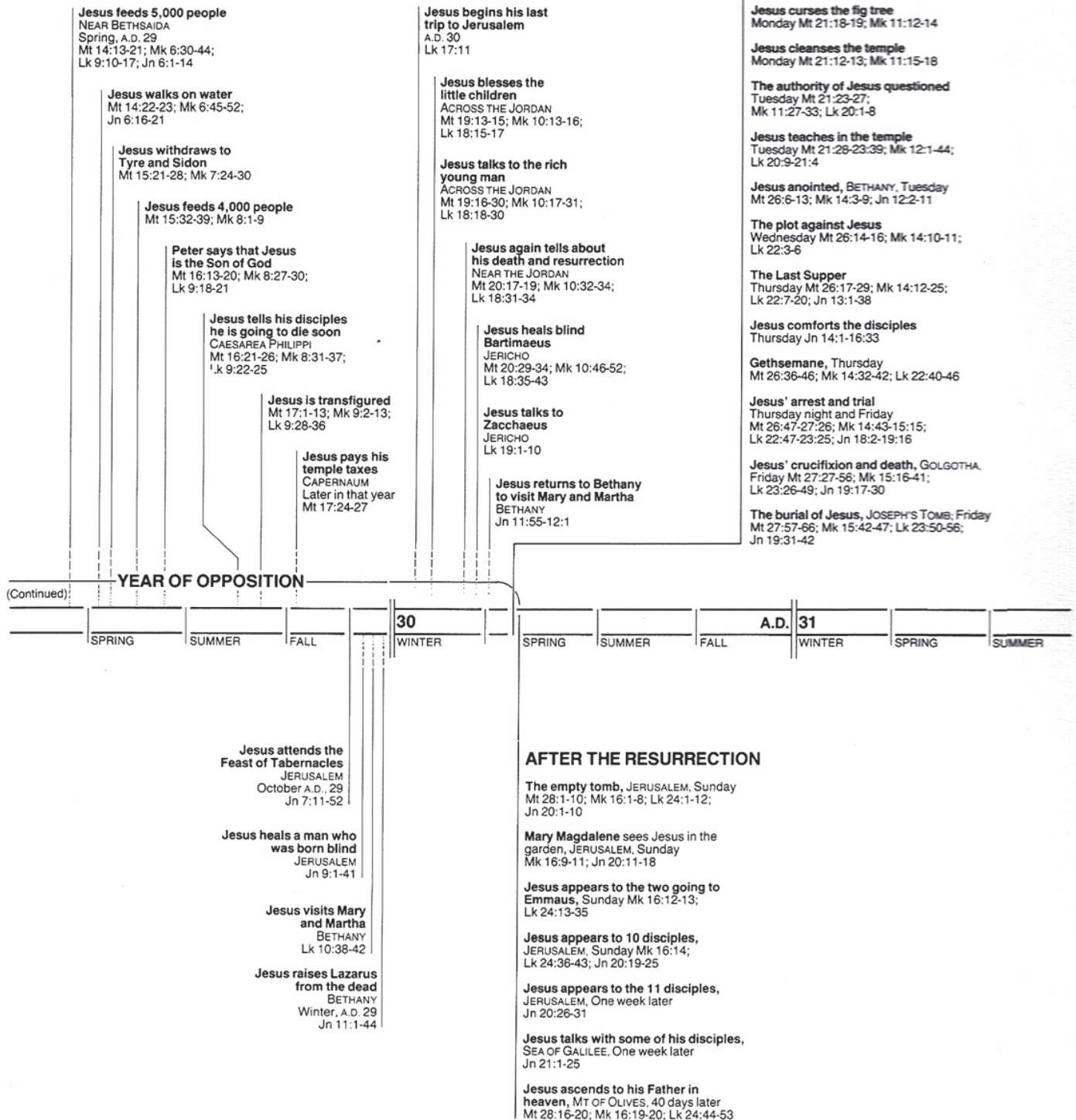
Italics denote date held in question by scholars



Dotted lines leading to the timeline are meant to define sequence of events only. Exact dates, even year dates, are generally unknown.

The Life of Christ

(Continued)



Dotted lines leading to the timeline are meant to define sequence of events only. Exact dates, even year dates, are generally unknown.

Jerusalem

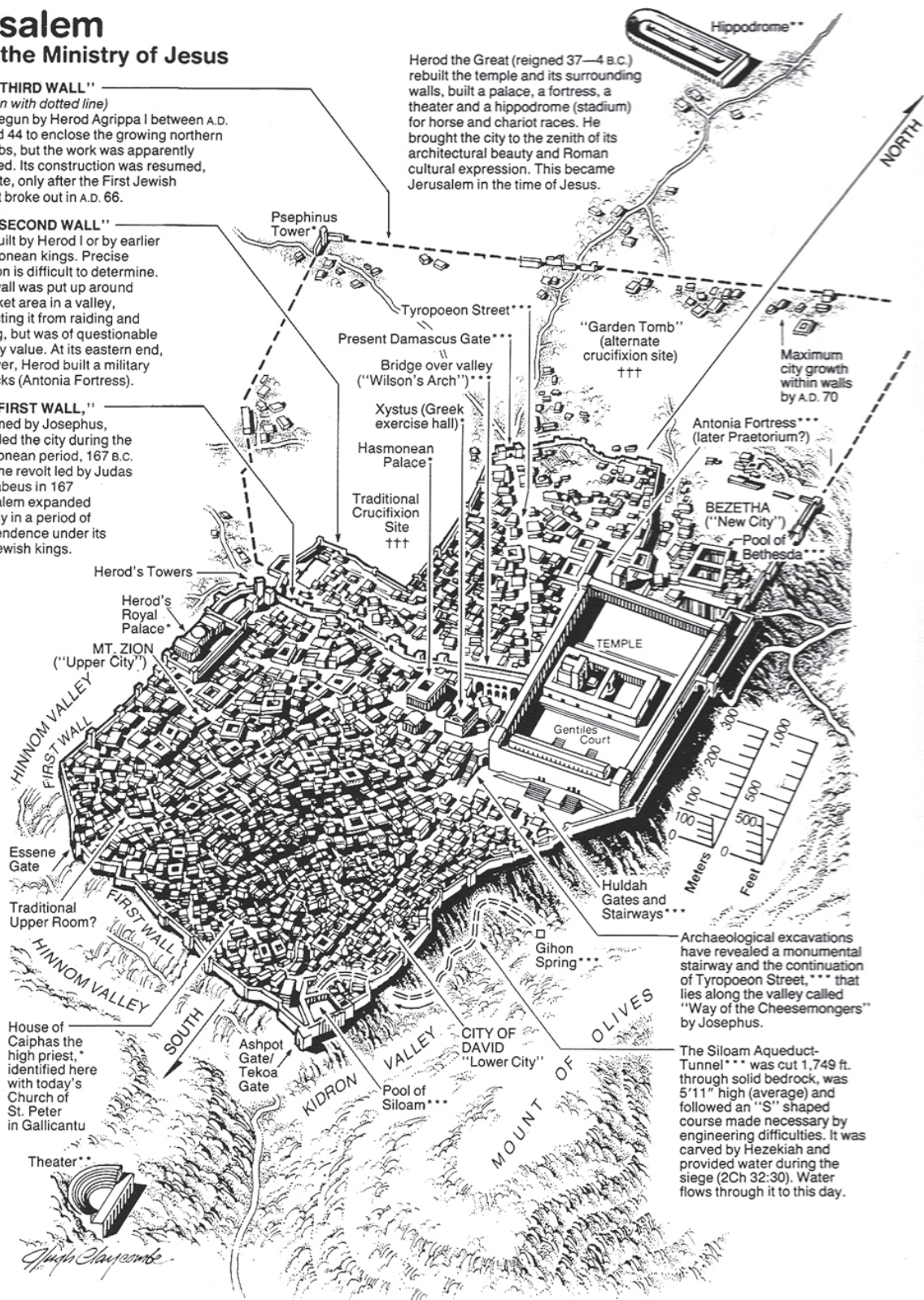
During the Ministry of Jesus

The **"THIRD WALL"** (shown with dotted line) was begun by Herod Agrippa I between A.D. 41 and 44 to enclose the growing northern suburbs, but the work was apparently stopped. Its construction was resumed, in haste, only after the First Jewish Revolt broke out in A.D. 66.

The **"SECOND WALL"** was built by Herod I or by earlier Hasmonean kings. Precise location is difficult to determine. This wall was put up around a market area in a valley, protecting it from raiding and looting, but was of questionable military value. At its eastern end, however, Herod built a military barracks (Antonia Fortress).

The **"FIRST WALL,"** so named by Josephus, encircled the city during the Hasmonean period, 167 B.C. After the revolt led by Judas Maccabeus in 167 Jerusalem expanded steadily in a period of independence under its own Jewish kings.

Herod the Great (reigned 37—4 B.C.) rebuilt the temple and its surrounding walls, built a palace, a fortress, a theater and a hippodrome (stadium) for horse and chariot races. He brought the city to the zenith of its architectural beauty and Roman cultural expression. This became Jerusalem in the time of Jesus.



* Location generally known, but style of architecture is unknown; artist's concept only, and Roman architecture is assumed.

** Location and architecture unknown, but referred to in written history; shown here for illustrative purposes.

*** Ancient feature has remained, or appearance has been determined from evidence.

Buildings, streets and roads shown here are artist's concept only unless otherwise named and located. Wall heights remain generally unknown, except for those surrounding the Temple Mount.

DEEP VALLEYS on the east, south and west permitted urban expansion only to the north.

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Passion Week

Bethany, the Mount of Olives and Jerusalem

4. Clearing of the temple MONDAY

Mt 21:10-17
Mk 11:15-18
Lk 19:45-48

The next day he returned to the temple and found the court of the Gentiles full of traders and money changers making a large profit as they gave out Jewish coins in exchange for "pagan" money. Jesus drove them out and overturned their tables.

NORTH

Present Damascus Gate

Traditional Crucifixion and Tomb Site

Jerusalem

Jerusalem

Jerusalem

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7. Passover Last Supper THURSDAY

Mt 26:17-30, Mk 14:12-26;
Lk 22:7-23, Jn 13:1-30

In an upper room, Jesus prepared both himself and his disciples for his death. He gave the Passover meal a new meaning. The loaf of bread and cup of wine represented his body soon to be sacrificed and his blood soon to be shed. And so he instituted the "Lord's Supper." After singing a hymn they went to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed in agony, knowing what lay ahead for him.

8. Crucifixion—FRIDAY Mt 27:1-66; Mk 15:1-47; Lk 22:66-23:56; Jn 18:28-19:37
Following betrayal, arrest, desertion, false trials, denial, condemnation, beatings and mockery, Jesus was required to carry his cross to "The Place of the Skull," where he was crucified with two other prisoners.

9. In the tomb

Jesus' body was placed in the tomb before 6:00 P.M. Friday night, when the Sabbath began and all work stopped, and it lay in the tomb throughout the Sabbath.

10. Resurrection—SUNDAY

Mt 28:1-13; Mk 16:1-40; Jn 20:1-31
Early in the morning, women went to the tomb and found that the stone closing the tomb's entrance had been rolled back. An angel told them Jesus was alive and gave them a message. Jesus' resurrection was established as a fact.

5. Day of controversy and parables

TUESDAY Mt 21:23-24:51;
Mk 11:27-13:37; Lk 20:1-21:36

IN JERUSALEM

Jesus evaded the traps set by the priests.

ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES OVERLOOKING JERUSALEM
(Tuesday afternoon,
exact location unknown)

He taught in parables and warned the people against the Pharisees. He predicted the destruction of Herod's great temple and told his disciples about future events, including his own return.

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6. Day of rest

WEDNESDAY

Not mentioned in the Gospels
The Scriptures do not mention this day, but the counting of the days (Mk 14:1; Jn 12:1) seems to indicate that there was another day concerning which the Gospels record nothing.

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1. Arrival in Bethany

FRIDAY Jn 12:1

Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover to spend some time with his friends, Mary, Martha and Lazarus. While here, Mary anointed his feet with costly perfume as an act of humility. This tender expression indicated Mary's devotion to Jesus and her willingness to serve him.

2. Sabbath — day of rest

SATURDAY

Not mentioned in the Gospels
Since the next day was the Sabbath, the Lord spent the day in traditional fashion with his friends.

Bethany

To Jericho and the Dead Sea

The Roman road climbed steeply to the crest of the Mount of Olives, affording a spectacular view of the Desert of Judea to the east and Jerusalem across the Kidron valley to the west.

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The Acts of the Apostles

I. The Book of Acts

“The book of Acts is the great text of mission. In this Lucan compilation of oral history, we hear the stories of how a localized Jewish sectarian movement became spread throughout its known world. We travel with the embryonic church as it stumbles toward recognition of the significance of this man Jesus, who had caused a minor stir in Palestine. Alongside the pioneers of the Christian faith, we learn that the intentions of God in Christ are much wider and more deeply significant than had at first been recognized.

Acts is also a text of the Spirit. From the dynamic epiphany at Pentecost, the first followers of Jesus are time and again astonished as they encounter the work of the Spirit. In times past they had bumbled their way to understanding as they followed the radical prophet, Jesus. Now, still struggling to make sense of the resurrection, they receive rough insights as they are led and confronted by the Spirit. This is of course what Jesus had promised, in the time which suddenly seems so long ago. That he would send someone to lead them into truth. Perhaps they had contemplated something a little less dramatic.”

Threshold of the Future, Michael Riddell pg 17,18

1. Read Acts 1:1. (See also Luke 1:1-4) In Acts 16:19,20; 20:4,5 a traveling companion writes about Paul and it is believed to be Luke the beloved physician (Colossians 4:14). Read Acts 1:8. This promise and command of Jesus, also serves as an outline for the early expansion of the gospel. Look at the chart below and look up the key verses. Fill in the name of the area where the gospel was proclaimed.

Chapters	Area(s) of Proclamation	Key Verse
1-7		<i>Acts 1:12</i>
8-12		<i>Acts 8:1</i>
13-28		<i>Acts 13:47</i>

} *Acts 1:8*

2. What would it mean to you 2000 years later if there was no book of Acts? (If when you finished reading the gospels, the next book was the book of Romans.) Why is it vital that we have these details of the early expansion of the kingdom? (see appendix A-20)

I. The Book of Acts (continued)

3. The book of Acts is a story of the activity of God's Spirit in the lives of his people. As you read through Acts, how do you see God's Spirit at work? (e.g. Acts 2:4; 4:8,31; 9:17; 13:9)



4. Read Acts 1:1-11. What did Jesus want the first believers to know before he ascended into heaven? Why was the resurrection a key message he wanted them to be convinced of? (see Jesus' prophecy of the resurrection Matthew 12:38-41, see also Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:30-32; 17:31,32)
5. What kind of kingdom was Christ establishing? (Acts 1:3) Do the apostles understand what kind of kingdom Christ came to bring? (Acts 1:6) See also: Acts 8:12; 14:22; 20:25; 28:23,31

I. The Book of Acts (continued)

6. The word 'witness' in Acts 1:8 is used 29 times in the book of Acts either as a verb or a noun. Our English word 'martyr' comes from the Greek word translated 'witness' and Stephen (Acts 6 & 7) is the first martyred witness. Look at the following verses in Acts where the word 'witness' is used. What is a 'witness' from the book of Acts? (Acts 1:8,22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 6:13; 7:44,58; 10:39,41,43; 13:31; 14:17; 15:8; 20:33; 22:5,15; 23:11; 26:16,22)
7. Read Acts 2:14-41. How does Peter explain what is happening to the Jews who witness the Spirit's power in the believers? What Scriptures does he use and what is their emphasis? What is the people's reaction and how does Peter encourage them to respond? (As you look in the passages ahead notice how the gospel witnesses continue to prove that Jesus is the Christ using the same Old Testament Scriptures you have just studied. Note how significant Christ's message was to them in Luke 24.)

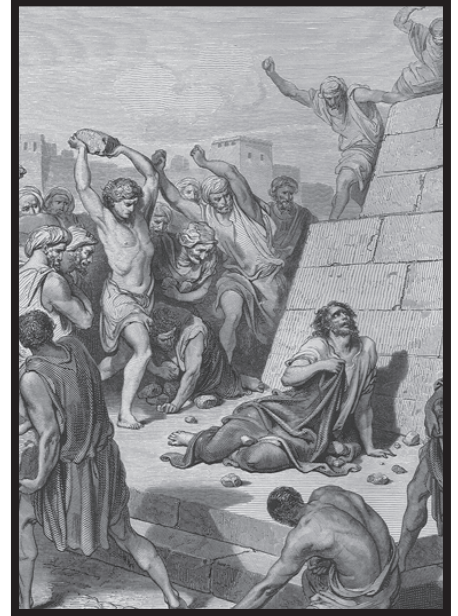


I. The Book of Acts (continued)

8. Read Acts 6:3 - 8:1. What kind of man was Stephen? How would you describe his grasp of the Word of God? In Acts 7 why does Stephen use these particular Old Testament examples as he makes his defense before the Sanhedrin?

Look at the Old Testament references Stephen makes and answer these questions:

- Where (geographically) is God working? Why is this significant?
- Who is God using? What is significant about them?
- What is God doing in these places through these people?
- What is Stephen seeking for the Jewish leaders to understand from these specific examples?



9. Read Acts 8:26-40. In this passage Luke tells us how God used Philip to bring the gospel to the Ethiopian. Look at this passage, what are some principles about sharing Christ that you can learn from Philip's example? (see appendix A-21)