

FREE SAMPLE OF A SUBJECT AND ASSESSMENT

1. SAMPLE PORTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

A. NOTES (portion only)

THE CONTENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament consists of twenty-seven distinct pieces of literature with nine different authors, unless Paul is regarded as the author of Hebrews, in which case the number is reduced to eight. This literature was written over a period approximately a half a century, probably from AD 45 at the earliest to about AD 100.

1. The literary character

The first five books of the New Testament are historical in character. The following books are largely doctrinal: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude, 1 John. Most of these were written in the form of letters to churches for the purpose of instructing them in the elements of Christian belief and in the practice of Christian ethics. All with the possible exception of Romans are “occasional” letters written to deal with current emergencies in the churches to which they were written.

Another group can be called personal: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 2 & 3 John. These were written as personal letters to individuals. However, because these recipients were engaged in the leadership of the churches, they may be regarded as containing instruction also to churches.

Revelation is prophetic. It is classed as apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic literature refers to a type of Jewish and Christian literature that persecution usually produced in a period of when men’s hopes turned to future deliverance. It was intended to encourage the believers to persist in their allegiance to God, and its imagery discouraged hostile readers from attempting to fathom its meaning. The Greek word “apokalypsis” in Rev 1:1

means “revelation” or “unveiling”, and is applied to these writings because they contain revelations of the secret purposes of God, the end of the world, and the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth.

2. Authors

All of the writers were Jews, except Luke.

Tenney writes:

“Three, presumably Matthew, Peter and John were members of the apostolic band. Mark, Jude, and James had been active in the early church, or had been in contact with the apostolic group before the death of Jesus. Luke and Paul, while not eyewitnesses of the life of Christ, were well known to those who were, and were certainly able to compare notes with them if necessary. Of the author of Hebrews nothing is known by external evidence”.

Tenney 1961: 125,126.

3. Periods

The books of the New Testament were not written in the order in which they appear in the Bible. We may divide the history of the first century into three periods:

a. Inception: the lifetime of Christ 5 BC to AD 30.

This period is described by the four gospels, each of which gives a different view of the life of Christ.

b. Expansion:

Development of the missionary enterprise AD 30 to 60. Acts portrays mainly Paul’s mission to the Gentiles, giving an account of the progress of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. Within this period fall also the majority of the Pauline (Paul’s) epistles which were written during Paul’s missionary career. Considerable knowledge of the growth of the Gentile church can be gleaned from them.

c. Consolidation: AD 60 to 100.

The epistles of this period, while varied in authorship, may be conveniently grouped under two main headings. Some deal primarily with the problem of suffering (Hebrews, James and 1 Peter), while the rest treat mainly the problem of false teaching (the Pastoral Epistles,(i.e. 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus) Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John and Jude.. Both these problems became increasingly serious as the first century progressed. Persecution came first from Jewish opponents and later (after AD 64)

from the Roman government. Christ had warned his followers of the rise of false Christs and false prophets (Matt 24:24), and Paul had said much the same thing to the elders of the Ephesian Church. Acts 20:29,30. By the time John wrote his letters, the Gnostics (teachers who claimed to possess a superior philosophical-religious type of knowledge. were plaguing the church. His epistles were an answer to that error. Finally, there is the well-known prophetic writing in the New Testament, the Revelation (or Apocalypse, the unveiling. of Jesus Christ. Like the prophecy of Daniel in the Old Testament, this book deals, for the most part, with the judgments of God in the last days upon “those that dwell upon the earth”. In Revelation the climax of redemption is portrayed. The earlier word of Paul, that God’s purpose was “to sum up all things in Christ” (Eph 1:10) is realised as John writes, “The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and shall reign for ever and ever” Rev 11:15. It is impossible to date precisely the writing of the books of the New Testament. Scholars vary widely in their estimations. Only a few can be dated with a fair amount of exactness.

THE FOUR GOSPELS

1. How the Gospels Came To Be Written.

“Gospel” is an old English word from “god spel”, ie. good news and translates the Greek word “evangelion”. It had reference to the message of salvation through Christ, and only later was the term used to designate the four written documents, now called “the four Gospels”.

We need to remember that the Good News was being proclaimed before any Christian literature existed at all. In the first generation of Christianity (roughly “D 30-60) there were no written Gospels. The only Scripture the first Christians had was the Old Testament. During this time stories of Jesus were shared among the people. Many still lived who had seen Jesus in the days of his flesh, or knew those who had been with him, and could tell stories of his wonderful deeds. It is probable that in every great centre of early Christianity - Jerusalem, Antioch, Caesarea, Rome - there must have grown up cycles of stories about Jesus, which the believers passed from one to another at their common meals, or when they met for worship, and which the apostolic preachers used in their sermons. At this stage, memories were still fresh, and it was not felt that there was a need for written records of Jesus. This is the period of “the oral tradition”. But by the time of the next generation, many of the eyewitnesses had died; some had been killed. It became increasingly important that the facts about Jesus should be set down

in writing before the time should come when there would be none left able to say: "I remember Jesus Christ". Besides, converts were flocking into the young churches; converts who needed instruction in the Christian faith. In short the need for a written record of the Lord Jesus began to be urgently felt.

2. The Gospels are not really biographies of Jesus Christ.

They are not biographies, for they omit much material normally found in a biography, such as character development, background facts, and chronology. However they are more like biographies than anything else. They are historical in form; their primary aim is to present the data in such a way that the Good News will be very apparent. This accounts for the heavy emphasis in each gospel upon the closing days of Jesus' earthly life and his resurrection. Each writer sought to give a portrait of Christ as he saw him from his perspective.

3. The Synoptic Problem

The first three Gospels are frequently called the Synoptic Gospels, from the Greek "syn", together, and "optanomai", to see, since they take a common view of the life of Christ. There is a remarkable parallelism among them. For an example of agreement in content see Mt 9:2-8; Mk 2:3-12; Lk 5:18-26. An instance of verbatim agreement is found in Matt 10:22a; Mk13:13a; Lu 21:17. You might not be surprised to find the same incidents described in three different biographies of some great person; what is strange in the first three Gospels is to find the same incidents in the story of Jesus described in practically the same language. We infer that each of these Gospels, though independently written, must have drawn much of its materials from a source, or sources, available to one or both of the others.

To discover these sources is the task set by the Synoptic problem. A.M. Hunter gives a likely solution to this problem:

"The first attempt at a solution was the oral tradition theory. Behind the three Gospels (it was said) lay a common oral tradition about Jesus, more or less fixed so far as the core was concerned. This solution is now abandoned because it fails to explain the minute linguistic resemblances among the Synoptic Gospels. (Compare Matt 9:6; Mark 2:10; Lk 5:24, where a paltry parenthesis - 'he said to the paralytic' - is found to be common to all three.. Only a documentary theory (we now realize) will fit facts like these. In other words, if very similar matter occurs in one or more evangelists, we must attribute it to their common use of one or more written sources. An explanation of this sort is now generally accepted. It is called 'the two

document theory', and it holds that two basic documents underlie the Synoptic Gospels. They are our Mark and a sayings-source called Q (German, Quelle: source..

The first principle of this theory is:

The Priority of Mark

By this it is meant that the earliest account of Christ's ministry is to be found in Mark, and that Mark was used as one of their main sources by Matthew and Luke.

In support of this view, scholars marshal various arguments. Here are three:

a. *Common subject-matter*

Matthew contains nearly all Mark (some 606 of Mark's 661 verses reappear in Matthew), and Luke about one half of Mark.

b. *Common Wording*

Matthew and Luke often repeat the exact words of Mark - in fact, Matthew reproduces fifty-one per cent, and Luke fifty-three per cent of Mark's language.

c. *Common order*

Matthew and Luke largely follow Mark's order of events; and when one of them departs from it, the other keeps to it. The cumulative force of these and other considerations compels us to conclude that the first of the sources used by Matthew and Luke was Mark.

The second principle of the two document theory is:

The Probability of Q

Both Matthew and Luke contain many verses not in Mark. Over two hundred of these they have in common often in identical language, and these mostly sayings of Jesus. (Compare Matt 3:7-10 and Luke 3:7-9, or Matt 11:25-27 and Luke 10:21-22). This almost certainly indicates the use by Matthew and Luke of a second written source, nowadays invariably called Q. (From German "Quelle").

Q, alas, has not survived; but by comparing these similar verses in Matthew and Luke we can roughly reconstruct it. When this is done, we find that Q

must have comprised mainly sayings of Jesus, and almost certainly did not contain the story of the Passion. Much of Q can be recovered from the great Sermon which both Matthew and Luke attribute to Jesus; and from Jesus' charge to His disciples when He sent them out on their mission.

Matter peculiar to Matthew and Luke

When we have detached from Matthew and Luke all the materials derived from Mark, we find that each of these evangelists has still much matter peculiar to himself.

Matthew, for example, has more than three hundred verses of his own, containing besides the birth stories (1-2) some narratives (e.g. Peter's walking on the water, Judas's suicide, and Pilate's hand-washing, and much teaching of Jesus (e.g. large portions of the Sermon on the Mount). The Jewish colouring of much of this material suggests Jerusalem as a place of origin. This document is often called "special Matthew".

As for 'special Luke', we find in the Third Gospel more than four hundred verses, many of them in the section Luke 9:51 - 18:14. This includes many narratives (e.g. the sermon at Nazareth, the woman who was a sinner, the walk to Emmaus) and much valuable teaching (e.g. the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son and the Pharisee and the Publican.. It is a fair conjecture that Luke gathered this special matter at Caesarea while St. Paul was imprisoned there (A.D. 57-59).

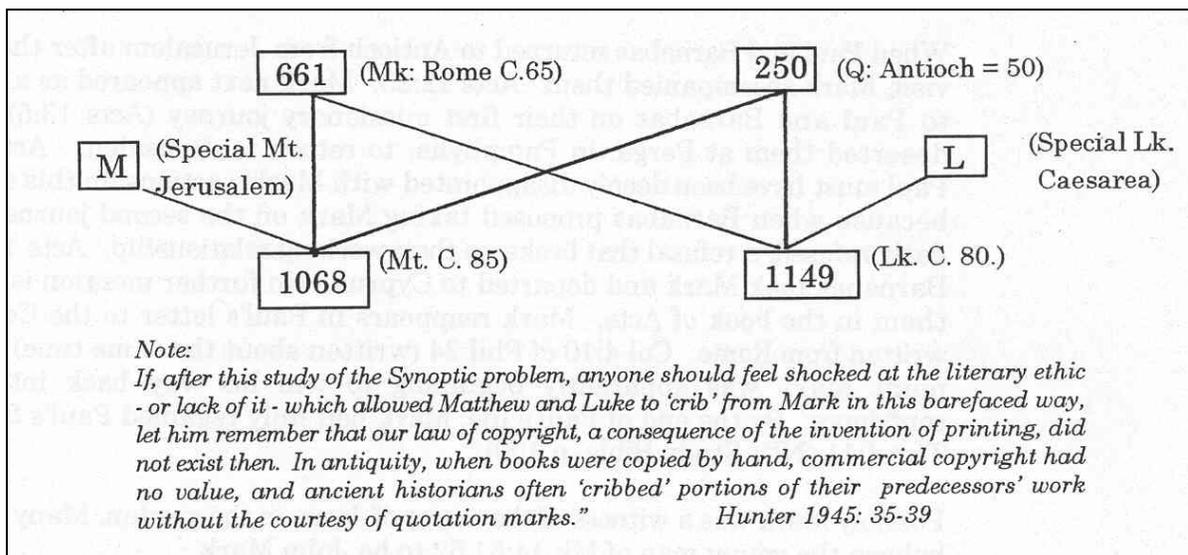
Mark, Q, Special Matthew and Special Luke - these are the four strata of tradition which modern scholarship lays bare in the Synoptic Gospels. The first is to be connected with Rome, and the other three with Antioch, Jerusalem and Caesarea respectively.

Before we close this chapter, let us set forth our conclusions in two different ways:

First, in rhyme:

*'The problem solved is stated here:
 Our Mark did first of all appear.
 For Luke and Matthew used him both.
 But Luke and Matthew nothing loth
 To add some more, used Q (for Quelle.
 And each a special source as well'.*

Second, in diagram:



MARK: THE EARLIEST GOSPEL

1. The Author

All tradition declares the author to have been Mark and there is no reason why he should have been so unanimously named as the author unless the tradition was true. In ca AD 112 Papias wrote: "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered . . . of what was said and done by Christ".

The date of his birth is unknown, but he was probably ten years younger than the apostles, which would have made him approximately twenty years old at the time of the crucifixion. He was the son of Mary, a friend of the

apostles, who is mentioned in Acts 12. The prayer meeting for the deliverance of Peter was held in her house, and it is possible that her home was the headquarters of the Christian leaders in Jerusalem. Evidently, Peter sought it out as his first point of call after the deliverance from jail (Acts 12:12) which may indicate that he felt sure of finding his friends there at that time. It may have been in this house that the “upperroom” was located where Jesus and the disciples ate the Last Supper, and where the pre-Pentecostal prayer meeting was held. If so, Mark was very well acquainted with the leaders of the church almost from its inception.

His family was probably wealthy as his mother kept hired servants. Acts 12:13. Barnabas, his cousin (Col 4:10) was a man of some property, for he sold a field “and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet”. Acts 4:37. Their original home was probably Cyprus; at any rate Barnabas came from there. Acts 4:36.

His parents gave him the Hebrew name of “John” (“Johanan”) and his Roman surname Mark (Gk “Markos”, Latin “Markus”) may have been adopted at a later time in his life. Acts 15:37. The fact that his Hebrew name is never used in the epistles shows that the Gentile world was his main sphere of activity.

Peter may have been the disciple used of God to lead Mark to Christ, as Peter speaks of Mark as “Mark my son”. 1 Pet 5:13.

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch from Jerusalem after the famine visit, Mark accompanied them. Acts 12:25. Mark next appeared as a “helper” to Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:5), but he deserted them at Perga, in Pamphylia, to return to Jerusalem. Acts 13:13. Paul must have been deeply disappointed with Mark’s actions on this occasion, because when Barnabas proposed taking Mark on the second journey, Paul flatly refused, a refusal that broke up their working relationship. Acts 15:36-39. Barnabas took Mark and departed to Cyprus. No further mention is made of them in the book of Acts. Mark reappears in Paul’s letter to the Colossians written from Rome. Col 4:10 cf Phil 24 (written about the same time.. At this point Mark was apparently beginning to win his way back into Paul’s confidence. By the end of Paul’s life, Mark had fully regained Paul’s favour. 2 Tim 4:11 (NIV Study Bible, p 190).

Possibly Mark was a witness of the arrest of Jesus in the garden. Many scholars believe the young man of Mk 14:51,52 to be John Mark.

A.M. Hunter writes:

“Turn up Mark 14:51 and you will read of a mysterious “young man” who in Gethsemane on the night of the arrest escaped the soldiers’ clutches only by leaving behind him the linen garment he was wearing.

It is very surprising in the tremendous drama of Christ’s last hours to find this trifling detail mentioned at all (Matthew and Luke who copy Mark, omit it). The late Canon Streeter used to say that it was as if a reporter to-day were describing a shocking railway accident - the wild confusion, the telescoped carriages, the groans of the injured and dying - and were blandly to remark, ‘Just then Mr John Smith lost his pocket handkerchief’. Just so does the verse in Mark seem to us; it is pointless and inept unless it refers to John Mark himself; unless it is his own modest signature in the corner of his Gospel: his quiet way of saying, ‘I was there’. Hunter 1945:41,42.

2. Date of Composition

Scholars who believe that Matthew and Luke used Mark as a major source believe that Mark may have been written in the 50’s or early 60’s. Others believe it was written shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

3. Place of Origin

The N.I.V. Study Bible comments: “According to early church tradition, Mark was written “in the regions of Italy” . . . or, more specifically, in Rome (Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria.. These same authors closely associate Mark’s writing of the Gospel with the apostle Peter. The above evidence is consistent with (1) the historical probability that Peter was in Rome during the last days of his life and was martyred there, and (2) the Biblical evidence that Mark also was in Rome about the same time and was closely associated with Peter (see 2 Tim 4:11; 1 Pet 5:13, where the word “Babylon” is probably a cryptogram for Rome.. (p1490)

4. Recipients

The N.I.V. Study Bible continues: “The evidence points to the church at Rome or at least to Gentile readers. Mark explains Jewish customs (7:2-4: 15:42) and translates Aramaic words (3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 15:22)” (p1490).

Finally it is noteworthy that this Gospel reaches its climax in the confession of Jesus’ deity by a Roman centurion. 15:39.

5. The Characteristics of Mark’s Gospel

It has frequently been said that Mark’s presentation of the Person of Christ is that of the Servant of Yahweh (Isa 52:13 - 53:12), while correspondingly,

Matthew presents Jesus, the King; Luke, Jesus the Man; and John, Jesus, the Son of God. Several features suggest this, such as the absence of genealogy and the predominance of deeds over teaching. The title “Son of man”, which occurs fourteen times, is in most cases (eg. 8:31; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 35; 14:21, 41) to be interpreted in this way. William Barclay writes of other characteristics of this Gospel:

- a. Mark never forgot the divine side of Jesus. He begins his gospel with the declaration of faith, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God”. He leaves us in no doubt what he believed Jesus to be. Again and again he speaks of the impact Jesus made on the mind and heart of those who heard him. The awe and astonishment which he evoked are always before Mark’s mind. “They were astonished at his teaching”. (1:22). “They were all amazed”. (1:27). Such phrases occur again and again. Not only was this astonishment in the minds of the crowds who listened to Jesus; it was still more in the minds of the inner circle of the disciples. “Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?” (4:41). “And they were utterly astounded”. (6:51) “The disciples were amazed at his words”. (10:24,26).

To Mark, Jesus was not simply a man among men; he was God among men, ever moving them to a wondering amazement with his words and deeds.

- b. At the same time, no gospel gives such a human picture of Jesus. Sometimes its picture is so human that the later writers alter it a little because they are almost afraid to say what Mark said. To Mark Jesus is simply “the carpenter”. (6:3). Later Matthew alters that to “the carpenter’s son” (Matthew 13:55), as if to call Jesus a village tradesman is too daring. When Mark is telling of the temptations of Jesus, he writes, “The Spirit drove him into the wilderness”. (1:12). Matthew and Luke do not like this word drove used of Jesus, so they soften it down and say, “Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness”. (Matt 4:1; Lk 4:1). No one tells us so much about the emotions of Jesus as Mark does. Jesus sighed deeply in his spirit (7:34, 8:12). He was moved with compassion (6:34). He marvelled at their unbelief (6:6). He was moved with righteous anger (3:5; 8:33; 10:14). Only Mark tells us that when Jesus looked at the rich young ruler he loved him (10:21). Jesus could feel the pangs of hunger (11:12). He could be tired and want to rest (6:31). It is in Mark’s gospel, above all, that we get a picture of Jesus of like passions with us. The sheer humanity of Jesus in Mark’s picture brings him very near to

us.

- c. One of the great characteristics of Mark is that over and over again he inserts the little vivid details into the narrative which are the hall-mark of an eyewitness. Both Matthew and Mark tell of Jesus taking the little child and setting him in the midst. Matt (18:2) says, “And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them”. Mark adds something which lights up the whole picture (9:36). “And he took a child and put him in the midst of them; and taking him in his arms, he said to them . . . “ In the lovely picture of Jesus and the children, when Jesus rebuked the disciples for keeping the children from him, only Mark finishes, “and he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them”. (Mark 10:13-16); cp Matt 19:13-15; Lk 18:15-17). All the tenderness of Jesus is in these little vivid additions. When Mark is telling of the Feeding of the Five Thousand he alone tells how they sat down in hundreds and in fifties, looking like vegetable beds in a garden (6:40) and immediately the whole scene rises before us. When Jesus and his disciples were on the last journey to Jerusalem, only Mark tells us, “and Jesus went before them”. (10:32; cp Matt 20:17; Lk 18:31); and in that one vivid little phrase all the loneliness of Jesus stands out. When Mark is telling the story of the stilling of the storm he has one little sentence that none of the other gospel-writers have. “And he was in the hinder part of the ship asleep on a pillow” (4:38). And that one touch makes the picture vivid before our eyes.

There can be little doubt that all these details are due to the fact that Mark was an eyewitness and was seeing these things again with the eye of memory.

6. An Outline of Mark's Gospel

Tenney writes:

“An outline of Mark is difficult to construct because of the impressionistic character of the Gospel. For his effect upon the reader the author apparently relied more upon the total impact of the Gospel than he did upon the climactic sequence of sections”. Tenney 1953:159

Mark's realism and his simplicity come out in his Greek style. Barclay writes:

- a. *His style is not carefully wrought and polished. (He uses 1,270 different words of which 80 are peculiar to him among the New Testament writers. Luke's Gospel, by contrast, contains 250 words not*

found elsewhere in the New Testament). He tells the story as a child might tell it. He adds statement to statement connecting them simply with the word “and”. In the third chapter of the gospel, in the Greek, there are 34 clauses or sentences one after another introduced by “and” and one principal verb. It is the way in which an eager child would tell the story.

- b. *He is very fond of the words “and straightway”, “and immediately”. They occur in the gospel almost 30 times. It is sometimes said of a story that “it marches”. But Mark’s story does not so much march; he rushes on in a kind of breathless attempt to make the story as vivid to others as it is to himself.*
- c. *He is very fond of the historic present. That is to say, in the past. “And when Jesus heard it, he says to them, ‘Those who are strong do not need a doctor, but those who are ill’ “. (2:17). “And when they come near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and to Bethany, to the Mount of Olives, he sends two of his disciples, and says to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you . . . “ (11:1,2). “And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, comes”. (14:43).*

Generally speaking we do not keep these historic presents in translation, because in English they do not sound well; but they show how vivid and real the thing was to Mark’s mind, as if it was happening before his very eyes.

- d. *He quite often gives us the very Aramaic words which Jesus used. To Jairus’s daughter, Jesus said, “Talitha cumi”. (5:41). To the deaf man with the impediment in his speech he said, “Ephphatha”. (7:34). The dedicated gift is “Corban”. (7:11). In the Garden he says, “Abba, Father”. (14:36). On the Cross he cries, “Eloi Eloi lama sabachthani?” (15:34).*

There were times when Peter could hear again the very sound of Jesus’ voice and could not help giving the thing to Mark in the very words that Jesus spoke.

It would not be unfair to call Mark the essential gospel. We will do well to study with loving care the earliest gospel we possess, the gospel where we hear again the preaching of Peter himself. “ Barclay 1975:6-9.

- e. *Mark’s presentation of the Person of Christ is that of the Servant of God (cf Isa 52:13-53:12), while Matthew presents the King, Luke the*

Man and John the Son of God. Two features suggest this:

- Mark does not give Jesus' genealogy, as Matthew and Luke do. No one is interested in a servant's genealogy.
- Mark presents Jesus as a worker. His life is one of strenuous activity. He hastens from one activity to another. Note the words "and straightway" in the "Authorised Version of Mark. (See above.. Also in Mark miracles are more numerous than parables. Mark has 19 miracles and only four parables, whereas the corresponding figures for Matthew are 21 to 15 and for Luke 20 to 19.

f. Mark 16:9-20

The genuineness of the last twelve verses of Mark has been disputed on textual grounds, for several of the oldest and most generally reliable manuscripts omit them entirely although it appears in many later ones. Also other manuscripts have other short endings. An Armenian manuscript of the tenth century contains a note ascribing the verses to Aristion, the disciple of John of whom Papias speaks. This would mean that they are at least very early. (perhaps AD100), even if not written by Mark. The transition from verse 8 to 9 is abrupt and there is a change of subject. Mary Magdalene is introduced as a stranger in verse 9, despite her appearance in verse 1. Instead of the vividness of detail so characteristic of Mark, we have here a kind of summary of the resurrection appearances.

The generally accepted view is that Mark wrote an ending to his Gospel, but that it was lost in the early transmission of the text. The endings we now possess represent attempts by the early church to supply what was obviously lacking.

LUKE: THE GENTILE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL

1. The Author

Hunter writes:

"What evidence have we for holding that Luke wrote the Gospel bearing his name?"

First, a comparison of the opening verses of Luke (1:1-4) with the preface of Acts (1:1 f. and a study of the style of the two books leave no room for doubt that they were written by the same man.

Second, certain extracts from a travel-diary in Acts (the so-called "We passages": 16:10-17; 20:5-16; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16) indicate that the

writer was one of Paul's travelling companions during part of his missionary journeys, and on his last voyage to Rome. We can narrow down the number of possible diarists to a few names like Titus, Jesus Justus, Crescens and Luke. Col 4:10-14; Phile 24.

Third, at this point tradition comes in to help us to a final decision. For the unanimous tradition of the Church in the second century names Luke as the author. There is a strong presumption that the tradition is right. If the book's authorship had been unknown and the Church had been casting about for an author, the odds are that they would have hit on some person of apostolic rank, and not on a comparatively unimportant person like St. Luke.

We need only add that odd medical phrases in Luke - Acts (as we may now name the two-volumed work. seem to betray the hand of one whom Paul calls 'the dear doctor' (Col 4:14). (A comparison of Mark 5:25-26 with Luke 8:43 shows that he had some interest in a physician's viewpoint)".

Hunter 1945:49

Also the author possessed high literary ability indicating that he was probably well educated. For example, the first four verses of the Gospel are about the best Greek in the New Testament. Luke, the physician would, no doubt, have the ability to write well. Further, the author took great care in writing accurately.

William Barclay gives an example:

"An example . . . is the way in which he dates the emergence of John the Baptist. He does so by no fewer than six contemporary datings. "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar (1), Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea (2), Herod being tetrarch of Galilee (3), and his brother Philip being tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis (4), and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene (5) in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas (6), the word of God came to John" (Luke 3:1,2). Here is a man who is writing with care and who will be as accurate as it is possible for him to be". Barclay 1975:3

A physician would likely be a man who would take such care. Luke was a Gentile, as we learn from Col 4:10-14. When Paul sends greetings to the Colossian Christians he mentions three of his companions by name as "the only men of the circumcision among my fellow-workers for the Kingdom of God. He goes on to send greeting from three others, who are presumably not Jewish. among them is "Luke, the beloved physician". Luke was the only Gentile among the writers of the New Testament.

Luke had access to other early written records of the life and ministry of Jesus (cf Lu 1:1-2) and he also interviewed many people who had been eyewitnesses of the events of Jesus' life (Lu 1:2). While Luke was imprisoned at Caesarea before his voyage to Rome, Luke had ample opportunity for such interviewing in the cities of Palestine. Also direct disclosure of some parts of the Gospel would have come by the Holy Spirit. Whatever way Luke obtained his information, all of the Gospel was divinely inspired or God-breathed.

2. The Recipient/s

Luke wrote this Gospel (and the book of Acts) for his friend, a man of the upper class whom he addressed by his baptismal name, Theophilus, which meant literally "loved by God". The epithet "most excellent" was generally applied only to officials or to members of the aristocracy. Perhaps he was a convert of Luke, or a patron who assumed responsibility for Luke, or a patron who assumed responsibility for circulating Luke's works. Theophilus had already been informed orally concerning Christ, perhaps through the preaching that he had heard, but he needed further instruction to stabilise him and to convince him of the truth.

When Luke's gospel began to circulate throughout the Roman Empire in the first century, the readers particularly attracted to it were people of Greek culture, the culture that glorified wisdom, beauty and the ideal man.

Luke had all mankind in mind when he wrote the Gospel, which is one reason the title "Son of Man" appears throughout the book. Also, he traces Jesus' genealogy back to Adam, (Lu 3:38), not just to Abraham cf Matt 1:2.

3. Date and Place of Writing

The N.I.V. Study Bible notes: "The two most commonly suggested periods for dating the Gospel are (1) AD 59-63, and (2) the 70s or 80s.

The place of writing was probably Rome, though Achaia, Ephesus, and Caesarea also have been suggested. The place to which it was sent would, of course, depend on the residence of Theophilus. By its detailed designations of places in Palestine, the Gospel seems to be intended for readers who were unfamiliar with that land. Antioch, Achaia and Ephesus are possible destinations". (p1532).

4. The Characteristics of Luke's Gospel

- a. Luke presents Jesus as Son of God (eg 1:35) but shows him especially as Son of man. This gospel is the fullest account of the birth,

childhood, domestic and social life of Jesus. It emphasises his human feelings (eg 10:21; 19:41; 22:44). And many of his social contacts are reported, for example with Simon (7:36-50); with Martha and Mary. (10:38-42); with Pharisees (11:37-52;); 14:1-24); with Zacchaeus (19:1-10).

The prayers of Jesus are prominent throughout the book, which fact again emphasises his humanity.

Barclay writes:

“Luke’s gospel is specially the gospel of prayer. At all the great moments of his life, Luke shows us Jesus at prayer. He prayed at his baptism (3:21); before his first collision with the Pharisees (5:16); before he chose the Twelve (6:12); before he questioned his disciples as to who they thought he was; before his first prediction of his own death (9:18); at the Transfiguration (9:29); and upon the Cross (23:46). Only Luke tells us that Jesus prayed for Peter in his hour of testing (22:32). Only he tells us the prayer parables of the Friend at Midnight (11:5-13) and the Unjust Judge (18:1-8). To Luke the unclosed door of prayer was one of the most precious in all the world. Barclay 1975:4

The genealogy of Jesus as recorded by Luke (3:23-38) also identifies Jesus intimately with the human race, by tracing his descendants back to Adam (3:38). The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is given special prominence; in fact there are more references to the Holy Spirit in Luke than there are in Matthew and Mark combined.

Tenney writes:

“All of the chief actors of the Gospel, John the Baptist (1:15), Mary (1:35), Elizabeth (1:41), Zacharias (1:67), Simeon (2:25,26) and the Lord Jesus Himself (4:1) were empowered for their work by the Holy Spirit. The whole life of Jesus was lived by the Spirit. He was conceived by the Spirit (1:35), baptized by the Spirit (3:22), tested by the Spirit (4:1), empowered by the Spirit for His ministry (4:14,18), cheered by the Spirit (10:21), and He expected that His disciples would complete His work in the power of the Spirit 24:49). Acts, of course, carried this theme to its fuller development by showing the nature and extent of the work of the Holy Spirit in the church”. Tenney 1961:181

Jesus’ dependence on the Spirit again emphasises his humanity.

b. Luke gives a very special place to women. In Palestine the place of

women was low. In the Jewish morning prayer, men thanked God that he had not made them “a Gentile, a slave or a woman”. The Scribes and Pharisees gathered up their robes in the street and synagogues lest they should touch a woman.

Tenney writes:

“The word ‘woman’ occurs forty-three times, and only forty-nine times in Matthew and Mark combined. The character of Mary, Jesus’ mother, is treated more fully in Luke than in Matthew. Elizabeth, the mother of John (1:5, 6, 39-45, 57), and Anna the prophetess (2:36-38), the company of women that travelled among Jesus’ disciples (8:2,3), the women who mourned His execution (23:27,28) and the women who were present at the cross and at the tomb. (23:55,56; 24:1-11) were all noted”. Tenney 1961:181

c. Children receive more prominence in Luke.

Tenney writes:

“The exposure of children was not uncommon practice in the Roman empire. But Jesus has a special love for children. Children receive more prominence in Luke than is usual in the annals of equity. The birth and infancy of Jesus and of John are omitted completely by Mark; Luke gives three chapters to them. Thrice Luke notes that Jesus performed a miracle on an only child (7:12, 8:42, 9:38)”. Tenney 1961:181

d. Luke is the Gospel for the Gentiles.

Barclay writes:

“It is clear that Luke wrote mainly for gentiles. Theophilus was a gentile, as was Luke himself, and there is nothing in the gospel that a gentile could not grasp and understand.

- i. *As we have seen, Luke begins his dating from the reigning Roman emperor and the current Roman governor. The Roman date comes first.*
- ii. *Unlike, Matthew, he is not greatly interested in the life of Jesus as the fulfilment of Jewish prophecy.*
- iii. *He very seldom quotes the Old Testament at all.*
- iv. *He has a habit of giving Hebrew words in their Greek equivalent so that a Greek would understand. Simon the Cananaean becomes*

Simon the Zealot. (cp Luke 6:15 and Matthew 10:4). Calvary is called not by its Hebrew name, Golgotha, but by its Greek name, Kranion. Both mean the place of a skull. He never uses the Jewish term Rabbi of Jesus but always a Greek word meaning Master. When he is tracing the descent of Jesus, he traces it not to Abraham, the founder of the Jewish race, as Matthew does, but to Adam, the founder of the human race. (cp Matt 1:2 and Lk 3:38). Because of this Luke is the easiest of all the gospels to read. He was writing, not for Jews but for people very like ourselves”.

Barclay 1975:3

Also Stott writes:

*“The great theme therefore of both Gospel and Acts, of which nearly every discourse and incident is a variation, is that the good news of Jesus Christ is universal in its application. It includes all sorts and conditions of men in its wide embrace. Close to the opening of the Gospel comes the quotation from Isaiah 40:3-5, illustrating the ministry of John the Baptist. All four evangelists include it, but only Luke continues the quotation to include the significant phrase ‘and all flesh shall see the salvation of God’ (Lk 3:6). Close to the beginning of Acts, in the course of his sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter quotes from Joel equally significant words: ‘I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh’ (Acts 2:17). These two references to the inclusion of ‘all flesh’ within the offer of salvation stand like signposts at the beginning of each volume to point the way. Similarly when giving the genealogy of Jesus, he traces His ancestry not only to Abraham, the father of the Jewish family (as Matthew does), but to Adam, the founder of the human race (Lk 3:38). Luke appears to go out of his way to demonstrate that the ministry of Jesus and His apostles was exercised to all in need, whatever their race or rank, for every mortal creature was the object of God’s grace. It is striking to observe his particular interest in different classes of person, who might have been thought to have been excluded”.*Stott 1964:30

- e. It emphasises Jesus’ ministry to all people, irrespective of race or status.

Barclay writes:

“But the outstanding characteristic of Luke is that it is the universal gospel. All the barriers are down; Jesus Christ is for all men without distinction.

- i. *The kingdom of heaven is not shut to the Samaritans (Luke 9:51-56). Luke alone tells the parable of the Good Samaritan (10:30-37). The one grateful leper is a Samaritan (Luke 17:11-19). John can record a saying that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans (John 4:9). But Luke refuses to shut the door on any man.*
- ii. *Luke shows Jesus speaking with approval of gentiles whom the orthodox Jew would have considered unclean. He shows us Jesus citing the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian as shining examples (4:25-27). The Roman centurion is praised for the greatness of his faith (7:9). Luke tells us of that great word of Jesus “Men will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at the table in the kingdom of God”. (13:29).*
- iii. *Luke is supremely interested in the poor. When Mary brings the offering for her purification it is the offering of the poor (2:24). When Jesus is, as it were, setting out his credentials to the emissaries of John, the climax is, “The poor have good news preached to them” (7:22). He alone tells the parable of the Rich Man and the Poor Man (16:19-31). In Luke’s account of the Beatitudes the saying of Jesus runs, not, as in Matt (5:3), “Blessed are the poor in spirit”, but simply, “Blessed are you poor” (Lk 6:20). Luke’s gospel has been called “the gospel of the underdog”. His heart runs out to everyone for whom life is an unequal struggle.*
- iv. *Above all Luke shows Jesus as the friend of outcasts and sinners. He alone tells of the woman who anointed Jesus’ feet and bathed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair in the house of Simon the Pharisee (7:36-50); of Zacchaeus, the quisling tax-gatherer (19:1-10); of the Penitent Thief (23:43); and he alone has the immortal story of the prodigal son and the loving father (15:11-32). When Matthew tells how Jesus sent his disciples out to preach, he says that Jesus told them not to go to the Samaritans or the gentiles (Matt 10:5); but Luke omits that altogether. All four gospel writers quote from Isaiah 40 when they give the message of John the Baptist, “Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God”; but only Luke continues the quotation to its triumphant conclusion, “And all flesh shall see the salvation of God” (Isa*

40:3-5; Matt 3:3; Mk 1:3; John 1:23; Luke 3:4,6). Luke of all the gospels writers sees no limits to the love of God” Barclay 1975:4,5.

5. An Outline of Luke

Luke wrote a two-volume work (the Gospel of Luke and Acts) of the origins of Christianity. It describes the work of Jesus in the world, now incarnate (in the Gospel., now risen but working still through his Spirit (in the Acts). In the Gospel we see Christ winning salvation for the whole world; in the Acts we see his apostles carrying the good news of this salvation to the whole world. The N.I.V. Study Bible notes:

“Luke’s account of Jesus’ ministry can be divided into three major parts; (1) the events that occurred in and around Galilee (4:14-9:50), (2) those that took place in Judea and Perea (9:51-19:27), and (3) those of the final week in Jerusalem (19:28-24:53). Luke’s uniqueness is especially seen in the amount of material devoted to Jesus’ closing ministry in Judea and Perea. This material is predominantly made up of accounts of Jesus’ discourses. Sixteen of the 23 parables that occur in Luke are found here (9:51 - 18:4; 19:1-28). Of the 20 miracles recorded in Luke, only 4 appear in these sections. Already in the ninth chapter (s Jesus is seen anticipating his final appearance in Jerusalem and his crucifixion.” (p 1533)

MATTHEW: THE JEWISH CHRISTIAN GOSPEL

1. The Author

Nowhere does the first Gospel name its author. The universal testimony of the early church is that the apostle Matthew wrote it. However there are modern critics who dispute this, arguing that if Matthew wrote it, he would not have depended heavily on Mark’s Gospel for a substantial part of it, when he was himself an eyewitness of much that he wrote about.

However D.A. Carsen writes.

“What the modern world calls “plagiarism” (the wholesale takeover, without acknowledgment of another document) was an acceptable literary practice in the ancient world, it is difficult to see why an apostle might not find it congenial. If Matthew thought Mark’s account reliable and generally suited to his purposes . . . there can be no objection to the view that an apostle depended on a nonapostolic document”. Carsen 1984:18.

Jesus called Matthew to be one of his twelve apostles. Matt 9:9-13; 10:3. Practically nothing is known of him except his name and occupation. His other name was Levi. Mk 2:14; Lu 5:27. Both names are Jewish.

Barclay writes about Matthew:

“About Matthew himself we know very little. We read of his call in Matt 9:9. We know that he was a tax-gatherer and that he must therefore have been a bitterly hated man, for the Jews hated the members of their own race who had entered the civil service of their conquerors. Matthew would be regarded as nothing better than a quisling. But there was one gift which Matthew would possess. Most of the disciples were fishermen. They would have little skill and little practice in putting words together on paper; but Matthew would be an expert in that. When Jesus called Matthew, as he sat at the receipt of custom, Matthew rose up and followed him and left everything behind him except one thing - his pen. And Matthew nobly used his literary skill to compile an account of the teaching of Jesus”. Barclay 1956: xxi, xxii

2. The Recipients

Barclay writes:

“Let us now look at the chief characteristics of Matthew’s gospel so that we may watch for them as we read it. First and foremost, Matthew is the gospel which was written for the Jews. It was written by a Jew in order to convince Jews. One of the great objects of Matthew is to demonstrate that all the prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in Jesus, and that, therefore, He must be the Messiah. It has one phrase which runs through it like an ever-recurring theme - “All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying”. That phrase occurs in the gospel as often as 16 times. Jesus’ birth and Jesus’ name are the fulfilment of prophecy (1:21-23); so are the flight to Egypt (2:14,15); the slaughter of the children (2:16-18); Joseph’s settlement in Nazareth and Jesus’ upbringing there (2:23); Jesus’ use of parables (13:34,35); the triumphal entry (21:3-5); the betrayal for thirty pieces of silver (27:9); the casting of lots for Jesus’ garments as He hung on the Cross (27:35). It is Matthew’s primary and deliberate purpose to show how the Old Testament prophecies received their fulfilment in Jesus; how every detail of Jesus’ life was foreshadowed in the prophets; and thus to compel the Jews to admit that Jesus was the Messiah”. Barclay 1956: xxii, xxiii

Also the N.I.V. Study Bible notes:

“Since his Gospel was written in Greek, Matthew’s readers were obviously Greek-speaking. They also seem to have been Jews. Many elements point to Jewish readership: Matthew’s concern with fulfillment of the Old Testament (he has more quotations from the allusions to the Old Testament than any other New Testament author): his tracing of Jesus’ descent from Abraham (1:1-17); his lack of explanation of Jewish customs (especially in contrast to Mark.); his use of Jewish terminology (eg. “kingdom of heaven” and “Father in heaven”, where “heaven” reveals the Jewish reverential reluctance to use the name of God.); his emphasis on Jesus’ role as “Son of David” (1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9,15; 22:41-45). This does not mean, however, that Matthew restricts his Gospel to Jews. He records the coming of the Magi (non-Jews) to worship the infant Jesus (2:1-12), as well as Jesus’ statement that the “field is the world” (13:38). He also gives a full statement of the Great Commission (28:18-20). These passages show that, although Matthew’s Gospel is Jewish, it has a universal outlook”. (pl439)

3. Date of Writing

If Matthew drew extensively from Mark’s Gospel, it could have been written either (a. in the late 50s or in the 60s, or (b. in the 70s or even later.

4. The Characteristics of Matthew’s Gospel

- a. It contains the largest single block of teaching material found in the Gospels which reproduce Jesus’ teachings. These discourses of Jesus comprise about three-fifths of the entire Gospel. Matthew is the teaching Gospel. He was a great systematiser. It was his custom to gather together in one place all that he knew and could find out about the teaching of Jesus on any given subject. The result is that in Matthew we find five great blocks of Jesus’ teaching, five great sections in which the teaching of Jesus is collected and systematised. All these sections have to do with the Kingdom of God. Each of these sections ends with the phrase: “When Jesus had finished . . .” They are:

The Sermon on the Mount, or The Law of the Kingdom (5-7)

The Duties of the Leaders of the Kingdom (10).

The Parables of the Kingdom (13).

Greatness and Forgiveness in the Kingdom (18).

The Coming of the King (24,25).

Hunter writes:

“These five discourses, each ending with the refrain ‘And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these words’, reveal Matthew’s most striking characteristic: his love of systematic grouping of Jesus’ sayings. We may guess that he had the needs of catechumens in view, and wished to present ‘the new Law’ of Christ in a simple and memorable form. Since it is Matthew’s way thus to gather Jesus’ sayings into great bouquets (like some gardener with varied flowers), we must not look for chronological order in his record of Christ’s teaching; for him ‘the words that will never pass away have already shaken off the manacles of time’.” Hunter 1945: 58,59.

b. Matthew is the “Gospel of the King”.

Tenney writes:

“Not only is the doctrine of the kingdom emphasised in Matthew, but through all of the Gospel the royalty of Christ is prominent. The genealogy in the first chapter follows the royal line of Judah. The alarm of Herod was caused because the birth of Jesus introduced a political rival. The entry into Jerusalem stresses His arrival as king, riding peacefully upon an ass’s colt (21:5,7). In the eschatological discourse He predicts that He will sit “on the throne of his glory” (25:31). The inscription over the cross, placed by Pilate, was “This is Jesus the King of the Jews” (27:37). Tenney 1961:152

JOHN: THE SPIRITUAL GOSPEL

1. The Author

Many scholars today doubt that the Apostle John was the author of the Gospel of John and 1 John, 2 John and 3 John. They attribute their authorship to another John, called John the Elder.

- a. The following facts lead us to understand that the apostle John was the author.
 - The author knew Jewish life well, as seen from references to popular Messianic speculations (1:20:21; 7:40-42), to the hostility between Jews and Samaritans (4:9), and to Jewish customs, such as the duty of circumcision on the eighth day taking precedence over the prohibition of working on the Sabbath (7:22). Also he knew the geography of Palestine well, locating Bethany about 15 stadia (about two miles) from Jerusalem (11:18), and mentioning Cana, a village

not referred to in any earlier writing known to us (2:1; 21:2).

- He was an eyewitness of the events which he was recording 1:14; 19:35. Tenney writes:
- A Small touches scattered through the Gospel confirm that the author was an eyewitness. The hour at which Jesus sat on the well curb (4:6), the number and size of the pots at the wedding of Cana (2:6), the weight and value of the ointment that Mary used on Jesus (12:3,5), the details of Jesus' trial (chap 18,19) are points which have little to do with the main narrative but which indicate the observer's eye". Tenney 1961:187
- He calls himself the "beloved disciple" In 21:20-24 cf 13:23,25; 19:26 f: 20:2-5; 21:7. It is possible that he was the unnamed disciple of 1:35-40, and again the "other disciple" who was "known unto the high priest" and who brought Peter into the high priest's courtyard. 18:15f. He appears to have stood in close relationship to Peter. 13:24; 20:2; 21:7. From the other Gospels we know that Peter, James and John formed a trio (and that they were singled out as especially close to Jesus). As James was martyred early (Acts 12:2), this leaves John. This may be supported by the curious fact that John is not mentioned by name anywhere in this Gospel. It is not easy to think of a reason why any early Christian, other than John himself, should have completely omitted all mention of such a prominent Apostle. It is also the case that in this Gospel we do not read of "John the Baptist" as in the other Gospels but simply of "John". It is difficult to see why any informed early Christian (who must have known there were two Johns) should thus court confusion. But it would have been quite natural for John the Apostle to speak of his namesake simply as "John".

Early church writers believed that the apostle John wrote this Gospel.

b. Stott writes about the character of John, the Apostle:

"Assuming then that the author of both gospel and epistles is none other than the apostle John, we know him as the son of a certain Zebedee, who was a master fisherman of Galilee. John and James, Simon and Andrew were fishing partners (Lk 5:10), and Zebedee was sufficiently well-to-do to employ hired servants (Mk 1:20). The family must have had good connections in Jerusalem, as he was known to the high priest (18:16), and the way in which Jesus commended His

mother to John's care suggests that he even had a house in Jerusalem (19:27). For an understanding of the distinctive message which the Holy Spirit prepared John to convey, there are two particular matters which call for elaboration. The first is the intimate relation in which he stood to the Lord Himself. Having been one of the Baptist's adherents, he was among the first to leave him and follow Him to whom the forerunner pointed (1:35-40). Soon after, he became one of the permanent disciples (Mk 1:19-20) whom Jesus later named 'apostles' (Mk 3:13-17; Lk 6:12-14). More than that, he shared with his brother James and with Peter the privilege of forming an inner circle of intimates to whom the Master more freely disclosed His mind. It was Peter, James and John who were permitted to witness the raising of Jairus' daughter (Lk 8:51), see His glory on the Transfiguration mount (Mk 9:2), hear His apocalyptic teaching (Mk 13:3) and stay near Him during His bitter agony in the garden (Mk 14:33). If these were sacred experiences shared by the three, John appears to have been the most privileged of all. He was reclining next to Jesus in the upper room, and was so close to Him that He could lean back and whisper to Him without being overheard by the others (Jn 13:21-25; cf 21:20). This is the first occasion in the gospel on which the title 'disciple whom Jesus loved' is used, and it may well be that not until that sacred moment did John realize himself to be specially loved. The title is used again four times afterwards, and each time with the suggestion, faint or clear, or special privilege. It was to the beloved disciple, who had faithfully followed his Lord to His trial (18:15-16) and to His cross, that He entrusted the care of His mother (19:25-27). It was to the beloved disciple and to Peter that Mary Magdalene ran to bring the news of the empty sepulchre (20:1-2). It was the beloved disciple who first recognized the risen Lord on the Galilean shore and shouted to Peter; 'It is the Lord!' (21:7) and who shared in the private conversation which the Lord had with Peter after breakfast (21:20-23). It is John, therefore, who was more qualified than any other one of the twelve to convey to the Church the inner mind of the Lord. It is appropriate that he should have written what Clement of Alexandria called a 'spiritual gospel'. He had enjoyed the most intimate possible relationship with Jesus. He had seen Him with his eyes (1 Jn 1:1-3; cf 4:14 and Jn 1:14); heard Him with his ears and touched Him with his hands (1 Jn 1:1-3). He had absorbed his Lord's own mind and could reflect His secret

thoughts. He had penetrated to the heart of Himself-revelation and had caught the spirit of his Master.

The second point to notice is that his holy fellowship had profoundly influenced his character. John and James, according to Mark, were nicknamed by Jesus 'Boanerges', which means 'sons of thunder' (Mk 3:17), and there are several incidents in the gospel narratives in which their stormy temperament appears. It is John who resents and forbids the ministry of the exorcist who was not one of the twelve (Lk 9:49-50). It was the sons of thunder together who were offended by the refusal of a Samaritan village to receive Jesus, and who wanted like Elijah to call down fire from heaven to consume it (Lk 9:51-56). And it was the same two brothers who came with their mother to ask that the best seats in the Kingdom might be reserved for them (Mk 10:35-45; Mt 20:20-28). How little they then seemed to understand the spirit of Jesus! He had to rebuke them. 'You do not know what manner of spirit you are of', He said (Lk 9:55). And again; 'You do not know what you are asking' (Mt 20:22; Mk 10:38). It seems strange that this son of thunder should have become known to us as 'the apostles of love'. It is clear that the kindly sun of his Master's love had made the thunder-clouds evaporate. It was because he was 'the beloved disciple' that 'the son of thunder' became 'the apostle of love'.

The Holy Spirit had thus prepared the apostle John to hand down to posterity through his gospel and his epistles the predominant themes of his Lord's revelation. He desired to introduce his readers to the Person he had come to know and love. He wanted them to have fellowship with Him, too (1 Jn 1:3). He expected them to be transformed in character as he had been. In fact, he explains clearly the purposes for which he wrote. He wrote his gospel that his readers might believe in Him, and that believing they might have life (20:31), and he wrote his first epistle to those who had believed, in order that they might know that they had life (1 Jn 5:13). Although his writings are perhaps the most philosophical in the New Testament, his ultimate purpose is seen to be practical. He desired his readers both to receive eternal life and to know that they had received it. For them to receive eternal life they must put their trust in Jesus Christ, since life resides in Him (1:4). Therefore in his gospel he sets forth Jesus Christ in all His divine-human glory that men might see and believe. For his readers to know that they had received eternal life, it was necessary

for them to understand clearly the indispensable marks of authentic Christianity. In his epistles, particularly in his first, he therefore proceeds to set these forth". Stott 1964:114-117

2. The Date of Writing

The N.I.V. Study Bible notes:

In general, two views of the dating of this Gospel have been advocated:

- a. The traditional view places it toward the end of the first century. C.A.D. 85 or later.
- b. More recently, some scholars have suggested an earlier date, perhaps as early as the 50s and no later than 70.

The first view may be supported by reference to the statement of Clement of Alexandria that John wrote to supplement the accounts found in the other Gospels (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 6.14.7), and thus his Gospel is later than the first three. It has also been argued that the seemingly more developed theology of the fourth Gospel indicates that it originated later. The second view has found favour because it has been felt more recently that John wrote independently of the other Gospels. This does not contradict the statement of Clement referred to above. Also, those who hold this view point out that developed theology does not necessarily argue for a late origin. The theology of Romans (written c.57) is every bit as developed as that in John. Further, the statement in 5:2 that there "is" (rather than "was") a pool "near the Sheep Gate" may suggest a time before 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed. Others, however, observe that John elsewhere sometimes used the present tense when speaking of the past". (p1591)

3. The Characteristics of John's Gospel

- a. John states his aim in writing this Gospel in Jn 20:30,31. He says that Jesus performed many signs which are unrecorded in this book, but that the seven signs chosen to be included are to lead the readers to faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, they will have life.

"Signs" is a characteristic Johannine word. John chooses to use this word, rather than "miracle" or "wonder", to point to some characteristic of Jesus' divine power and authority. The seven signs are:

The changing of the water into wine. 2:1-11.

The healing of the nobleman's son. 4:46-54.

The healing of the impotent man. 5:1-9.

The feeding of the five thousand. 6:1-14.

The walking on the water. 6:16-21.

The healing of the man born blind. 9:1-12.

The raising of Lazarus. 11:1-46.

To make it clear what each "sign" is pointing to, each is often followed by a long discourse.

Barclay writes:

"The feeding of the five thousand is followed by the long discourse on the Bread of Life (chap 6); the healing of the blind man springs from the saying that Jesus is the Light of the World (chap 9); the raising of Lazarus leads up to the saying that Jesus is the resurrection and the life (chap 11). To John the miracles were not simply single events in time; they were illustrations, examples, insights into that which God is always doing and what Jesus always is; they are windows into the reality of God. Jesus did not only once feed five thousand people; that is only an illustration that He is for ever the real Bread of Life. Jesus did not only once open the eyes of a blind man; He is for ever the Light of the World. Jesus did not only once raise Lazarus from the dead; He is for ever and for all men the resurrection and the life. To John a miracle was never an isolated act; it was always a window into the reality of that which Jesus always was and always is and always did and always does. . .

John was not so much interested in the mere facts, as in the meaning of the facts, that it was not facts that he was after, but truth. John did not see the events of Jesus' life simply as events in time; he saw them as windows looking into eternity, and he pressed towards the spiritual meaning of the events and the words of Jesus' life in a way that the other three Gospels did not attempt. John wrote, not an historical, but a spiritual Gospel." Barclay 1955:xxv,xxvi

Of these seven five are found only in this Gospel. The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle recorded by all the Gospels; the walking on the water appears also in Matthew and Mark.

- b. This Gospel is very evidently different from the other three. It omits so many things that they include. It has no account of the birth of Jesus, of his baptism, of his temptations, of the Last Supper, of Gethsemane,

and nothing of the Ascension. Also it has no parables. In the other three gospels, Jesus speaks in short, simple, vivid sentences. But in John the speeches of Jesus are often a whole chapter long. They are often involved, argumentative pronouncements quite unlike the vivid, pithy, unforgettable sayings of the other three Gospels. Although John omits much that the Synoptics tell us about, he also tells us much of which they had nothing to say: the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee (2:1-11), the coming of Nicodemus to Jesus (3:1-15); the woman of Samaria (chap 4); the raising of Lazarus (chap 11), the way in which Jesus washed the disciples' feet (13:1-17); Jesus teaching about the Holy Spirit, which is scattered through chapters 14 to 17.

- c. John has a different account of the scene of Jesus' ministry. In the other three Gospels, the main scene of Jesus' ministry is in Galilee. In John, the main scene is in Jerusalem and Judea, with only occasional withdrawals to Galilee. 1:28; 2:13; 5:1; 7:8-10; 8:1; 10:22; 11:1; 12:1,12; 18:1.
- d. John tells us again and again, of little extra details which read like the memories of one who was there.

Barclay writes:

“The loaves which the lad brought to Jesus were barley loaves (6:9); when Jesus came to the disciples as they crossed the lake in the storm they had rowed between three and four miles (6:19); there were six stone water pots at Cana at Galilee (2:6); it is only John who tells of the crown of thorns (19:5), and the four soldiers gambling for the seamless robe as Jesus died (19:23); he knows the exact weight of the myrrh and aloes which were used to anoint the dead body of Jesus (19:39); he remembers how the perfume of the ointment filled the house at the anointing at Bethany (11:32). Many of these things are such apparently unimportant details that they are inexplicable unless they are the memories of a man who was there”.
Barclay 1955: xx

4. An Outline of John's Gospel

Stott writes:

“It is difficult to analyse St. John's gospel without resorting to an artificial arrangement, but the following signs appear to have been selected. Each is accompanied by one or more explanatory discourses, and can be associated directly or indirectly with an “I am” verse, in which is crystallized the particular claim set forth in the sign.

- a. *Jesus claims to inaugurate a new order, declaring 'I am He', viz., the Messiah (4:26). The turning of the water into wine is said to be the first of His signs (2:11). The symbolism is clear. The 'six stone jars. . . for Jewish rites of purification' (2:6) stood for the law. It is through the miraculous intervention of Jesus that this water was replaced by the wine, which represented the gospel. Similarly, He cleansed the temple (centre of the worship of the Old Testament Church, and spoke of the temple which He would raise in its place. 'But He spoke of the temple of His body', comments the evangelist (2:21), interpreting the words as referring not only to His resurrection body, but also to His mystical Body, the Church, which would be the new Temple (cf. Eph 2:21-22; 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16). To enter this new order, Jesus went on to explain to Nicodemus, a new birth was necessary (3:1-15). The water of Jacob's well would give place to the 'water of life' (4:1-15). The Samaritan woman evidently intended to receive the blessings of the New Covenant, for she 'left her water jar' (4:28).*
- b. *Jesus claims to bestow new life, declaring; 'I am the Life' (11:25; 14:6). The discourse in which this claim is elaborated (5:10-29) follows two signs in which it is exhibited. The first is the healing of the nobleman's son (4:46-54), which is in fact called 'the second sign' (4:54), and the other is the healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-9). In both these 'signs' the health of the body symbolizes the life of the soul. Eternal life begins now in this age, and is given in response to faith in Jesus Christ (5:21-24). Judgment also begins now (5:22-23; cf 3:16-21, 36), but both life and judgment will be brought to their consummation hereafter (5:25-29).*
- c. *Jesus claims to satisfy the soul, declaring: 'I am the Bread of Life' (6:35, 48, 51). The sign in this case is the feeding of the five thousand (6:1-15), the only miracle recorded by all four evangelists. In the accompanying discourse (6:25-65) it is made plain that He who fed the hungry multitudes can satisfy the starving soul. The bread which He will give for the life of the world is His flesh (6:51). He is clearly referring to His cross. It is His torn flesh which is 'food indeed' and it is His shed blood which is 'drink indeed' (6:55). Eternal life is one of the 'benefits of His passion'. Only through His death is life available for us. What, then, is the eating and drinking? It is faith, that is, personal acceptance of Christ and self-committal to Him, of which eating and drinking are a striking physical illustration. He could say with equal ease: "He who believes has eternal life' (6:47) and 'He*

who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life'. (6:54)

- d. *Jesus claims to reveal God, declaring: 'I am the Light of the World' (8:12; 9:5). This section opens with the suggestion of His brothers that He should go to Judea to make Himself known (7:1-3). 'If You do these things, show Yourself to the world', they said (7:4-5). But Jesus waited until His time had come, and then, after going up secretly, suddenly in the middle of the feast appeared in the Temple (7:6-14). Then after speaking to the Pharisees about His word which would reveal to them the truth (8:31-32; cf 14:6; 17:6, 17; 18:37), He performed the sign of healing the man born blind (ch 9). The One who restored physical sight did so on God's authority as the Sent One, whose very title is symbolically found in the name of the pool 'Siloam' (9:7), through whose waters the man had been enabled to see. They who follow Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (8:12).*
- e. *Jesus claims to forgive sins, declaring, 'I am the Good Shepherd' (10:11,14), 'I am the Door' (10:7,9) and 'I am the Way' (14:6). It is perhaps not fanciful to see the sign to which the Good Shepherd discourse is to be annexed in the whole story of the Passion (chs 13-19), culminating in the flow of blood and water which John witnessed and to which he evidently attached great symbolical meaning (19:34-35). Here we see the Shepherd laying down His life for His sheep, and claiming that through death His sheep may live (10:10,11,15,17-18). The grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, that a harvest may be assured (12:24,32-33).*

That the cross is the supreme 'sign' is clear from even a cursory reading of the gospel. It is there that Jesus was 'lifted up' (3:14-15; 8:28; 12:32-33), not only physically, but spiritually as a magnet to draw all men to Himself. It is there, too, that He was supremely 'glorified', that is, revealed in the full beauty of His divine nature (7:39; 12:16,23,28; 13:31-32; 17:1-5).

- f. *Jesus claims to overcome death, declaring: 'I am the Resurrection' (11:25). His glorification was completed not in His death, but in His triumph over death (11:4,40). The sign which demonstrated this was the raising of Lazarus (ch 11), which was intended, like the other signs, to evoke faith (11:15). It succeeded in doing so (12:9-11, 17-19). But this final sign was an anticipation of the greater sign of Christ's own Resurrection. John himself knew the efficacy of this sign, for he wrote of himself (20:8) that 'he saw and believed'. Not only the empty tomb*

and the undisturbed grave-clothes but the risen Jesus Himself constituted the sign. At His first general appearance to the ten 'He showed them His hands and His side' (20:20). Thomas refused to believe until he had seen the same sign (20:25), but, seeing it, confessed 'my Lord and my God' (20:28-29).

Such is the comprehensive testimony borne to us by the Father concerning the Son. St. John records it with diligence, jealous for the honour of his Lord, resolved that his readers should themselves believe in Him, and believing, should receive life in His name." Stott 1964:122-126.

THE EARTHLY LIFE OF JESUS

Regarding the duration of Jesus' public life, three Passovers are mentioned when he cleansed the temple (Jn 2:13), when he fed the 5000 (Jn 6:4), and when he was crucified. Lu 22:15. If the 'feast' in John 5:1 was a Passover as is commonly supposed, that would make four Passovers, with three full years between the first and fourth. If it was some other feast, coming in between Passovers, there were only three Passovers, with two years between the first and third. Thus the duration of Jesus' public ministry was either about 3 2 years or about 1 2 years. Prevailing opinion favours 3 2 years.

This period is summarised in the chart below.

First Year		Second Year		Third Year		Death Resurrection Ascension
APPEARANCE		POPULARITY		OPPOSITION		
Opening Events	Early Judean Ministry	Early Gali-	Middle lean min-	Late istry	Later Judean (Perean). ministry	

The first year

1. Opening Events: (Autumn AD 26):

Baptism in lower Jordan. Jn 1:32-34.

Temptation in nearby Wilderness. Matt 4:1-11.

First disciples in lower Jordan (John, Andrew, Simon (Peter) Philip and Nathaniel. Jn 1:35-51. Temporarily they returned to their regular occupations.

First miracle, in Cana. Jn 2:1-12.

For a few weeks Jesus went to Galilee, visited Cana and Capernaum. Then he left for Jerusalem for the Passover. Jn 2:13.

2. Early Judean Ministry, in the lower Jordan. (told only in John's gospel.. It lasted eight months, beginning at Passover time (Jn 2:13), April, and ended 'four months' before harvest time (Jn 4:3,35), December.

It included:

The Cleansing of the temple. There were two cleansings, three years apart: John 2:13-25 at the beginning of his public ministry; the other, at the close, during his Last Week (Matt 21:12-16; Mk 11:15-18; Lu 19:45-46). In John he drove out the cattle; in the Synoptics he drove out the traders. In John, he called the Temple "a house of merchandise", in the Synoptics", "a den of robbers".

The visit of Nicodemus. Jn 3:1-21.

The ministry by the Jordan. Jn 3:22-36.

During this early period in Judea, there were no crowds. He gradually became known through his public appearances. His main contact during this time was with individuals rather than with crowds.

The Second Year

During this year, Jesus travelled throughout Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, teaching in the synagogues and healing diseases. Crowds of people came from all over Palestine. But during this year, opposition was growing stronger from the Jewish religious leaders. Mark 2-3. By the end of the second year, even some of his loyal followers had left him because of the clear demands of discipleship that he put to them. John 6:60-69.

The main events of this year were:

a. Early Galilean ministry

December AD27

Passover? AD28.

Return through Samaria. John 4.

Visit to Jerusalem

The Twelve chosen. This was about a year after Jesus first called John, Andrew, Simon (Peter), Philip and Nathaniel. Jn 1:35-51. Now they were called to leave their fishing business and to follow him continuously. Mk 1:16-20.

b. Middle Galilean Ministry.

About four months later they were formally chosen as apostles. Lu 6:12-16.

Sermon on the Mount.

The Twelve sent forth. Lu 9:1-9.

John the Baptist beheaded. Matt 14:12-13

The Twelve return. Lu 9:10

February AD 29.

The 5,000 fed. Jn 6:4.

Passover

The Third Year

By the beginning of this third year, the reaction of the crowd turned to open hostility. The religious leaders challenged every step he took and opposed every thing he did. Yet even during this period Jesus still had a large following and was still popular among the common people.

The main events of this period were:

a. Late Galilean ministry

October AD29.

Visit to Jerusalem at Feast of Tabernacles.

Jn 7:2,10.

The Transfiguration, in Galilee.

Visit to Tyre and Sidon, the Decapolis, and Caesarea Philippi. Mk 7:24 - 9:50.

Ever since the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus and his disciples had been, for the most part, skirting the region of Galilee. His purpose was to avoid the opposition in Galilee and to secure opportunity to teach his disciples privately. Mk 9:30-31.

Tyre, Sidon, the Decapolis and Caesarea

Philippi were Gentile territory.

b. Later Judean (Perean. ministry)

Jesus left Galilee and went to Judea via the Decapolis and Perea. Jn 7-10; Lu 10:25-42. Jesus spent three months teaching in Jerusalem, but because the Pharisees were trying to arrest him he went across the Jordan into the province of Perea which was ruled by Herod Antipas and was mostly populated by Jews. (Judea at this time was ruled by Pilate.. After nearly three months' ministry in Perea (Mk 10:1-22), he returned to Judea not long before the Passover in April AD30. He raised Lazarus from the dead (Jn 11) which eventually led to Jesus' execution and then his resurrection and ascension.

B. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (corresponding with notes above)

The Content of the New Testament

5. The New Testament consists of _____ books, authored by _____ men if Paul did not write Hebrews. It was written between approximately _____ and _____ AD.
6. State the character of the literature of the following books:
- (a) Matthew to Acts: _____

- (b) Romans to Jude, excluding 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 2 and 3 John: _____

- (c) 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 2 and 3 John: _____
- (d) Revelation: _____

7. (a) Name the type of Jewish and Christian literature that is full of strange imagery, written during periods of persecution, and intended to encourage believers to persist in their allegiance to God.

- (b) Much of the book of Daniel consists of this type of literature. What New Testament book is also classed as this type of literature?

8. Name the only Gentile author of the New Testament. _____
9. Scholars are unable to identify precisely the author of _____.

10. The four gospels depict the life of Christ who lived on earth from approximately _____ BC to _____ AD. However, they were written some time later.
11. The events of the book of Acts depict events between approximately _____ AD and _____ AD. During this period most of Paul's epistles were also written.
12. The remainder of the New Testament books were written between _____ AD and _____ AD.

(a) During this period the epistles that dealt mainly with the subject of suffering were:

(b) During this period the epistles that dealt mainly with the subject of combating false teaching in the churches were:

The Four Gospels

13. The word "gospel" is the translation of the Greek word _____ which means _____.
14. After Jesus' departure for heaven, from approximately 30 AD to 60 AD there were no written gospels. This was called "the period of _____ tradition".
15. What are the "synoptic gospels"?

16. They are called “synoptic” because they take a _____ view of the life of Christ.
17. The “synoptic problem” is this: Each of these three gospels describe the same incidents in the life of Christ in practically the _____. We infer, therefore, that these three writers must have drawn much of their materials from: (choose one)

- (a) the same source or sources
- (b) a different source or sources

This does not mean that the writers of these three gospels were not inspired by the Holy Spirit. It simply means that under the Spirit’s inspiration they chose these sources of information in the writing of their gospels.

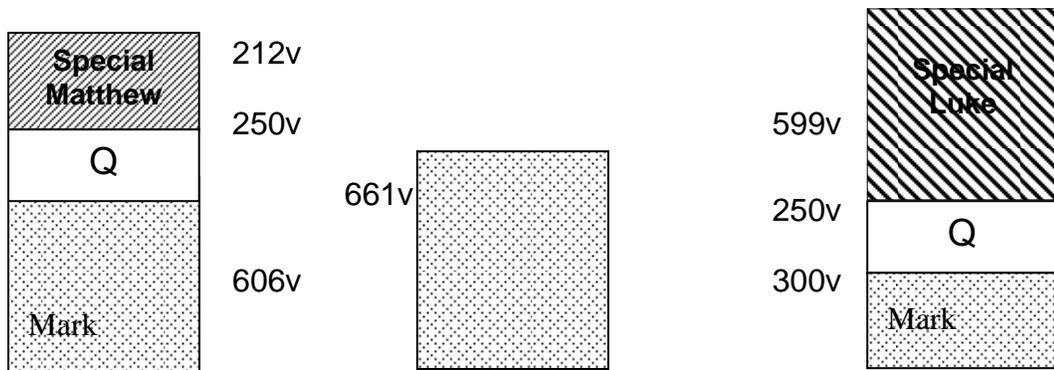
18. Many scholars today believe that the two sources from which Matthew and Luke drew their information were:

- (a) The gospel of _____
- _____.
- (b) A document which today is called _____
- _____.

19. According to this theory the first gospel to be written was _____. Later Matthew and Luke drew from his gospel when writing their own gospels.

20. This theory as a solution to the “synoptic problem” is usually called “the _____ theory”.

Below we have tried to depict this theory in diagrammatic form.



- (a) _____ which means “Sons of Thunder” (men with an angry disposition). (Mark 3:17).
- (b) _____ which means “little girl, I say to you, get up”. (Mark 5:41).
27. In relating his stories, Mark gives us details that the other synoptic writers omit. For example:
- (a) Comparing Matthew 18:2 and Mark 9:36, Mark gives the added information that Jesus took up the child in _____
- (b) Comparing Matthew 19:15 and Mark 10:16, Mark gives the added information that before He placed his hands on them, He _____
_____ and after He put his hands on them, He _____
_____ them.
28. Mark tells his stories very simply, the way a _____ might tell it. He adds statement to statement connecting them simply with the word “_____”. This word appears 34 times in the third chapter. You will need to refer to the AV. The NIV Bible does not translate this word.
29. Almost 30 times he uses the word “_____” and “_____”. This is how the AV translated it.
- How does the NIV translate this word in the following instances?
- 1:18 _____
- 1:20 _____
- 5:29 _____
- 5:42 _____

Luke

30. We know that the same person who wrote Luke wrote the book of Acts because each book begins in the same way. Comparing Luke 1:1-4 and

Acts 1:1-2, we see that Luke wrote both books to a man called _____.

Also in Acts 1:1 he writes of a "former book". This "former book" must be the gospel of _____.

31. Tradition names _____ as being this author.
32. By profession Luke was a _____. (Col 4:14).
33. In this gospel Luke especially depicts Jesus as the Son of man. This gospel emphasises the humanity of Jesus, depicting him as the perfect man.

(a) As a man Jesus needed to pray to receive power from God. He was praying when the _____ descended on Him. (Luke 3:21-22).

How regularly did He pray? (Luke 5:16) _____

He prayed all night before choosing the _____ on the following day. (Luke 6:12-16).

Jesus prayed just before He _____. (Luke 23:46).

(b) Whereas Matthew gives Jesus' genealogy as far back as _____ (Matt 1:1-2), (because Matthew was writing to Jews to prove Jesus was the Messiah), Luke gives Jesus' genealogy as far back as _____. (Luke 3:38).

(c) As a man Jesus needed the power of the Holy Spirit. So Luke emphasises this.

Luke writes that the _____ came upon Jesus at the beginning of His ministry. (Luke 3:21-22).

It was the _____ who led Jesus into the desert to be tested by the devil. (Luke 4:1-2).

After the temptation Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of _____ . (Luke 4:14).

In the synagogue at Nazareth, He announced that _____
_____ was on Him. (Luke 4:16-18).

- (d) In this gospel Luke shows Jesus' compassion for the needs of women, and His attitude towards women.

According to Luke 8:1-3, who regularly helped to support Jesus and the apostles out of their own means, men or women? _____

According to Luke 23:26-29, who followed Jesus to Calvary, mourning and wailing for Him, men or women? _____

According to Luke 23:55-56, who followed Joseph when he buried Jesus' body, men or women? _____

According to Luke 24:1-8, who went to Jesus' tomb to embalm His body, men or women? _____

- (e) Luke's gospel gives a special place to children. In this gospel Jesus three times performed a miracle on an only child.

In Luke 7:11-17, Jesus performed a miracle on an only son who had _____.

In Luke 8:40-42, 51-56, Jesus performed a miracle on a twelve year old _____ who had died.

In Luke 9:37-45 Jesus cast out an evil spirit from a _____.

- (f) Luke gives a special place to Gentiles.

In Luke 9:51-56, he shows Jesus as going through a _____ village.

In Luke 17:11-19 He healed a _____ man who later returned to thank Him.

(g) Luke gives special place to the poor.

In Luke 7:18-23 Jesus told John's disciples that He had been preaching the gospel to the _____.

In the parable of Luke 16:19-31, was it the poor man or the rich man who, after death, went to live in bliss with Abraham and the Old Testament saints, whereas the other one was cast into fire?

(h) Luke also gives a special place to outcasts and sinners. What sinners or outcasts did Jesus show concern for in this gospel?

Jesus allowed this person to wipe his feet with her hair. She was despised by the _____. (Luke 7:36-50).

This person was a criminal who was _____ with Jesus. (Luke 23:43).

Jesus told the parable of a wicked son who repented and was warmly received and forgiven by his father. This parable is usually called "the parable of the _____". (Luke 15:11-32).

Matthew: The Jewish Christian Gospel

34. What work was Matthew doing when Jesus called him? (Matt 9:9).

35. What was his other name? (Mark 2:14). _____

36. We know that Matthew wrote his gospel to the Jews because he emphasised that many aspects of Jesus' life were a fulfilment of the Old Testament Scripture. Refer to the following Scriptures and note below

(a) What event in Jesus' life fulfilled Scripture?

(b) The reference of the Scripture that was fulfilled.

You will discover the Old Testament Scripture reference in the margin of your Bible. To help you to understand what to do, we have noted the first event and its Old Testament reference.

Reference in Matthew of the event	The event in Jesus' life	Old Testament Scripture reference
1:21-23	Jesus' virgin birth	Isa 7:14
2:14, 15	_____	_____
2:16-18	_____	_____
21:3-5	_____	_____
27:9	_____	_____

37. Luke who writes his gospel for the Gentiles, traces Jesus' genealogy as far back as the man _____. (Luke 3:23-38).

However, because he is writing his gospel for the Jews, Matthew traces Jesus' descent only as far back as _____ . (Matt 1:1-16).

38. Which of the two gospel writers explains Jewish customs, Mark who, like Luke, wrote for the Gentiles or Matthew who wrote for the Jews? Refer to the following Scriptures which narrate the same incident: Matthew 15:1-9 and Mark 7:2-23 (note particularly verses 2-4). _____

Why didn't the other gospel writer feel he needed to explain this Jewish aspect of culture?

-
-
39. Also, we know that Matthew wrote his gospel to the Jews because throughout his gospel, he pointed out that Jesus was the descendant of what great king of theirs? (Matt 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22). _____
40. Refer to questions 65-68 and give four reasons why we believe that Matthew wrote his gospel to the Jews.
- (a) He often quoted _____

- (b) He traced Jesus' descent back to _____

- (c) Also he traced his descent back to _____
- (d) When writing his gospel he did not consider he needed to _____

41. One of the characteristics of Matthew's gospel is that of all the gospels it contains the largest single block of _____
_____.
- What fraction of this gospel contains this kind of material? _____
42. The other main characteristic of Matthew's gospel is that it portrays Jesus as the _____.
43. Throughout the gospel Matthew refers to "the kingdom of heaven," the time when Jesus will one day rule over the whole earth.
- (a) _____ preached: "Repent, for the _____
_____ is near." (Matt 3:2).

- (b) Jesus told His disciples: "The _____ will be like ten virgins." (Matt 25:1).
- (c) Jesus predicted that He will one day sit on His _____ in heavenly glory. (Matt 25:31).
- (d) When Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey on the Sunday prior to His crucifixion, it was the fulfillment that for the Jews their _____ was coming to them. (Matt 21:1-5 refer especially to verse 5).

John: The Spiritual Gospel

44. John was the brother of _____, both being the sons of _____. (Luke 5:10).
45. John's business was _____, as was the other disciples
(a) _____ (b) _____ and (c) _____
(Mark 1:16-20).
46. John was part of an inner circle of three men within the larger group of the twelve apostles. Who were the other two men in this inner circle? (Luke 8:51) _____ and _____.
- This inner circle of disciples was involved with Jesus on two occasions:
- (a) When Jesus raised up _____
. (Luke 8:49-56).
- (b) On the _____
_____. (Mark 9:2-13).
47. Most scholars believe John was the disciple whom Jesus _____.
(John 13:21-25).
48. John wrote in his gospel a number of miraculous signs that Jesus performed. He wrote this information in his gospel so his readers would

_____ that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by
_____ they might have life in His name. (John 20:30-31).

49. These seven miraculous signs included in this gospel are:

(a) 2:1-11 (note that John calls this miracle a "sign" in verse 11)

(b) 4:46-53

(c) 5:1-9

(d) 6:1-15

(e) 6:16-21

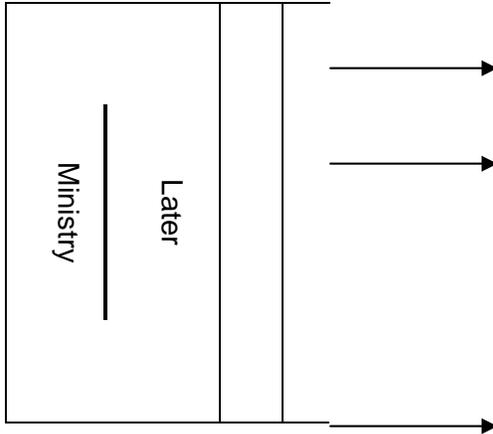
(f) 9:1-12

(g) 11:1-46

THE EARTHLY LIFE OF JESUS

50. Complete the following chart of Jesus' public ministry.

Events	_____	FIRST YEAR	→ Jesus' _____ (Matt 3:13-17), followed by His _____ (Matt 4:1-11).
Ministry	Early		→ Jesus finds His first disciples who are: (a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____ and (e) an unnamed disciple, probably John, the author of this gospel. (John 1:35-51).
_____	Early	SECOND YEAR	→ Jesus' first miracle in the town of _____. (John 2:1-12).
_____ Ministry	Middle		→ Jesus cleanses the _____ (John 2:13-25). _____ visits Jesus. (John 3:1-15).
_____	Late		→ Jesus first disciples spend more time with Him. Their names were (a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____ (Mark 1:16-20).
_____	Late	THIRD	→ Jesus chooses His 12 apostles. He calls these 12 disciples _____. (Luke 6:12-16). From this time on, many of His _____ _____. However, _____ the spokesman for the



THE BOOK OF ACTS

The Author

51. Scholars believe the Book of Acts was written by _____ who also wrote another book of the Bible, _____.

Recipient

52. The recipient of both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts is _____.

An Outline of the Book of Acts

53. Complete the following outline of the book of Acts.

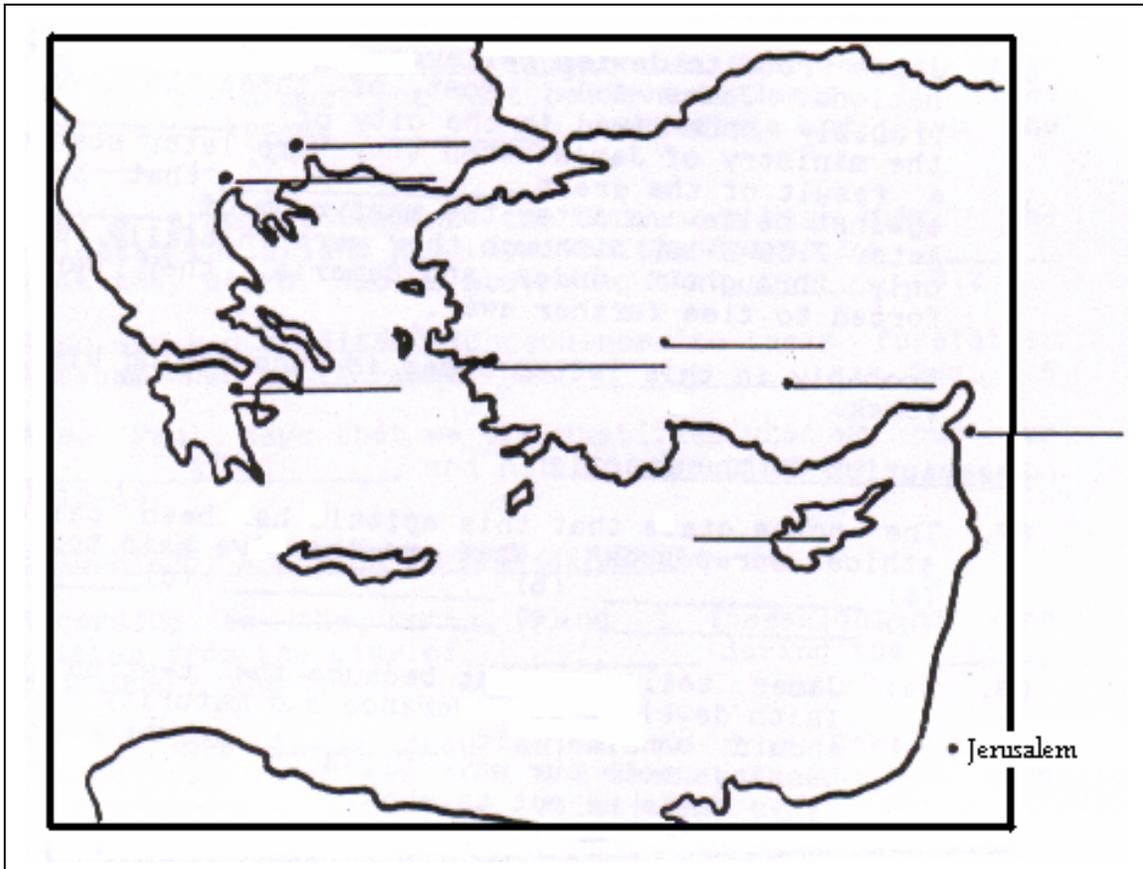
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">The Church in Jerusalem expands</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chapters 1 – 5</p>	<p>Acts begins with Jesus and the disciples in the city of _____ (Acts 1:4).</p> <p>The theme of the book is Jesus' statement that the empowerment of the Holy Spirit will make the disciples witnesses in _____, in _____, and in _____ and to the _____.</p> <p>This theme verse is found in Acts _____. The disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts chapter _____.</p> <p>From this point on the church grows. On the Day of Pentecost there were _____ converts. (2:41). From that day on, conversions were occurring every _____. (2:47). After Peter healed the lame man, the number of male converts grew to about _____. (4:4). After that _____ and _____ men and women believed. (5:14).</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">The Gospel reaches outside Jerusalem</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chapters 6 – 12</p>	<p>Later the numbers of disciples in Jerusalem _____ and a large number of _____ were converted. (6:7).</p> <p>Philip went to a city in _____ and many people were converted. (8:4-7). Later he converted a Jewish proselyte from _____. (8:26-27).</p> <p>Later _____ was converted as he was travelling to _____ (9:1-9). _____ was sent to a man called _____ who with his family became the first Gentile converts. (10:23-38).</p> <p>Because of persecution in Jerusalem, some Jewish believers went to the city of _____. A large Gentile church was planted there. (11:19-21).</p>

54. Complete the following outline of the book of Acts.

<p style="text-align: center;">First Missionary Journey Chapters 13 & 14</p>		<p>Paul and Barnabas were in the city of _____ when the Spirit told them to begin their first missionary journey. (13:1-3). They went to the island of _____ and later to the province of Pisidian _____ (13:14). _____ (14:1), _____ (14:8) and _____ (14:20). Afterwards they returned to their home church in the city of _____. (14:26-28). The epistles of James and Galatians were written about this time.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Council at Jerusalem Chapter 15</p>		<p>Later there were men who taught that Gentiles must first be _____ in order to be saved. (15:1-2). So the apostles and elders gathered in the city of _____ to discuss the matter. Some of the speakers at this conference were _____ (15:7), _____ and _____ (15:12), and _____ (15:13).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Second Missionary Journey 15:36 – 18:22</p>		<p>Paul and _____ departed from Antioch on the second journey. (15:40-41). They went to the province of Macedonia, in particular to the cities of _____ (a Roman colony and the leading city of Macedonia 16:12), _____ (where there was a Jewish synagogue 17:1) and _____ (17:10). They then continued on to the province of Achaia, in particular to the cities of _____ (17:15) and _____ (18:1). Again they returned to their home church at _____ (18:22). Paul wrote _____ during this journey.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Third Missionary Journey 18:23 – 21:16</p>		<p>On his third journey Paul evangelised the province of Asia, in particular the city of _____. (19:1). Paul wrote Romans and 1 & 2 Corinthians during this time.</p>

21:17 – 38:31 Paul Under Arrest	Eventually governor Festus sent Paul to Caesar in the city of _____. (27:1; 28:16). At Rome Paul wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. The book of Acts ends at this point
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55. By referring to the maps in your notes, note the following places on the map below: (a) island of Cyprus, (b) Syrian Antioch (from which Paul left on each of his journeys. This is a different city from Pisidian Antioch where Paul planted a church on his first journey.), (c) Pisidian Antioch, (d) Lystra, (e) Corinth, (f) Philippi, (g) Thessalonica, (h) Ephesus.



2. SAMPLE PORTION OF OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY **(The Book of Joshua)**

A. NOTES (portion only)

JOSHUA

INTRODUCTION

Overview of Joshua

Titles: Joshua means "Jehovah is salvation."

The Book is often referred to as the Book of Conquest.

Author: Written by Joshua (18.9, 24.25,26).

Setting: Covers the period of time from the death of Moses to the death of Joshua, which is about 30 years.

Outline of the Book: 1. Entering the land (Ch's 1-5)
2. Conquering the land (Ch's 6-12)
3. Dividing the land (Ch's 13-22)
4. Farewell and burial in the land (Ch's 23-24).

Relationship to the promised land in Pentateuch:

Genesis	- promise of a new land.
Exodus	- leaving for the land.
Leviticus	- laws for living in the land.
Numbers	- wandering outside the land.
Deuteronomy	- preparations for entering the land.
Joshua	- possessing the land.

Joshua the man

1. His name

Joshua was first named “Hoshea” or “Oshea” (Nu.13.8,16), which means “salvation, deliverance, or conquest.” But later his name was changed to “Joshua” meaning, “Jehovah is salvation.” Obviously the latter name means the same thing, “salvation,” except that the big difference is “Jehovah” included in the meaning of his new name. As Joshua was born in Egypt and in captivity, his name must have been a sign of hope and expectation. In fact, salvation was commonly referred to in military exercises. But later, when Joshua was credited with his new name, focus was placed on God as the one who really saves. Somewhere along the line, somebody had a revelation that only Jehovah can really save to the uttermost! It is little wonder that Joshua would look to God so much, and declare that it is God who delivers us from our enemies. Significantly, the Greek form of Joshua is "Jesus"! Hence, one soon gets the distinct impression that this book is going to be about God saving His people.

2. His heritage

Joshua came from the tribe of Ephraim (Nu.13.8, 1Cr.7.20-27). His father's name was Nun (meaning “fish”), and his grandfather was Elishama who marched at the head of the tribe of Ephraim in the wilderness (Nu.1.10, 2.18, 10.22). It seems that Joshua came from a line of faithful and capable leaders. Perhaps he was influenced very strongly by their example. Joshua could have easily rested on the laurels of his heritage, as many still do, but rejected the temptation to rest on his family's previous successes. In short, he wanted to maximize what God wanted him to be. Ultimately, it is our response to God that determines what we become, and not so much our heritage whether impressive, mediocre, or downright insignificant. You don't need to have a rich family heritage to do wonders in the church.

3. His birthplace

Joshua was born into slavery in Egypt. He well knew the oppression, the hopelessness, the despair, the pain, the tears and the torment. Yet his lifestyle shows us no overreaction to a slave mindset, for he was liberated in the promises of God. Unfortunately, many never get free from a slave mindset. They never free themselves of the past, they magnetize themselves to offenses and criticism, they wallow in self-pity like a ship with a broken rudder in the ocean, and look behind and never ahead. The crux is how we respond to what has happened to us in the past, knowing the promises of God. We are no longer meant to be children of the slave woman (as from Hagar), but children of the free woman (as from Sarah) - Gal.4.30-31. We can notice one thing about Joshua -- he was willing! He looked ahead. He was free of the bondages of the past, unlike most of Israel who always seemed to cast their thoughts back to Egypt. No

wonder Joshua would exhort: *“Do not go back and serve the gods of Egypt”* (Jos.24.14).

4. His First Victory

The first time Joshua is mentioned he is leading the troops to victory (Ex.17.8-16). This was Israel's first battle, when the Amalekites came against them. This is the ministry Joshua would have later on, for it would be 40 years before he would fight in the great conquests of Jericho and other Canaanite cities. He was a man in preparation. He did not despise the day of small beginnings. For most of us, there may be some gap between the time when God called and the actual fulfillment of that call. Even David had to wait for years (though anointed by Samuel to be King) before becoming king of Israel. Paul of the N.T. had to wait too, as have most other Bible characters. In essence, God may impart a call, a vision and an anointing, but it may take some time to eventuate while the Lord works on substance, character, maturity and prepares the scene. Also notice that nobody came and slapped hands on Joshua before crossing the Jordan, announcing some ministry he was not already familiar with, trained in, or prepared for. His conquests in Canaan were merely an extension of what his lifestyle and calling already was. We must never be greedy to embark on some ministry service never really given to us. Most Christian leaders and pastors see no “big deal” in what they are doing because, to them, it is quite natural and is something they have already been doing anyway. Awards and positions really only formalize or acknowledge what a person is already doing.

5. His desire for God

Though only Moses was initially told to climb Mt.Sinai (Ex.24.2), we find Joshua going with him to get the Tablets of the Law (Ex.24.13). It seems that God saw the desire of this young man to want to be in His presence, and allowed it. God will not turn away anybody who wants to draw near to Him. As we saw in Pentateuch, He wants relationship more than anything else! We further read of how Joshua used to linger in the Tabernacle of Moses (Ex.33.11). When everybody had gone home, even Moses, Joshua hung around the Tabernacle because of his desire for the presence of God. Passion and desire are qualities every believer should possess. Do you have a heart for God?

6. His servanthood

Joshua faithfully served Moses throughout his life. Whether it was as a military leader, assistant, or mere companion, Joshua was ready to help and fit in where needed. He is called “his [Moses'] servant” (Ex.33.11). He was the David to Saul, the Elisha to Elijah, the Timothy to Paul. Certainly, one is getting the distinct impression that God is not just interested in charismatic gifts. In fact, gifts should flow out of character. We may do better not to be so impressed with the great “gifts” and “anointing” some seem to minister in, but to check out their

character as well. If their character is questionable, though they raise the dead, watch out! You will know them by their "fruits" (Matt.7.16).

7. His willingness to be corrected

Now, this really is a mark of a good leader! Notice Nu.Ch.11. This scene was the one in which God poured out some of the spirit that was on Moses onto 70 elders (v's 16-17). The seventy prophesied, although the spirit rested only on Eldad and Medad who continued to prophesy. Joshua said, "My lord Moses, forbid them!" (v.28), to which Moses replied that he wished there were more who were prophets (v.29). In fact, Joshua was rather sharply rebuked: "Are you jealous for my sake?" (v.29). Unfortunately, many of us get exclusive in our area of ministry function. We want to be the one who is picked, who gets selected for some position, who is on some in-house "who's who" list, who gets to be the leader in some area, who gets recognized, who is the "cool" guy around church, who gets favour, who gets the glory for some job well done, and so on. Our attitude can be "who can we eliminate" in the competitive rush rather than "who else can get a blessing." Competition, striving, playing political games, cutting out others and ambition can reign supreme. So, certain attitudes were being dealt with in Joshua. Even Jesus once said to the "sons of thunder" (James and John): "You do not know what spirit you are of." We can't always be the exclusive hub in a wheel. We can't be the recipient of all the praise, all of the time, to all of the people. We can't hog a revival all to ourselves. Exclusivity was being dealt with in Joshua, and he was willing to be corrected -- for we never hear any more of the matter nor his questioning of Moses in such a way ever again.

8. He is a man of faith

This was proven when he and Caleb, along with 10 other spies, went out to search the land of Canaan (Deut.1.22f). Yes, there seemed no possible way of ever getting the land. It was far too big for them. But what was bigger than the circumstances was God's word! Joshua believed in that word, and that is what separated him and Caleb from the doubtful ten. They were indeed unable -- in the natural -- but God was able. It was humanly impossible, but spiritually possible. There were many obstacles, but many opportunities in God. Man's word was doubtful, but God's word was promising. Joshua chose to believe the Lord despite the circumstances and all that he could see. He was a faith man. There is not much one can do with anybody who is a "doubting Thomas." Joshua was that faith man, and the Lord would use him years later in leading the people across the Jordan.

9. He was willing to forgive

Joshua had plenty to be bitter about! Despite his faithful response after spying out the land, he had to wander for nearly 40 years in the wilderness just like everybody else. He could have blamed them all for not yet getting his portion

of land, for not yet getting his leadership position over Israel in leading them over the Jordan, for not yet getting the “milk and honey” and other blessings Canaan had to offer, for being penalized for other's mistakes, for suffering hardship through no fault of his own, for having to wait so long for something he was so keen to obtain, for putting up with dry sand and unpleasantness year after year, for seeing his vision apparently die in the wilderness, for seeing human misery and funerals day after day, and for seeing 40 years apparently taken away from his youth. Let's face it, Joshua had a lot to be bitter about. Can a man or woman ever rise from such bitterness of the past? Can we forgive others or even release our own wounded spirits to function and achieve again? Do we have "the stuff" to get up and go again? Joshua did. We can! Unforgiveness binds up a person in chains, and causes one to shrivel up and starve spiritually. But forgiveness is the floodgate of the dam, that when released, allows rivers of living water to gush out again. Another thing -- sometimes we get to lead “failures” into successes though having identified with them in their failures. Even Jesus identified with us, though keeping himself separate and pure. If ever we feel like lashing out against others who have failed (especially when their failure affects us), it is good to remind ourselves that Jesus reached out to you and me when we failed.

10. His appointment and commission

Joshua was appointed to take over the leadership of Israel in Nu.27.15-23. He stood before Eleazar the priest and all the congregation of Israel, and then Moses laid his hands on Joshua and he was “commissioned.” He still waited some time, however, until Moses' ministry was at an end. Joshua appears again in Deut.31.14 on the eve of the death of Moses. Clearly Joshua did not push his way to the top, but waited until it was God's time. Joshua had waited years to assume the leadership of Israel, and now he hears that the people will go astray, break the covenant, and play the harlot once in the new land (Nu.31.16). Moses, too, knows that the people will rebel: “You have been rebellious against the Lord; how much more, then, after my death?” (32.27). No wonder Joshua is told to “be strong and be courageous” (v.23)! How would we be, like a Joshua or a Jeremiah, to know that after all our work and effort the people we lead are going to desert the faith and rebel against God? The challenge to Joshua was to keep this rebellion from coming to pass in his lifetime. He remained faithful to his call, and Israel prospered throughout all the days of Joshua. Like we have to be, Joshua was faithful in his generation. Without war horses or chariots, Joshua conquered cities, fortresses, and nations in about seven years while in his 80's!

I. ENTERING THE LAND (Ch's 1-5)

The Command to Joshua (Ch.1)

A brand new era has begun. It starts with God's voice, and the first thing He says is to “Get up” (1.2). The people had been obviously mourning over

Moses and dwelling on the past. Hence, Joshua and the people are told to rise up and look ahead to the land (v.2). There comes a time that we must experience death to self, trust God, and rise up in resurrection life (Col.3.1-17). Without the past chained to their heels, there was therefore now no condemnation (Ro.8.1-2) to bind them from moving on in the purposes of God.

Significantly, the first thing God asks Joshua to do is the impossible -- cross the Jordan! (v.2). Joshua is going to need God right from the very start, and it will be good practice for him because he is going to have to look impossibility in the face all throughout his conquest of Canaan. The point is: what we conquer was already given us by God! ("which I am giving you" - v's 2-3). Yet Joshua had to recognize his God-given limitations, and the Lord describes the boundaries (v.4). Joshua will need confidence in God's enablement, and is told that "no man will be able to stand before you" (v.5). What wonderful assurance to know that God "will be with you" (v.5)!

The remainder of the chapter focuses on the necessity of Joshua's strength and courage to do God's will. "Be strong and courageous" is the plea four times:

- (i) for the peoples sake (v.6)
- (ii) for the sake of keeping the word (v.7)
- (iii) for his destiny's sake (v.9)
- (iv) for the rebel's sake (v.18).

To be strong and courageous is a trait necessary for all spiritual leadership, otherwise they will only flounder and wallow like a cork in the ocean.

Meditation and obedience are clearly keys to success, as v.8.exhorts, "...you shall meditate on it [the word] day and night..." It speaks volumes to us today. How can the Christian life ever be strong and victorious if it does not live by the Word? Note the results of spending time in God's word:

- you may be careful to do it
- you will make your way prosperous
- you will have success.

Authority and a chain of command is evident from v.10, for Joshua commands the officers of the people. God's work is never accomplished by His people doing their own thing. It is accomplished when people rise up in unity and work together with a common purpose under clearly defined guidelines of authority. Despite the spiritual goals and command of the Lord, Joshua would never have been able to conquer Canaan without some ordered structure of authority. God is a God of order! As the Roman Centurion knew, authority comes from being under authority ("for I myself am a man under authority" - Matt.8.9).

Paul even describes the necessity of order when it comes to using the spiritual gifts (1Cor. Ch's 13-14).

Finally, the two and one-half tribes on the east side of the Jordan (Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh) are addressed (v's 12-18). They are reminded that they cannot rest until their brothers have claimed their inheritance (v.15). In other words, they were not just to consider themselves, but to consider others in the body of Christ. In fact, the main purpose of the five-fold ministry (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers) is to bring others to maturity. Notice also the obedience of the two and one-half tribes: "we will obey you" (v.17). This was no time for a spirit of independence. This was no time for raw self-interest. This was no time for "charismatic butterflies" (said to be believers who continually hop from church to church and never settle anywhere) doing their own thing. This was a time to work together in order to rout the enemy and extend the kingdom.

The Jericho Spies (Ch.2)

In this chapter we can note seven things about the spies:

A. Spies detached (v.1). "The land" was promised as an inheritance long before ("The land that will be given to you as an inheritance" - Deut.34.2). Only two spies are dispatched this time (in marked contrast to the 12 sent out at the time of the evil report), and they are told to "view the land, especially Jericho." It seems that the spying technique this time is to go one step at a time. The earlier 12 saw all the cities, and decided it was too much for them. But these 2 spies essentially saw one city, and focused their faith on that city to start with. They were not "biting off more than they could chew." It is a good lesson even now to walk one step at a time, for taking on too much at once may simply overwhelm us in the end. A good and godly vision can be too overwhelming if not broken down into manageable steps. "Today has enough troubles of its own" (Matt.6.34).

An unusual character comes along early in this Book -- Rahab. This person had at least three things against her:

- She was a woman (considered at a lower social level)
- She was a pagan (who worshipped idols)
- She was a prostitute (a terrible sinner).

Can the Lord ever use a woman like this? Perhaps the Lord was using the base things of this world to manifest His glory, for in such circumstances no man can take the credit. Yet Rahab has one remarkable characteristic -- faith in the Lord! With such strong faith, God could see the potential for this woman to be mightily used in the taking of the first Canaanite city. He could also have seen that such a woman was fully capable of leaving behind the old carnal life and becoming a virtuous woman of Israel -- virtuous enough to even become an

ancestor of David and Jesus (notice her name in the Matt.Ch.1 genealogy). The gospel message is what transforms lives just as powerfully now.

B. Spies concealed (v's 2-7). The king of Jericho is informed that "men from the sons of Israel" have come to spy out the city and land (v.2). Despite a search, Rahab hides the spies in stalks of flax on her rooftop. These men were supernaturally concealed by the Lord as the searchers went out of the city on Rahab's "red herring" suggestion of some road they presumably went on. God knows how to conceal His people, Moses also once having been concealed for a time as a baby.

C. Spies informed (v's 8-11). Rahab reveals some critical information -- Jericho and all of Canaan are fearful of Israel. The hearts of the inhabitants had "melted away" (v.9). Significantly, she says, "I know that the Lord has given you the land" (v.9), which suggests that she had revelation knowledge of the mind of the Lord. The mighty works of the Lord had gone before Israel (v.10), so that now "no courage remained" in Canaan. Further notice that the real fear is not so much of Israel -- the real fear is of God Himself: "For the Lord your God, He is a God in heaven above and on earth beneath" (v.11). Once fear enters the heart, you are already defeated! Fear should be as foreign to a believer as a lizard in Antarctica.

D. Spies beseeched (v's 12-13). Rahab requests to be spared, along with her family, when Jericho is eventually taken. She is wise enough to have the spies swear by the same God she has revelation knowledge of (v.12), making sure to take no chances. These verses also speak something of the protection there can be in families, for Rahab and her family will be together when Israel finally arrives.

E. Spies promise safety (v's 14-20). Rahab and her family will be spared the judgment of the Lord if she follows certain conditions, such as tying the cord of scarlet thread in her window, having the family together in one place (v.18), and telling no one about the deal they have made (v.20). There is only one way of salvation -- God's way! The scarlet (red) cord symbolizes redemption, and salvation is being offered to an entire household that believes in the Lord and His promises. We might also recollect Lydia's family at this point (Acts 16.15) in which her entire household was baptized and saved following her belief and her obedience.

F. Spies escape (v's 21-22). Rahab did not hesitate one moment to tie the scarlet cord in her window! For her and the entire household, salvation was a matter of utmost priority. There was no waiting for "tomorrow." The two spies then hid themselves in the hill country. Today is the day of salvation (2Cor.6.2).

G. Spies report to Joshua (v's 23-24). What a different report to forty-odd years before ("We are not able to go up against this people for they are too strong for us" (Nu.13.21)! Now they say; "Surely the Lord has given all the land

into our hands, and all the inhabitants of the land" (v.24). They already had the victory in their hearts. Occasionally we have to ask ourselves; "Do I really believe we can do this?"

Hence, this chapter is more about Rahab than about Joshua. In the genealogy of Matt.Ch.1, Rahab is listed in the line of Jesus (Matt.1.5). She was the mother of Boaz -- the man who married another great woman of faith; Ruth. The two spies had reached out to the pagan Rahab as Boaz had reached out to the pagan Ruth. Finally, Rahab is listed in Hebrews Ch.11 as one of the great faith people of the Bible.

The Crossing of the Jordan (Ch.3)

A. People commanded to follow the Ark (v's 1-6). The prominence of the Ark of the covenant is brought to light again as the centre of importance. Without the presence of God, the people could go nowhere nor accomplish anything. Israel arrives at the Jordan river (v.1). They are given instructions to follow the ark and the priests carrying it (v.3). Leadership declares the direction of the Lord (v's 2-3). Significantly, the people are reminded that they "have not passed this way before" (v.4). Every new path in life is, at least, a little bit different. Every new generation must experience God for themselves. One cannot ride on another person's faith or another person's leadership throughout life. There comes a time of personal conviction for all of us. Also, the people are told to consecrate themselves (v.5). Holiness is essential to entering the purposes of God! Recall that the theme of "redemption" in Exodus Ch's 1-18 was followed by the theme of "consecration" in Ch's 19-40.

B. Priests stand in the Jordan river (v's 7-8). Now we read; "the Lord said to Joshua" (v.7). It is as if the heavenly Joshua (the name meaning the same as "Jesus" or "salvation") is speaking to the earthly Joshua, or the heavenly saviour is speaking to the earthly saviour. Salvation is obviously on God's mind in bringing His people into a land of their own. The priests are to "stand still" in the Jordan and see the salvation of the Lord.

C. Promises given (v's 9-13). The leaders challenge the people with the word of God. Prior to crossing the river into a whole new era of history, the people are told to "hear the words of the Lord your God" (v.9). They are reminded that He is a "living God" (v.10). The miracle of crossing the Jordan in flood time (v.15) will be a sign to them that the Lord will surely dispossess the nations before them. Seven specific enemies are mentioned (v.10). In a way, they speak of the enemies we continue to face (as suggested below).

- Canaanite, meaning "merchant or greed," which speaks of rampant materialism;
- Hittite, meaning "terror or fear," which speaks of the spirit of fear;

- Hivite, meaning "wickedness or blatant sin," which speaks of a callous disregard for the things of God;
- Perizzite, meaning "dwelling in unwalled villages," which speaks of a failure to draw personal boundaries or a failure to live within the bounds of the word of God;
- Gergashite, meaning "strangers drawing near," which speaks about compromise;
- Amorite, meaning "highlander or bitter rebels," which speaks of the high philosophies of this world that attempt to rule our morals, values and personal ethics;
- Jebusite, meaning "treading down," which speaks of the discouragement and confusion that attempts to engulf us.

Once the soles of the feet of the priests rest in the waters of Jordan, the waters will be cut off and will stand as a walled heap (v.13). This is a supernatural event! The people shall also then be comforted with the knowledge that the Lord is with Joshua as He was with Moses (v.7). This kind of confirmation of leadership is nothing new in the Bible. King Saul, for instance, was confirmed in his leadership after winning a decisive battle (1Sam.Ch.11).

D. Jordan crossed (v's 14-17). The impossible happened. As the priests stood on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, the people crossed over dry shod (v.17). The Lord made a bridge between the old life and the new. This was an historic moment, and one that Moses had desired to see. This was part of the promise given long ago to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The event was also significant in that the crossing was reminiscent of the earlier miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, as told by their parents. Finally, the people set foot in the new land. Even now we need to request the Lord as to how to bridge our present circumstances with what the Lord has laid on our hearts. It may look totally impossible. We need God's supernatural provision, preparation, and enablement in order for us to be able to do it.

The Two Memorials (Ch.4)

After the nation of Israel crosses the Jordan, there are a couple of matters to attend to. Two memorials are set up. They are set up to "become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever" (v.7). Twelve stones from the river are placed at the Israelite camp of Gilgal (v.20 - this is their first abode on the west side of the Jordan), and another twelve stones are placed in the middle of the Jordan (v.9) before the priests cross over with the ark and before the waters return to their former level (v.18). But what is the purpose of the memorials? There are at least four:

- to frequently rehearse God's miracles to our children (v's 21-22). Recall Deut. 6.7 which said "You shall diligently teach my word to your children;"

- to act as faith builders and encouragement for both the present and future generations (v.23);
- to confirm Joshua as leader in the sight of all Israel (v.14);
- to testify to the whole world that the Lord is a mighty God, and so that all peoples will fear the Lord (v.24).

Perhaps we need to also remember the many great things the Lord has done in our lives and to mark those (as in spiritual memorial stones) accordingly.

Preparations before Jericho (Ch.5)

It is interesting that this new generation experiences many similar events to the first generation. For instance: they crossed the Jordan like the first generation had crossed the Red Sea; they had to be circumcised like the first generation; they celebrated the Passover like the first generation; they were provided new food in the land like the first generation was provided manna; their leader had a supernatural experience with God like Moses had with God on Mt. Sinai; etc. Basically, we are seeing that each generation (or indeed each person) has to experience God for themselves. Let us look at each of these a little more closely.

A. The enemies fear after hearing of the crossing of the Jordan (v.1). Rahab had earlier indicated the fear of the nations in Canaan. But after Israel crossed the Jordan dry-shod, when it was in full flood, all of Canaan was reeling with fear! "Their hearts melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer." Once people are defeated in their heart, mind, and spirit, they are doomed to be defeated totally.

B. The circumcision (v's 2-9). In the natural, this must have been a very foolish thing to do while on the brink of warfare and in strange territory. They were totally vulnerable, yet totally dependant on God. Circumcision was the sign and seal of the Abrahamic Covenant, and the new generation had not formally entered into this covenant with God since they had not as yet been circumcised (v.5). Without a covenant relationship with God, there would be little hope of winning any contest in Canaan. Through this new covenant relationship, God "rolls away" (hence, the name "Gilgal") the reproach of Egypt (v.9). This is serious business. Remember Zipporah who understood the necessity of her son Gershom being circumcised, and reached out with a flint knife to save his life? (Ex.4.25).

C. The Passover (v's 10-11). Not only did the new generation of Israel have to experience a renewing of the covenant in the circumcision, but have to partake of the Passover experience as well. This was an ongoing ordinance, as told to Moses, and they therefore observed and celebrated the salvation of the Lord in bringing Israel out of the bondage of Egypt.

D. The manna ceases (v.12). Significantly, the moment Israel ate some of the produce of Canaan the manna ceased from falling. This was a new day! The wilderness era was behind them, and a new era in the Promised Land was now before them. The Lord will still provide, but in a different way. The people had to be open to the new way God was moving, and to flow with Him. Of course, as with any "new move" of God, He builds on what has already been laid in the past. Unfortunately, many of us want to throw out vital foundations, principles and truths discovered, or renewed, in the past because we consider them "old," "outdated," "traditional," or "no longer relevant." Even in Pentecostal circles there are many who realize that we can throw out too much of "the baby with the bathwater" when new methods and ways of doing church are presented to us. For Israel, they will now go from a "spoon-fed" relationship with God to a mature walk with God.

E. The Captain of the Lord of Hosts (v's 13-15). The captain of the earthly army meets the captain of the heavenly army. Joshua is totally dependent on this heavenly captain. There is one thing Joshua had to know before going to battle -- this was not his battle. It was the Lord's battle! All of Joshua's success depends on the unseen host of heaven to fight on his behalf. If battles are not won in the heavenlies first, they will never be won on earth.

Now, after such vital preparations are over, Israel is ready to tackle Canaan head on -- commencing with Jericho.

II. CONQUERING THE LAND (Ch's 6 - 12)

The Fall of Jericho (Ch.6)

This is a famous Bible event. It commences what we call "The Central Campaign" (to be followed by the Southern Campaign commencing 10.28, and Northern Campaign commencing 11.1). Jericho was completely closed up (v.1), confident that their city will resist attack. However, protection is never guaranteed by being personally locked up. A mentality "under siege" can offer no security. By all natural appearances, the fortress was impregnable ("the cities are fortified" - Nu.13.28). Apparently, Jericho had two walls; the outer wall was about 2 metres thick, then there was a gap of about 4 metres, and then there was an inner wall of 4 metres thick. Apparently there was also a moat around the fortress, and the city was on a hillside. It certainly sounds formidable. We are told that it was one of the best and strongest fortifications in Canaan. The trust of the people of Jericho was in those walls. But the Lord is well able to penetrate them. Only the Spirit of God can penetrate the man-made walls we erect around our lives.

What could possibly be the plan of attack against so great a fortification? Joshua needed some heavenly blueprints and a heavenly battle plan. He got one -- strange as it was. But God's "strangeness" can be infinitely better than our

“wisdom.” Israel is to march around the city each day for six days, and then march around it seven times on the seventh day. Then after a mighty shout, the "impenetrable" walls would fall. The strategy sounds very unusual. There are at least two reasons for such an unusual means of strategy:

- To test the obedience of Israel (which seemed to be "foolishness" by human standards, but it was really the wisdom of God);
- To strike fear in the heart and spirit of the enemy (adding fear to the immense fear they already had. Fear defeats people even before the actual event). Fear of the unknown can be people's greatest weakness.

A number of lessons can also be learned from this great conquest. Some of them include:

- Spiritual victories are won by the wisdom of God. We have to seek God for the blueprints and strategy in any given situation -- which may sometimes be contrary to the thinking or "wisdom" of man;
- God had a way for each city to be conquered. Interestingly, the Jericho episode was never repeated. We must be very careful not to allow the success of one endeavour to be converted to "method." The key is hearing God's plan in a certain situation and being obedient to it -- not methodology. Even in the book of Acts the Gospel message was presented in different ways, though underlying principles of salvation were the same. Further, methods give way to manipulation, and we have to watch we don't manipulate the Holy Spirit like witchcraft seeks to manipulate heavenly powers. God wants to be in charge of every battle. Don't just look to the past -- look to God!
- The event was successful through faith in God's word. Heb.11.30 says; "By faith the walls of Jericho fell." Israel had God's word, and they were expected to put their faith in those words. Even the shout was a shout of faith (Jos.6.10).

Note also that Israel had to “keep yourselves from the things under the ban” (v.18). Jericho was "devoted to destruction," i.e., it was given over wholly to the Lord. Jericho was the "first-fruits" of the cities of Canaan (like a tithe), and so no single person would be allowed to take some of the treasures for himself for fear of being accursed (v.18). That is why the silver, gold, bronze, and iron was to go only to the treasury of the Lord (v.19). Israel could take whatever it liked from other cities to be conquered later, but not this one. The passage also therefore highlights the principle of tithing.

Rahab and all her family are spared as promised (v's 22-25). Evidently this part of the wall did not collapse! Salvation came to one house because one house believed in the Lord. God will not allow the righteous to receive the same fate as the unrighteous. This has always been the case, e.g., Noah, Lot, etc., and it still is.

Finally, Joshua utters a curse on Jericho saying that the person who tries to rebuild it will be at the cost of his firstborn (v.26). This is exactly what happened in 1Ki.16.34. Hiel, a Bethelite, in the days of king Ahab, rebuilt Jericho at the cost of the lives of his sons. The principle remains; what God has pronounced dead, don't try to resurrect it! And never build on something that does not contain God's blessing.

The Sin of Achan (Ch.7)

This chapter witnesses Israel's first setback in the new land of Canaan. In a similar way in which Adam's actions affected us all (in the sin imputed to us – Ro.Ch.5 KJV), the guilt of one man tainted and affected the whole of Israel. Sin had to be dealt with. Others in Achan's family had to pay the price for sin just like Jesus had to pay the price for sin not of his own making. Unfortunately, sin can be like leaven – it can potentially infect and taint everyone else. The lessons contained in this chapter may be easily summarized and captioned under the letter “D.”

A. Deceit (v.1). Achan took some of the things under the ban or "devoted to destruction." Lust for something he badly wanted got the better of him, and it affected all of Israel. We might call him the “Gehazi” of the Book of Joshua (2Ki.Ch.5), though Gehazi's sin was only against himself.

B. Defeat (v's 2-4). Israel could not believe their ears -- defeated by the insignificant town of Ai! Notice the overconfidence. Ai was considered such a walkover that only 3000 men were dispatched to defeat it (v's 2-3). In comparison to Jericho, Ai was a joke (“a toilet block in the outback,” one Bible student was heard to remark). Sometimes, success can be our greatest test! Joshua did not even consult God about a battle plan. Without God, even the most minute of enemies can cut us down. Combine this casualness with Achan's violation of God's word regarding the ban, and trouble is brewing.

C. Discouragement (v's 5-7). As some of us have experienced, discouragement can set in like fog on a cold night. But are there clearly identifiable causes? Is part of the problem due to our meddling? Joshua and all the elders prostrate themselves on the ground, pouring dust over their heads because “the hearts of the people melted and became as water” (v.5) -- which is supposed to describe how the enemy is supposed to feel (as in Jos.5.1). In such circumstances, we wish we never got involved in the venture at all, and Joshua wishes he stayed on the east side of the Jordan (v.7). But the issue was essentially one of disobedience, as the principle of first-fruits had been violated. This was not a time to pray (v.10), it was a time to repent!

D. Disgrace (v's 8-9). Joshua is aware of the impetus this disgrace will have on his enemies, for their initial fear will give way to a new-found confidence.

Yet sometimes even the Lord can use a sense of disgrace to get through to us. It is suggested He has even used the media or other outside-church means to do it. Further, when we fail, the enemy is all primed and ready to take advantage of the case against us. Joshua is aware of the possible ramifications, and how sin can withhold the release of God's power (see v.13).

E. Discovery (v's 10-20). Conviction is active and solution-oriented, whereas condemnation is passive and problem-oriented. In response to Joshua's discouragement, the Lord says to "Get up" (v.10), which is very different kind of "get up" to the one in 1.2 (the former was a "get up" to vision, the latter a "get up" to repentance). Spending forever on a "pity party" and keeping downhearted provides no lasting answer. So, God tells Joshua to get up and do something about it. Joshua has no options (i.e., no chance to "hedge," pacify all parties, or diplomatically find a way around the problem). He has to deal with the problem God's way. Somewhere there is sin in the camp, and it has to be searched out and something done about it. The bottom line is, Israel has "transgressed My covenant" (v.11). The covenant was only recently renewed by circumcision at Gilgal, and it is broken already. Hence, the narrowing-down process begins in search of the offender. Joshua knew that he and Israel could never move on in the purposes of God until sin and transgression were dealt with. Sin has a way of finding us out. What is done in secret will be shouted from the rooftops. The eyes of God penetrate all. Nothing can be hidden from Him. The whole of Israel comes forward by tribes, families, households, and then by individuals (v.14). Achan is found (v.18). Repentance is a door of hope, yet we essentially see none of this in Achan. He did not come forward when Ai was lost, nor when the narrowing-down process was on. He thought he could conceal and hide his guilt. He who covers his sin will not prosper, but he who confesses and renounces it will find mercy (Prov.28.13). One should never force God to "dig you out." One should willingly repent while there is time.

F. Disobedience (v.21). Achan's actions bore similarities to Eve's in the Garden of Eden. Achan saw ("I saw...a beautiful mantle"), coveted ("then I coveted them"), took ("and took them"), and concealed ("they are concealed"). Eve saw, coveted, took, and concealed. It seems the development of sin has not changed. Many do the same now; first the eye sees something enticing, then that "something" is looked on with lust, then comes the action or sin, and then, finally, the cover up. Rather, God would want us to purge the leaven out of our lives. Otherwise, the sorry alternative is that sin can soon spread to others (1Cor.Ch.5). In short, this section describes the "process" of sin.

G. Discovery of goods (v's 22-23). What is concealed, hidden, and covered up is soon dug up, revealed, and disclosed by the Lord. Be sure your sin will find you out (1Tim.5.24-25)!

H. Discipline (v's 24-26). Judgment must begin in the house of the Lord (1Pet.4.17). Achan pays with his life, and unfortunately, his whole family suffers

too. This is a classic case of irresponsible leadership in which a husband's failure to lead can adversely affect the entire household. All are stoned and then burned with fire (v.25). This is so unlike Zacchaeus who brought salvation to his entire household (Lk.19.9). Fire will purge away sin if repentance does not. A great heap of stones is raised over Achan, and the place is called the Valley of Achor (Achor means "trouble"). Notice in v.25 that Joshua says, in essence, "Why have you 'achaned' us?" So, his sentence is his own name. Isaiah 65.10 alludes to the Valley of Achor as a warning to the Israelites that "trouble" does not pay. Even more significantly, Hosea says that God desires to turn the Valley of Achor (trouble) into "a door of hope" (Hos.2.15). God would prefer that we deal with sin through genuine repentance than He have to deal with it through judgment.

The Conquest of Ai (Ch.8)

A. The word of the Lord (v's 1-2). This time there is a battle plan, and there is no sign of the blasé overconfidence of before. Notice the plan to capture Ai is quite different to the way in which Jericho was captured, for now the tactic of ambush is going to be used (v.2). Also, Ai is not "devoted to destruction" like Jericho was, as the principle of "first-fruits" had been fulfilled. Hence, Israel can keep the spoil of the city (v.2). If only they had waited the first time. If Achan had waited one more city, he would have gotten more than he stole the first time. Never act presumptuously in wanting a blessing! Again is the command; "Do not fear or be dismayed" (v.1), for fear is no way to begin a battle. Perfect love casts out fear, and to fear is akin to doubting God and His word.

B. The plan of attack (v's 3-8). "All the people of war" (v.3) are summoned to go against Ai. Joshua immediately selects 30,000 valiant men, which is a far cry more than the 3,000 sent out the first time (Jos.7.4). Ten times more! Occasionally, the perceived "small" enemy may prove to be a more formidable an opponent than a perceived "big" enemy. It sounds as if Israel has learned a valuable lesson -- things have to be done God's way! The enemy has already given itself an air of confidence and a false sense of security following the first successful attempt against Israel, and this will surely work against them. So much so, in fact, that they never even considered an ambush -- hidden behind their town. Sometimes we become so engrossed in the pursuit of something that we become blind to everything else. Ultimately, success for Israel lies in the following critical advice; "You shall do it according to the word of the Lord" (v.8).

C. The ambush (v's 9-28). The military tactic works because it is God's plan. There will be other plans and other blueprints for other cities. God's word in a matter has to take precedence over methodology, even if that methodology is developed from past successes. The tactic was playing on the enemy's own weakness -- overconfidence and a false sense of security. Every enemy has a weakness. They were brazen enough to leave "the city unguarded" (v.17). After the men of Ai were pursuing Israel, the rearguard came in and burnt the city (v.19). Then the Israelites, whom the enemy were pursuing, suddenly turned on

them and the men of Ai found themselves sandwiched between Israel's forces on both sides (for the men in ambush attacked them from the rear after burning the city). They "utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai" (v.26).

D. The king of Ai (v.29). The king of Ai, however, was hung on a tree. Deut.21.22-23 said that a body of a man hung on a tree could not be left there overnight because to do so would "desecrate the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance" (Deut.21.23). As Gal.3.13 says; "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." There would be another King who would hang on a tree -- Jesus. His body would not be left on the tree/cross overnight either. Death on the tree was the price assigned for great sin. The king of Ai paid for his sin on the tree, as did Jesus pay for ours. Sin began because of an event associated with a tree in the Garden of Eden. Hence, it is no wonder that sin was seen to be ultimately dealt with on the tree of Calvary. In short, we can say that the place of defeat in the Garden became the place of victory at Calvary.

E. The two mountains (v's 30-35). Deut.Ch's 27-30 is a prelude to what is happening here, for Israel was informed on the east side of the Jordan under Moses that the people were to stand on Mt.Ebal and Mt.Gerezim to re-hear the word of the Lord. An altar to the Lord is built at Mt. Ebal, on which a copy of the Law is written (v's 31-32). The altar is constructed of "uncut stones," according to God's command in Ex.20.25. Half of the people stood on Mt.Ebal, and half on Mt.Gerezim (v.33). The two mountains (we would call them hills) provided an amphitheatre affect, which is an excellent setting for hearing the word of the Lord. Six tribes stood on Mt. Ebal, which is called the mountain of cursing, and six stood on Mt.Gerezim, which is called the mountain of blessing (as per Deut.27). Then the word of the Lord is read out including the blessings and the curses. The reasons for doing this are at least fourfold:

- so as to re-hear the word of the Lord (which speaks of the necessity to read the Word frequently);
- so as to be fully aware of the contents of the word of God, including its blessings and curses (to be forewarned is to be forearmed);
- so as to produce godly living (for the end result of meditating on the Word is to produce a godly lifestyle);
- so as to reveal the importance of a balanced life (victories in God and the movings of the Holy Ghost must always be balanced by time spent in God's word). This understanding is quite important for our time as history shows that some past revivals made the mistake of neglecting a teaching of the word when God pours out His Spirit in a tremendous way.

We may therefore summarize the above four reasons as follows: to hear, to understand, to express godly action, and to possess true godly devotion.

Notice that all the assembly had to hear the word, including “the women, the little ones and the strangers” (v.35).

Basically, what we are witnessing is another renewal of the covenant as God had ordered Moses. Some call this the Palestinian Covenant (rather than the Mosaic) because the covenant is renewed in the new land. The people are now reminded afresh that they must be faithful to this covenant. What we see presented before the people is choice (Deut.Ch.30) in its various blessings and curses. In other words, their future, success, destiny, and reward would depend on their response to the word of God.

The Gibeonite’s Deceit (Ch.9)

Things are warming up. All the kings of the nations in Canaan “gathered themselves together with one accord” (v.2) to fight against Joshua and Israel. Remarkably, these nations were often at war with each another, but rose together to fight God’s people. This is what the enemies of Jesus did, for Herod and Pilate became friends over the quest to get rid of Him (Lk.23.12). Joshua’s enemies also knew the power of unity to get a job done, for they were in “one accord.” A kingdom divided against itself can never stand (Mk.3.24). Some of us have similarly experienced a barrage of obstacles that join together in a tirade against us.

In the meantime, another scene dominates this chapter. Some of the local inhabitants, the Gibeonites, are smart enough to realize that no alliance of nations will overcome Israel “because of the fame of the Lord your God” (v.9). Balak (king of Moab) realized the same in Numbers Ch.22. So they try a trick of their own with far greater potential -- deception! A group of them disguise themselves as travelers from a far-distant land, having crumbly dry bread (v.12), torn old wineskins, clothes worn haggard, and shoes worn out (v.13). Their request? “Make a covenant with us” (v.6). The dual tactic of flattery (saying how great God and Israel are) and disguise works ingeniously, and the leaders of Israel fall for it. Why were they deceived? Because they “did not ask for the counsel of the Lord” (v.14)! They looked on the outward appearance, and not what was truly in their hearts. Sometimes, we are just too smart for our own good.

Then they hear the devastating news that “they were neighbours and that they were living within their land” (v.16). No wonder the people complained about the stupidity of the elders (v.18). So now Israel finds that it has made a covenant that is contrary to what was stipulated in their covenant with God (in that they had to drive out the inhabitants and not spare them) – a rather awkward scenario for now one covenant conflicts with the other. Yet God would hold Israel responsible for the covenant with the Gibeonites, and they will have to fight on their behalf (as per the next chapter). In fact, the covenant is still binding even about 500 years later when Saul was king (2Sam.Ch.21), as Saul was held accountable for

failing to back up Israel's part in the covenant. Israel will have to learn the consequences of their actions. Joshua makes a token gesture to make the Gibeonites "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (v.23) forever as a form of damage control, but it will still not undo the outcome of a classic and serious blunder.

Some lessons we can learn from this chapter include:

- Deception is often disguised in flattery;
- Never look on the outward appearance only;
- Always seek God's mind on a potentially serious matter;
- Rash actions, though forgiven, can still have consequences;
- Once a promise is given, or a covenant made, one often has to live with it;
- Life does not stop with a mistake, but learns from it and presses on strongly into other conquests and other victories.

Victory in the Land (Ch's 10 - 12)

A. Victory at Gibeon (10.1-27). Now that the inhabitants of the land are in "one accord," they sure don't want any breaking of ranks. Hence, a coalition of nations descend on Gibeon because "it has made peace with Joshua and with the sons of Israel" (10.4). So Gibeon sends word to Joshua camped at Gilgal (which seems to be Israel's abode for now) to "save us and help us" (v.6). Being committed to the covenant made with Gibeon, Israel has no choice except to fight on their behalf -- although the Lord would use the occasion to begin conquering the rest of Canaan. No doubt it would have been very tempting to let the Gibeonites get wiped out after deceiving them, but Joshua, being a covenant man, never entertained the thought. His response was quick and decisive. The Lord assures Israel that "not one of them shall stand before you" (v.8), and they take the enemy by surprise (having walked all night - v.9 - the enemy was unprepared for such a quick response). The Lord "confounded them before Israel" (v.10), and claimed more lives of the enemy through large hailstones than Israel did with the sword (v.11). Then a very historic event took place! "The sun stopped in the middle of the sky, and did not hasten to go down for a whole day" (v.13). This allowed Israel to pursue their enemies to the utmost. It is said that there has been no other day "when the Lord listened to the voice of man" (v.14), for God had to override some of His natural laws of science and physics. God's response is overwhelming in the face of one of the biggest coalition battles in history. The men must have been tired, having walked all the previous night and then fighting for virtually two days solid. But Joshua was out for total victory! There was no letting up until the enemy was destroyed. Even his men were prepared to pursue victory to the point of exhaustion. Finally, notice the different battle plan that was employed this time. There were no walls collapsing (Jericho) or secret ambushes (Ai), but there was a surprise attack, hailstones flung from the sky, and the sun stood still.

After hearing that the five kings of the alliance had hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah (v's 16-18), Joshua has them come out. The words are reminiscent of those spoken at the end of the ages; "They will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!'" (Lk.23.30). Significantly, Joshua commands the army chiefs to "put your feet on the necks of these kings" (v.24). In essence, Joshua was saying; "feel it, see it, know it, get it into your spirits" that the Lord will do the same to all their remaining enemies. As Ro.16.20 says, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." Ps.110.1 also says that He will make our enemies "a footstool for your feet." Finally, the five kings are hung on five trees by their necks, for as Gen.3.15 promised, we shall crush the enemy's head. The bodies, typically, are removed before evening.

B. Victory over various cities (10.28-39). This section commences what we call "The Southern Campaign," given the conquest of cities south of Jericho. A succession of battles takes place, defeating Makkedah (v.28), Libnah (v's 29-30), Lachish (v's 31-32), Gezer (v.33), Eglon (v's 34-35), Hebron (v's 36-37), and Debir (v's 38-39). Notice the repetition – "utterly destroyed," "left no survivor." Victory has to be total to be complete.

C. Victory throughout the south (10.40-43). All the land of the south was subsequently subdued. Notice that Kadesh-Barnea is mentioned -- the place where the first generation said the land could never be taken. The "giants" had turned to "grasshoppers." This basically completed the southern campaign. How was it accomplished? "Because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel" (v.42).

D. Victory at the waters of Mermon (11.1-9). Now comes "The Northern Campaign." Even more intimidating than walled cities were the horses and chariots. Israel only had their legs, and sometimes the use of donkeys. But now in this northern campaign they are confronted with "as many people as the sand that is on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots" (11.4). The enemy had an overwhelming technological advantage of the time; horses were swift and robust, and the iron chariots were basically invincible machines of power, protection, and speed. Hence the Lord had to reassure Israel "Do not be afraid" (v.6). The results are announced before time; they are all to be slain, their horses are to be hamstrung, and the chariots are to be burned with fire (v.6). Joshua gave a surprise attack by the waters of Mermon and struck them "until no survivor was left of them" (v.8). The apparent "sand on the seashore" became "dust in the wind."

We learn something here of how to neutralize the strength of the enemy (remembering that our enemies are never people, but the rulers, principalities, and powers in heavenly places). Notice that the horses were "hamstrung," which basically involved cutting the calf muscle. A way to hamstring our enemy now is to overcome the enemy with the blood of the Lamb and the Word of God

(Rev.12.11). This will really give him a limp! The Lord will then finish the job and "burn his chariot with fire" when he is finally cast into the lake of fire.

E. Victory at Hazor (11.10-14). The northern campaign continues. Hazor was once the head of the northern kingdoms (v.10), but now is utterly destroyed. Again we hear the reprise; "utterly destroyed them" (v.11). Israel "left no one who breathed" (v.14). In a way it is hard to understand why there was such a wholesale slaughter of the inhabitants, but we have to keep in mind that a society can become so depraved that, like Sodom and Gomorrah, there is no other choice than complete annihilation. It is difficult for us, with our 21st Century mindsets, to understand this. However, we will never understand "here now" much of what was happening during these Old Testament events unless we position ourselves "back then" and evaluate the scenes in the context of their own times. Imposing modern interpretations and conclusions on contexts that had little bearing, or similarity, with the contexts of our own times, will only rob us from obtaining true meaning.

F. Joshua's obedience (11.15-20). Some scholars say that 11.15 summarizes the whole Book of Joshua; "...so Joshua did; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord had commanded Moses." Obedience to the word of the Lord is the central issue here. If we are obedient to His word, God is obligated to fulfill it! Joshua's victory was thorough, complete, and total.

G. Victory over the Anakim (11.21-22). Joshua then descends upon the Anakim so that "there were no Anakim left in the land" (v.22). Significantly, this was the same Anakim that scared the first generation of Israel out of their wits. Recall; "There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (Nu.13.33). The Anakim were related to the rebellious Nephilim (meaning "the fallen ones") of Gn.6.4. This must have been a personally rewarding time for Joshua and Caleb. The so-called "giants" were, indeed, only "grasshoppers" after all. If only the first generation had seen it this way!

H. Summary (11.23). This is a summary verse. Joshua took all the Lord had asked him to take. His obedience is evident yet again. Note that "Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord had spoken," i.e., he only took that portion currently requested. We see in Ch.13 that "much of the land remains to be possessed" (13.1), which means that the conquest is not fully over yet and there is still more land to conquer later (the Philistines to the west, the Sidonians to the south, and Lebanon to the north are mentioned). But for now, Joshua has conquered all that he has been requested to.

List of Kings Conquered (Ch.12)

Thirty-one kings in all were conquered. The campaign took about seven years (see 14.7,10 & Deut 2.14). It was an amazing testimony of what can be

accomplished through sheer obedience to the word of the Lord. Oftentimes, we never rise higher than our self-imposed limitations. We nail in our own ceiling, seal it in plaster, and wonder why we cannot go any higher. To fulfill our destiny and defeat the giants, we have to rise up in faith and obedience to the word of the Lord given to us. This may involve seeking God's face first so that He can speak clearly to us. This will also mean not moving out in presumption on something God never said. Joshua was just as careful not to move out on something God did not say as what he was to move out on something God did say.

III. DIVIDING THE LAND (Ch's 13 - 22)

The Tribal Inheritances (Ch's 13 - 19)

From chapters 13 to 19 inclusive we witness the division of the lands among the twelve tribes of Israel. The boundary lines are decisive and fixed. In summary, the tribal inheritances are outlined for the following tribes:

- Reuben (13.8-23)
- Gad (13.8-12,24-28)
- Manasseh (13.29-31, 17.1-3)
- Judah (15.1-63)
- Ephraim (16.1-10, 17.14-18)
- Benjamin (18.11-28)
- Simeon (19.1-9)
- Zebulun (19.10-16)
- Issachar (19.17-23)
- Asher (19.24-31)
- Naphtali (19.32-39)
- Dan (19.40-48).

These were the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua, and the heads of the tribes of Israel distributed by lot in Shiloh at the doorway of the Tabernacle (19.51).

There are at least two main reasons for these territorial boundaries:

1. They affirm to Israel who the respective pieces of land belong to.

In a sense, what is given to us as our inheritance is also our destiny. After all, our destiny is the fulfillment of God's purposes in our life. We too must labour to enter into the inheritance God has given us. When God gives us certain gifts, talents, positions, and so on, we can affirm in our hearts that God has given them to us. The Lord allocates severally as He wills, and because He gives them, no one can take them away. An insecure leader is one who looks to man for his position and promotion, but a secure leader knows that God positions and

promotes. Ultimately, we belong to the Lord. In sum, the allocation sets ownership and occupancy.

2. They affirm that it is God who really sets the boundaries.

Each tribe was unique in the land they received, be it in the area of land, the terrain, and the like. He gave it according to the way He wanted it. In the same way that God made some captains of 1000's, 100's, 50's, or 10's, or in the same way that some are given 10 talents, 5, or 1, a so-called "equality" was not the issue. Some see equality differently to the way God does. To the Lord, "equality" is Him allocating severally as He wills. The clay has no right to say to the potter; "why have you made me thus" (Jer.Ch.18). We see Ephraim (the sons of Joseph) complaining about the lot they received in 17.14-18. Do we ever get unhappy with the portion, gifts or ministry God has given us? "Equality" on our part is being faithful with whatever He has given us (as per the Parable of the Talents - Matt.Ch.25). There are also some timely lessons on being different members of one Body in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. We can be confident that if we are faithful with what God has given us that one day Jesus will say, "Well done, true and faithful servant."

Before leaving this section on the tribal inheritances, let us note a few relevant issues in these chapters (13-19).

A. The tribe of Levi. Levi is addressed in 13.14,33, 14.3,4, 18.7. Recall from Pentateuch that one of the 12 sons of Jacob (Joseph) had two sons -- Ephraim and Manasseh -- who became two tribes in Israel. In essence, Joseph received a double portion of the "blessing" (though not the "birthright" which went to Judah in carrying on the godly seed line). This seems to bring the number of tribes to 13. However, because Levi was not to receive a directly-allocated land inheritance, the tribes were back to 12 again in number (at least for inheritance purposes). Rather, the inheritance of Levi was to be:

- The sacrifices (13.14)
- The Lord God of Israel (13.33)
- Cities to dwell in (14.3,4), mostly from Ephraim & Manasseh
- The priesthood of the Lord (18.7).

With our materialistic mindset, we would probably make a grab for the land if we had the choice, yet surely Levi's inheritance is far, far, superior.

B. Balaam. This cunning character of Nu.Ch.22f is finally dispensed with in Jos.13.22, ending an epic and intriguing story (some would say of Charles Dicken's vintage). After the terrible damage he caused Israel in Nu.Ch.25, Israel must have been delighted to finally get rid of him. Balaam was the one who taught Balak (king of Moab) how to cause Israel to destroy itself. Israel sinned so badly that they broke the Covenant and invoked the curses of God on themselves. We find Balaam mentioned in three other parts of the Bible:

- 2Pet.2.15 describes "the way of Balaam"
- Jude 11 describes "the error of Balaam"
- Rev.2.14 describes "the doctrine of Balaam."

They all relate to spiritual compromise. In the Greek vernacular, "Balaam" means the same as "Nicolaitans," i.e., "to conquer the people." Spiritual powers are always out to conquer God's people by causing them to compromise godly standards. Balaam craftily created the scene for compromise, as did the Nicolaitans. This is why "the teaching of Balaam" and "the teaching of the Nicolaitans" are mentioned together in the address to the Church at Pergamum in Rev.2.12-17. Finally, notice the emphasis on "swords" throughout: God first confronted Balaam with an angel holding a sword; Balaam caused a sword to come against Israel in judgment; Balaam was finally defeated with a sword himself; and, in Rev.2.12, Jesus speaks of the sword in His mouth. It goes to show that the real answer to the temptation of compromise is to confront the enemy with the word of God.

C. Caleb. Unlike the cunning character of 13.22, a very different kind of person is emphasized in 14.6-15 -- Caleb. Caleb comes to Joshua and requests him to "Give me that mountain" (14.12). Significantly, Caleb selects this land even though the Anakim ("the fallen ones") live there. This is the same Anakim that terrified the first generation of Israel, yet Caleb had faith from the very beginning that Israel was well able to conquer them (Nu.13.30-33). Hence, Joshua gives him Hebron (later, David was proclaimed king there), which was named after "Arba," the greatest man of the Anakim (v.15). This made a very fitting 85th birthday present. What kept Caleb so faithful these 45 years (v.10) since the day of the bad report? For one thing, Caleb had a vision that he would never allow to go stale. For another thing, Caleb had an unbending belief in God's word. This is why he could say without reservation; "as my strength was then, so my strength is now" (v.11). Vision holds on to God's promises. Vision gives determination. Vision sees one through the trials and difficult times. Optimists can see the opportunities in every difficulty, but pessimists can only see its problems. Caleb received his reward. All of us, in God's time, will receive the reward promised to us if we hold firm. Soon, we see Caleb driving out the three sons of Anak from his given land (15.14-19). Whenever God has given you a vision, never let it die! Nurture it, feed it, live it and breathe it.

D. The Tabernacle. The Tent of Meeting is not set up at Gilgal, but at Shiloh (18.1). It would remain there until the time of Samuel (1Sam.4.3) when it was taken out in battle against the Philistines.

E. Joshua's inheritance. The person who inherited last was Joshua! (19.49-50). This somewhat negates a concept called "ministerial privilege," or as some people call it, "God's blessing." Unfortunately, demands for resources are sometimes taken at the sheep's expense. A mark of a true leader is to help

provide for his people first. Indeed, Joshua served his people to the point of giving all, and nothing was left. But then notice what followed; the people gave out of their abundance. "The sons of Israel gave an inheritance in their midst to Joshua" (v.49). If a leader serves his people well and looks after their wellbeing, usually those people are only too pleased to give out of their abundance to bless their leader/pastor. There is an acute leadership lesson contained here. Some leaders "look after number-one first." Some see the position as an opportunity to "feather their own nest." These ones have apparently forgotten the words of Jesus; "The last will be first, and the first will be last" (Matt.20.16).

F. Not all the inhabitants driven out. A subtle statement appears here and there in these chapters that will have far more significance as time goes on; "They did not drive out..." We see this, for instance, in 13.13, 15.63, 16.10, and 17.13. This will also become the prominent theme of Judges Ch.1. Are they already beginning to rest on their laurels? As we will see later, failure to completely drive out the inhabitants of the land as commanded by the Lord will force many Israelites into compromise and idolatry later. The enemy you do not drive out is the enemy who will drive you out later.

G. Procrastination. Although some tribes had received their inheritance, seven had yet to divide and possess the land (the 7 included Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Nephtali and Dan). Another 2 ½ of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh were situated east of the Jordan. The remaining 2 ½ tribes of Judah, Ephraim and the other half-tribe of Manasseh had already divided and possessed their land. How long do we take before stepping out on a command of the Lord? Procrastination is the enemy of accomplishment. So Joshua asks; "How long will you put off entering to take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you?" (18.3). We will never possess the land, even now, as long as we hold back in complacency, ease, and procrastination. Sometimes we need to hear Joshua's command – "Go!" (18.8).

Finally, before leaving this section on the tribal inheritances (Ch's 13-19), we can glean three vital principles:

- Inheritance is important to God. God is committed to giving an inheritance He has promised if we are faithful to do our part;
- There will be differences in the inheritances of different people. We should avoid comparing with others, for what may seem small in our eyes may be large in the eyes of the Lord. Never despise the lot given to us by the Lord;
- It is important to have a relationship between different people with different inheritances. Though we live side by side in the body of Christ (and experiencing some degree of "like iron against iron"), we still must work together in unity and harmony to fulfill the will of the Lord. We are a corporate body, and there can be no place for individualism. Yes there is an individual responsibility to be faithful

with what we are given, and we are individuals, but we are also responsible to relate and work together as living stones making up one glorious house.

The Cities of Refuge (Ch.20)

The cities of refuge are listed as Kadesh, Shechem, and Hebron on the west side of the Jordan, and Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan on the east side of the Jordan. Notice that Hebron, formerly the city of “giants,” now becomes a city of peace and rest. How the tables have turned! The backdrop to the cities of refuge includes Numbers Ch.35, Deut.4.41-43, and Deut. Ch.19. Basically, if a person had killed someone “unintentionally, without premeditation” (20.3), he could flee to the nearest city of refuge. The elders of that city would hear his case, and if it was found that the offender had “struck his neighbour without premeditation and did not hate him beforehand” (v.5), he could receive refuge inside the city. Hence, the blood relative, or “avenger of blood” (v's 3,5,9), could not enter the city or demand the death of the offender. The offender or “manslayer” (v's 3,5,6) had to remain in the city until the death of the High Priest in office at the time (v.6). Two meanings may be derived from this: 1. Jesus is now our refuge and strength who becomes our “city of refuge” when we under accusation and condemnation by our spiritual enemy. 2. Jesus has also become our great High Priest who, by His death on the cross, has put an end to our sin and released us from its guilt forever.

But -- if an offender was found to be guilty through an intentional or premeditated murder, he could not seek refuge in the city and would be handed over to the avenger of blood. There was no escape from justice and impending judgment. The scene speaks of the person who intentionally rejects Christ, who willfully and remorselessly sins, who bars himself from the refuge of Jesus, and who keeps himself from the complete release from sin Jesus won on the cross. Furthermore, by rejecting Christ as our refuge and strength, we are candidates for “open slather” by an enemy intent on our demise.

The Levitical Cities (Ch.21)

Though the Levites were not to get any initial land inheritance, they needed to be provided for in a practical way (as commanded by Moses - 21.2). The Levites needed dwellings to live in like everybody else, and they also possessed cattle in need of pasture. Land, therefore, became a matter of practical necessity for them. So the twelve tribes gave out of their abundance, which included certain cities and their adjacent pasture lands (v.3). Indirectly, therefore, due to the generosity of others in the face of practical need, the Levites would indirectly inherit land. It remains an honourable and spiritual principle today to generously provide for our spiritual leaders. To be stingy must surely be a slight on the people the leader serves, and is not likely to be very pleasing to the Lord. This writer is no fan of the excessive “health and wealth” doctrine,

however, it is an expectation of the Lord, and in the best interests of the congregation, if leaders are generously provided for. As much as is practically possible, leaders and pastors ought to be comfortably housed, fed, looked after, and well provided for. They should be sent out to travel and experience other things, and not to have any worries concerning security and provision. The ascetic doctrine of “suffering for Jesus” came from the Middle or Dark Ages of history, and ought to remain there. The Levitical groups of Kohath, Gershon, and Merari (originally the 3 sons of Levi) all received portions.

The chapter ends with another statement that “the Lord gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and lived in it” (v.43). None of their enemies stood before them! Again is the reprise; “Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass” (v.45). When God gives us a word, He is responsible to fulfill it. However, as we shall see in Judges Ch.1, although the Israelites “possessed” the land, they had not yet driven out all the inhabitants.

The Altar of Witness (Ch.22)

At this point the national campaign was over, and Israel was firmly established in the promised land. The Lord had now given them a season of rest (21.44). All the lands were divided, though the occupation of the land was certainly not yet complete (23.4-5, Jud.Ch's 1-2). No power was left in Canaan that could seriously threaten Israel's entrenchment and settlement in the land. Hence, Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have fulfilled their pledge to help their brothers conquer the west side of the Jordan, and Joshua releases them to return to their lands on the east side (22.1-4) -- after a warning to serve the Lord and obey His word (v.5).

But trouble begins to brew, and here we face one of the final significant episodes of the book of Joshua. The 2 ½ tribes to the east build a large altar on the banks of the Jordan (22.10), and when the rest of Israel on the west side heard of it, they were furious! After all, the brazen altar of the Lord was in the Tabernacle at Shiloh, and now it seems the eastern tribes have set up a substitute or counterfeit altar. It was clearly stipulated in the Law that sacrifices for sin could only be made on the altar of sacrifice in the Tabernacle. This would be a matter of grave concern, and so the western tribes prepare themselves to wipe out the eastern tribes -- but fortunately, not before dispatching Phinehas (son of Eleazar the high priest) and ten of the chiefs of the western tribes (v's 13-14). Phinehas is quick to point out to the easterners the idolatrous events that led to Peor (v.17), and what happened over the issue of Achan (v.20), and invites them to live on the west side if they consider the east side “unclean” (v.19). But the truth is revealed. The eastern tribes explain that the altar is NOT an altar of “sacrifice,” but an altar of “witness!” Indeed, they were very well aware of what the altar of sacrifice stood for (v's 23,28,29). The eastern tribes actually had keen foresight -- showing knowledge of human nature. They knew that a day would

otherwise come when later generations on the west side would deny the eastern tribes full status in Israel. Hence the altar of witness -- to remind all future generations that the Jordan is no barrier between the eastern and western tribes. Phinehas and the elders were delighted with the outcome, blew a sigh of relief, were probably slightly embarrassed at the conclusions they had prematurely jumped to, and returned to the west in peace.

Often we misunderstand people and their motives. Often we lash out prematurely without knowing the real facts. We tend to go by here-say, or what we have heard second, third, or tenth hand. In our vehemence for God and our regard for certain principles we hold dear, we can be too quick to jump to conclusions and judgment. Unfortunately, we can destroy others with our misunderstanding, as the western tribes almost did. On the other side of the coin, we are often the subject of being misunderstood. People don't always see our real heart and motives, and may trample all over us with some very heavy boots. Unfortunately, being misunderstood is something all ministries experience one time or another. But, like the eastern tribes, our response should also be honourable in such cases. Do we respond with a gracious hand or with a ten inch cannon? Above all, the end result should be reconciliation, which is what happened with the tribes on the east and west sides of the Jordan. Finally, we need to watch that some of the things we build in our lives and ministries are not perceived by others to be "barriers" between us and them. An idea might seem good to us, but is it timely? Is it wise? Have we explained ourselves well enough? Are we appreciative of sensitivities and covered the bases?

IV. FAREWELL AND BURIAL IN THE LAND (Ch's 23 - 24)

Some scholars refer to this section as "Joshua's parting words and advice."

Joshua's last words (Ch's 23 - 24)

A. Joshua's first charge to Israel (Ch.23).

Israel has rest on every side, and Joshua is very old (23.1). Before departing this natural world, he has some words of sound advice (remembering all too well what God said to Moses about them in Deut.Ch.31 -- that the people will forsake the Lord, commit idolatry, and break the covenant). This first charge to Israel concerns the following:

- Calls for the elders and all Israel (23.1-2)
- Rehearsal of God's blessing (v's 3-5)
- Encourages obedience to the Law/Word (v.6)
- Warns against idolatry (v.7)
- Exhortation to cleave to God (v.8)

- Promises total victory (v's 9-10)
- Exhortation to love the Lord (v.11)
- Alliances with the inhabitants will be a trap to them (v's 12-13)
- Reminder of God's promises being fulfilled (v.14)
- The results of breaking the covenant (v's 15-16).

B. Joshua's second charge to Israel (Ch.24).

- Israel gathered at Shechem (24.1).

- The history of Israel reviewed (v's 2-13). This is a brief history of Israel since the call of Abraham. Joshua brings their remembrance back to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Egypt, Moses, the Red Sea, Balak, Balaam, crossing Jordan, and overcoming Jericho and other cities of Canaan. The people are also reminded that they are in the Promised Land because God had given it to them. Now they live in a land where they had not previously laboured, in cities they had not built, and eat of vineyards they did not plant (v.13). Perhaps the theme of this section is: "remember not to forget."

- The covenant to serve God (v's 14-28). Joshua exhorts the people to "fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth, and put away the foreign gods" (v.14). He brings the people to the point of making a choice -- the Lord or other gods (v.15) -- and Joshua himself vehemently declares his position; "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (v.15). Three times the people say, "We will serve the Lord" (v's 18,21,24), and a stone is erected as a future witness of the commitment they made this day (v.27). It is Joshua's dying exhortation not to go back to the old value system! It is amazing that there are foreign gods already in their midst (v.23), and Joshua suspected that future generations will not have a heart to serve the Lord (v.19).

- Three heroes of faith (v's 29-33). The Book of Joshua concludes with three heroes of faith -- Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar. A study of any of these three characters even now will enrich the student of the word. Joshua dismissed the people to their own inheritance. His task was complete. He finished all the Lord required him to. For Joshua, it was a case of "well done, true and faithful servant." He dies at the age of 110, his life having spanned Egypt, the wilderness, and the Promised Land. Joshua has been a model of courage, faith, dedication, and godly living ever since.

The bones of Joseph also received their final resting place at Shechem, for Joseph spoke of a day in faith when the young Israel in Egypt would enter the land as a mighty nation given them by the Lord (Gn.50.24-26). His bones were taken out of Egypt when Moses and Israel departed (Ex.13.9). Faith promises come true, even if it's centuries later. It was roughly three and one-half centuries before Joseph's bones were finally buried. Some of us become impatient after 3 ½ days! As Hebrews 11.22 says, "By faith Joseph, when his end was near,

spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.”

Eleazar, son of Aaron, also departs the scene. He was the second high priest of Israel, having survived the wilderness too. Interestingly, Joshua and Eleazar died closely around the same time, as did Moses and Aaron. Joshua faithfully served the Lord all the days of his life. The passing of Joshua and Eleazar certainly marked the end of a very significant era. New characters and ministers will soon enter the scene. How well will they fare? The judges were soon to come, and Phinehas (Eleazar’s son) will be high priest.

“Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua” (v.31). But new generations will arise that will forsake the Lord, and this is where we turn to the “rollercoaster ride” of the Book of Judges.

B. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (corresponding with notes above)

JOSHUA

Overview of Joshua

1. What is the meaning of the name “Joshua”? _____
2. The events recorded in the book of Joshua cover a period of about _____ years.
3. Note the outline of the book on the chart below:

_____	_____	_____	_____
the land	the land	the land	_____
			the land
Chapters	Chapters	Chapters	Chapters
_____ to _____	_____ to _____	_____ to _____	_____ to _____

Joshua The Man

4. Why do the notes state that Joshua's original name in his early years must have been a sign of hope and expectation?

5. According to the notes, what lesson do we learn from Joshua from the fact that he came from a line of leaders?

6. (a) Against what enemy did Joshua first lead Israel? (Ex 17:8-16).

- (b) In what way was this battle a preparation for him?

7. Joshua accompanied Moses on his ascent up Mount Sinai, even though he was not specifically invited. What lesson does this teach us, according to the notes? _____

8. (a) In Exodus 33:11, Joshua is called Moses' _____. God requires servanthood in His people.

(b) From this we learn that charismatic gifts flow from a person's

9. What good character trait do we see in Joshua when

(a) Moses had to rebuke him in Numbers chapter 11?

(b) He and Caleb were sent into Canaan to spy out the land?

- (c) He had to spend the next 40 years waiting in the wilderness, even though he had exercised faith in God?

- 10. (a) About how many years did Joshua take to capture the land of Canaan from the Canaanites? _____

- (b) During this time he was over _____ years of age.

The Command To Joshua (Chapter 1)

- 11. According to the notes, what lessons do we learn from Joshua chapter 1?

- (a) While Israel is still mourning Moses' death, God commands Israel to prepare to cross the Jordan River.

- (b) God requires Joshua to do something that is impossible – to cross the Jordan River. _____

- (c) Joshua is commanded to “be strong and courageous”.

- (d) God commanded the two and one-half tribes on the east of Jordan to help their brother clans before they can enjoy their own rest.

12. What does God say will result if Joshua meditates on the Word daily and obeys it? (Josh 1:8).

The Jericho Spies (Chapter 2)

13. The book of Joshua records God's promise to give the land of Canaan to Israel. True or false? _____

14. (a) How many spies were sent out the first time? _____

(b) How many spies were sent out the second time (40 years later)? _____

15. (a) What three things, in the eyes of Israel, did Rahab have against her?

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

(b) Why did she need to hide the spies?

(c) What three things was she told she must do if she and her family were to be saved?

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

16. According to the notes, what does the red cord in Rahab's window signify?

17. (a) How had the majority of the twelve spies reported forty years previously? (Num 13:31). _____

(b) How did the two spies of Joshua chapter 2 report? (Josh 2:24).

The Crossing of the Jordan (Chapter 3)

18. The people were commanded to follow the ark. According to the notes, what does this teach us about our inadequacy? _____

19. At what point of time did God promise that the water of Jordan would stop flowing? (Josh 3:13). _____

The Two Memorials (Chapter 4)

20. (a) At what place were the twelve stones from the Jordan River to be set up? (Josh 4:20). _____

(b) These stones were to be a memorial to future generations that "Israel crossed _____" (4:22).

(c) How did this miracle benefit Joshua as the leader of Israel? (4:14).

Preparations Before Jericho (Chapter 5)

21. (a) What did the circumcision signify? _____

(b) In the natural, why was it a foolish thing to do at that time?

22. The moment Israel ate some of the produce of Canaan, the manna ceased from falling. According to the notes, how was this symbolic?

23. (a) When the Lord appeared before Joshua, what did he look like? (Josh 5:13).

- (b) Who did the Lord say he was? (verse 14).

The Fall of Jericho (Chapter 6)

24. Describe the fortifications around Jericho.

25. What was God's strategy for them to penetrate these foundations?

26. According to the notes, which of the following was NOT a reason for this strategy?

- (a) To discover any weakness in the fortifications as they march around.
 - (b) To test Israel's obedience to see if they would follow this seemingly foolish strategy.
 - (c) To strike fear in the enemy.
27. What lesson about the principle behind tithing do we learn from the story of Jericho? _____

The Sin of Achan (Chapter 7)

28. Israel was defeated at Ai because Joshua omitted to consult _____

29. (a) How had the Canaanites felt when they heard of the might of Israel's God? (Josh 5:1). _____
(b) After Israel's attack upon Ai, whose hearts melted with fear because of disobedience? (7:5). _____

30. In the process of discovering who it was who brought judgment upon Israel, Israel had to present themselves before God. First tribe by tribe then (a) _____ by _____, then (b) _____ by _____ and lastly (c) _____ by _____. (7:14).
31. According to the notes, what should Achan have done before the narrowing-down process began? _____

32. According to Proverbs 28:13 who will find mercy? _____

33. We can compare Achan's sinning with Eve's sinning. (Josh 7:21 cf Gen 3:6-8).

(a) Firstly, Achan " _____ " the beautiful robe from Babylonia etc.

Eve " _____ " that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye.

(b) Then Achan " _____ " these things.

(c) Then Achan " _____ " them.

Eve " _____ " some fruit and ate it.

(d) Lastly, Achan " _____ " them in the ground inside his tent.

Eve (and Adam) " _____ " from the Lord God.

The Conquest of Ai (Chapter 8)

34. In contrast to God's strategy against Jericho, what is his strategy against Ai, in general terms? (8:1-2)

35. What was the fatal mistake the people of Ai made? (8:17).

36. (a) What did Joshua do with the body of the king of Ai? (8:29)

(b) A body hung on a tree was a symbol of God's _____
_____.

(c) When Jesus was hung on the cross, what was this a symbol of? (Gal 3:13). _____

37. (a) What was the name of the two mountains upon which Israel stood as the law was read to them? (8:30-35).

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(b) Those who heard the Lord's commandments were not only the men, but also _____

_____. (8:35).

The Gibeonites' Deceit (Chapter 9)

38. Who were the people who deceived Joshua into thinking that they were a distant people and therefore not under God's curse? _____

39. Israel allowed themselves to be deceived because they omitted to _____
_____. (9:14).

40. What punishment did Joshua place upon these people? (9:23).

Victory In The Land (Chapter 10-12)

41. What tactic did Israel take that contributed to their victory against the Canaanites? (10:7-10). _____

42. What two miracles did God do that also contributed to Israel's victory? (10:11-14).

43. (a) What was Israel to do with the enemies' horses and chariots after each victory? (11:6) _____

(b) According to the notes, what lesson can we learn from this?

44. According to the notes, why did there need to be such wholesale slaughter of the enemy? _____

List of Kings Conquered (Chapter 12)

45. The conquest of Canaan was achieved in four stages: (out of sequence) the Northern Campaign, the Central Campaign, the Southern Campaign and the Entry into Canaan. What was the chronological sequence of these stages? Note the numbering of these stages on the two maps in your notes.

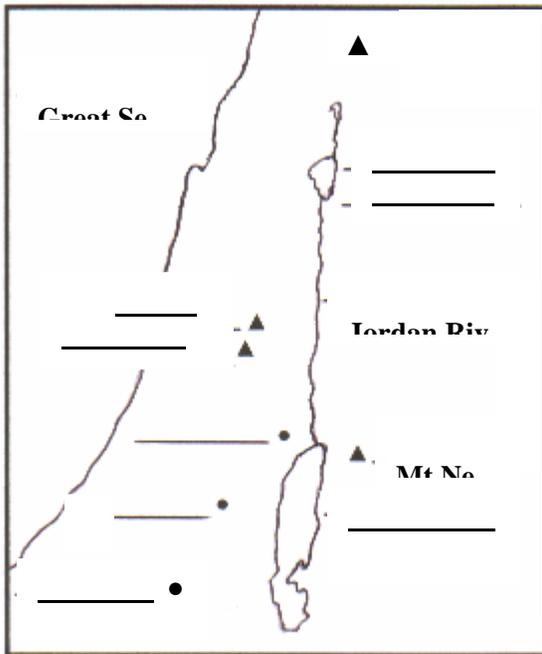
(First) _____

(Second) _____

(Third) _____

(Fourth) _____

46. By referring to your maps in the notes, note the following places on the map below: Great Sea (now Mediterranean Sea), Sea of Chinnereth (now Sea of Galilee), Jordan River, Mt. Hermon, Mt. Ebal, Mt. Gerizim, Mt. Nebo, Beersheba, Hebron, Jericho, Dead Sea (or Salt Sea).



The Tribal Inheritances (Chapters 13-19)

50. (a) In the presence of the Lord, who were involved in the distribution of the land to the tribes? (19:51). _____

(b) What method did they use to decide which land each tribe was given? _____

51. The notes state that there are at least two reasons for these territorial boundaries and these reasons teach us lessons today on how God deals with us.

Which below is NOT a lesson we learn from the distribution of the land of Canaan?

- (a) God wants to be fair and so he had given each of us the same gifts, talents and positions.
 - (b) The clay has no right to say to the potter: "Why have you made me thus?"
 - (c) God decides the work and authority each of us are to have in this life.
52. (a) Originally there were twelve sons of Jacob who became the patriarchs of the twelve tribes. However, the tribe of Joseph was split into two tribes. What were their names?
_____ and _____

(b) Seeing this tribe split into two tribes, how did it eventuate that the land of Canaan was divided among only twelve tribes?

(c) What was the four-fold inheritance of Levi?

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

(iv) _____

53. (a) During Israel's time in the wilderness, while they were staying at Shittim, what sin did the Israelite men commit? (Num 25:1,2).

(b) Although Numbers chapter 25 does not tell us who the instigator was, who was the instigator? (Num 31:16).

(c) What was the punishment inflicted upon Israel?

(d) How did Balaam die? (Josh 13:22).

54. A generation previously, what were the names of the two spies who gave a good report of the land in contrast to the other ten? _____ and _____ (Num 13:20; 14:6-9).

(a) What was now Caleb's request of Joshua? (Josh 14:6-15)

(b) What enemies lived in this area? _____

(c) How old was he when Moses sent him out with the other eleven spies?

(d) How many years had passed by since then? _____

(e) So how old was he now? _____

(f) What land did Joshua give him? _____

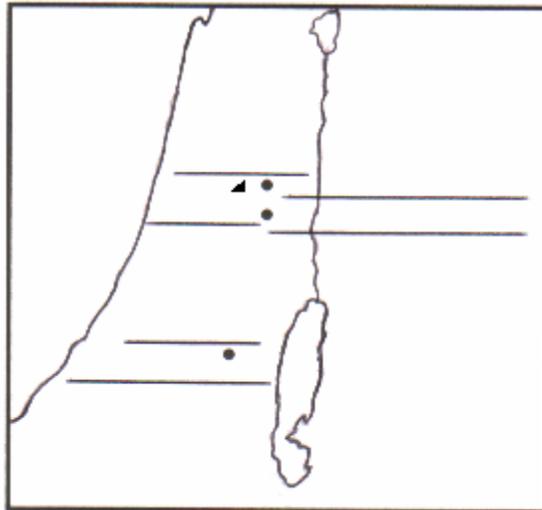
(g) By referring to the map below, note this place on your map at the end of these assignments. In brackets under the name write "Caleb's inheritance".

(h) According to the notes, how was it that throughout that period of time he had such determination to possess his portion of land?

—

55. (a) At this time where in Israel was the tabernacle set up?

(b) Note this name on the map below. In brackets underneath the name write "Site of the tabernacle".



56. (a) Who was the last person to receive his inheritance? (Josh 19:49). _____

(b) What life principle do we learn from this? _____

57. What one word describes the characteristic of the Israelites who received Joshua's rebuke in Joshua 18:3?

The Cities of Refuge (chapter 20)

58. (a) What kind of person were the cities of refuge designed to protect? (Josh 20:3).

(b) How many cities of refuge were there? _____

The Levitical Cities (Chapter 21)

59. What possession did God give to the Levites? (Josh 21:3).

The Altar of Witness (Chapter 22)

60. (a) What did the two and one-half tribes on the east side of Jordan do that enraged the other tribes? (Josh 22:10).

(b) What did the western tribes think the eastern tribes would use the altar for? _____

(c) For what purpose did the eastern tribes build their altar?

(Josh 22:27). _____

(d) According to the notes, what lesson does this teach us?

Joshua's last words (Chapters 23-24)

61. (a) Where were the leaders of Israel gathered to hear Joshua's last words? (24:1). _____

(b) Note this place on the map with Q55 above. Write the words "Joshua's last words" in brackets under the name.

(c) Joshua told them that they must _____
whom they will serve. (Josh 24:15). Then he adds the famous words: "But as for me and my household, _____
_____".

62. Match the following stories in the book of Joshua with their corresponding lessons for us.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (a) Rash actions, though forgiven, can still have consequences. | Israel's defeat at Ai. |
| (b) We need to read God's Word frequently. | The story of the Gibeonites |
| (c) Covetousness leads to further sin. | Mt Gerizim and Mt Ebal |
| (d) Success comes through faith. | Israel's circumcision at Gilgal |
| (e) Through the new covenant relationship, God "rolls away" our sins. | The defeat of Jericho |
| (f) We must frequently rehearse God's miracles in past experiences to our children. | The two memorials at Jordan |
| (g) God can make a bridge between the old life and the new. | Israel crossing |