

Welcome to the

# Story of the Bible

With Daniel Cherry

Part III: Preparing the Way



CHURCH *of* CHRIST  
*at Jenks Avenue*

# 4-Week Overview of the Bible Outline

## I. The Beginning

- A. Creation → Babel (Gen. 1-11)
- B. Abraham → Joseph (Gen. 12-50)

## II. Old Testament History

- A. Moses → Kings (Exodus-2 Chron)
- B. Exile → Return (Ezra-Esther, Prophets)

## III. Preparing the Way

- A. Intertestamental Period
- B. Jesus in the Gospels (Matthew-John)

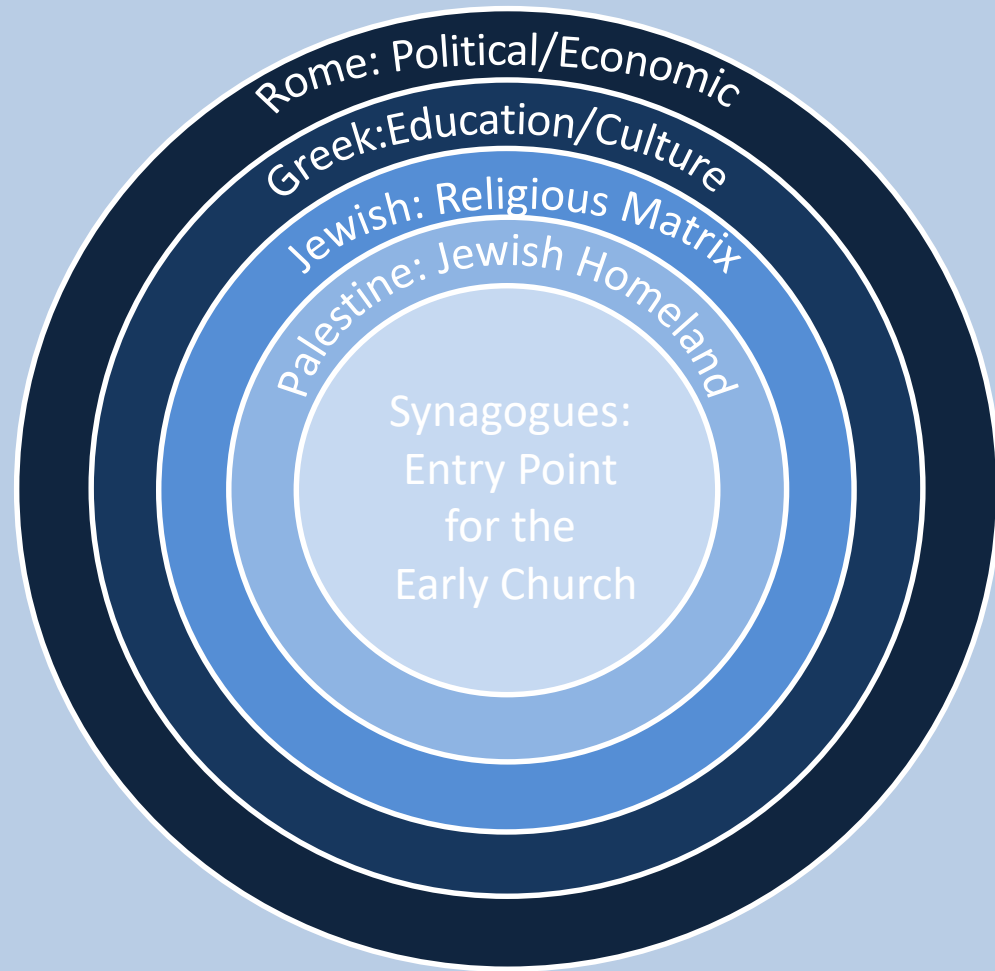
## IV. The Church

- A. The Beginning of the Church (Acts)
- B. Letters to the Churches (Romans-Revelation)

## A. Intertestamental Period

### 1. Intertestamental Period Intro

- a. The 400 years between Malachi and Matthew set up the multilayered setting into which God would choose for the church to be born.
- b. In a discussion on this time period, it may be helpful to think of these multiple layers as an onion.



## 2. Greece

- a. Alexander the Great (356-323bc), Educated by Aristotle, taught education, not birth makes a true Greek.
- b. He established a world economy, language, education, philosophy and individualism.
- c. When he died at 33 his four generals tried to keep the monarchy together but failed – Split the empire into Four Greek Kingdoms
- d. For 250 years, the Seleucids/Ptolemies to Israel's north/south traded control over Israel.

### 3. Rome

- a. While the Greeks considered man as the highest authority and for the Jews it was God, for the City/State of Rome it was law and order which lead to peace.
  
- b. They defeated territories with sheer power and organization. Upon conquest, they would establish peace, offer citizenship for military service, “Romanized” local cultures
  
- c. From 262bc to 63bc Rome slowly conquered the entire Greek empire.

## 4. The Dispersion of the Jews

- a. Diaspora – The Persians managed the dispersion of captured people around the world
- b. Scribes rather than priests taught the Law and slowly established synagogues.
- c. Jews were unique in the ancient world, educating their people in a “book religion.”

## 5. The Maccabean (Hasmonean) Period (167-63bc)

- a. When Mattathias Hashmon, priest from Modin, was told to sacrifice to pagan gods, he fled to the mountains with his five sons and built up a resistance to Seleucid rule.
- b. Mattathias' son, Judas Maccabeus, led a successful campaign against the Seleucids.
- c. Dec. 14, 164bc pious Jews rededicated the temple in the Feast of Lights (Hanukkah)
- d. Eventually the Hasmonean family became a dynasty of high priests ruling Palestine.
- e. Under John Hyrcanus (134-104bc), grandson of Mattathias, an opposition group of conservative Jews arose called Pharisees. John's supporters were called Sadducees.

## 5. The Maccabean (Hasmonean) Period (167-63bc)

- f. Pharisees – Committed to scriptural authority and scribes' interpretation/tradition.
  - i. **Staunchly opposed unscriptural rule by Greeks, Romans, and Hasmoneans**
  - ii. **The party of scholars who advanced Hebrew education of all Palestinian Jews.**
  - iii. **Developed a system for training non-priest scholars/teachers, "Rabbis."**
- g. Sadducees – Mostly wealthy priests and aristocrats
  - i. **Capitalized on power politics who controlled the temple and temple ritual.**
  - iii. **Under Roman rule they collaborated with Rome to maintain control of the temple**



## 6. Jews in the Roman Period (from 63bc onward)

- a. In 63bc Pompey, the Roman general, took control of Jerusalem for Rome.
- b. In 40bc, Herod, a Jewish prince of Idumea was appointed king of Judea
- c. Herod the Great (37-4bc) brought outstanding building projects, national stature and wealth to Judea (Palestine)
  - i. His most notable work was the massive rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem which started in 19bc and wasn't completed until 63ad (7 years before it was destroyed).
  - ii. Herod became very jealous of his position and killed his sons, wife and even babies in Bethlehem to protect it.
  - iii. When Herod the Great died he was the third wealthiest person in the Roman Empire.

## B. Jesus in the Gospels (Matthew-John)

1. The Four Gospels tell the story of Jesus' life and ministry.

a. Matthew – Apostle, a former tax collector, for a primarily Jewish audience.

i. Committed to showing that Jesus Christ is the Promised Messiah who fulfilled prophecy.

ii. Great Commission (28:18-20) shows fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:3)

b. Mark – Cousin of Barnabas, companion of Peter, for a primarily Roman audience.

i. Emphasizes Evangelism and Discipleship – following Jesus

## **B. Jesus in the Gospels (Matthew-John)**

**1. The Four Gospels tell the story of Jesus' life and ministry.**

**c. Luke – Companion of Paul and a Doctor, for a Greek/Jewish/Christian official.**

**i. To eliminate doubt in young Christians. (1:4)**

**ii. Fulfillment of prophecy (Lk. 4:14-19, see also Acts. 2:14-37, 7:2-53)**

**iii. Restoring of Israel (1:68-80 - Zechariah's Song) - (see Jeremiah 31-33) (Acts 1:6)**

**iv. The Saving of Gentiles (Luke 4:23-27)**

**v. Low lifted up, and the high brought down (ex. Luke 1:51-53, 16:19-31, 18:9-14)**

## B. Jesus in the Gospels (Matthew-John)

1. The Four Gospels tell the story of Jesus' life and ministry.

d. John – Apostle, fisherman, Jesus' best friend, for a primarily Greek audience.

i. Jesus is the “Logos” = “WORD”

ii. In Greek Philosophy “logos” was the underlying cosmic principle uniting all of reality.

iii. In the O.T. “logos” was associated with God's act of creation and cosmic order.

2. Each gospel demonstrates how Jesus is the answer to Abraham's promise (Gen. 12:1-3)
- a. Matthew – The answer to prophecy, descendent from Abraham
  - b. Mark – For the Jews and Romans, blessing “all people” through transformation
  - c. Luke – For “all kinds of people” – low/high, male/female, slave/free, sinful/religious...
  - d. John – The “logos” that holds all things together, God who loves the “whole world”

### 3. The Life of Jesus Christ

- a. Born around 4 bc – in Bethlehem – to a virgin – traveled to Egypt to escape Herod
- b. Returned from Egypt while still a baby (Herod died in 4 bc, probably late March)
- c. Settled in Nazareth (Mat. 2:19-23) - Father was likely a stone mason in Sepphoris
- d. Age 12 (c. 8 ad) impressed the leaders in the temple (Luke 2:41-52)
- e. Age 30 (c. 26 ad) baptized in southern Jordan River region – then forty-day fast.
- f. Traveled back to Galilee, called disciples, returned to Jerusalem and up through Samaria.

### 3. The Life of Jesus Christ

- g. Age 31 (c. 27 ad) – “Year of popularity” – spent the year traveling and teaching in Galilee
- h. Age 32 (c. 28 ad) – “Year of opposition” – traveled through Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Phoenicia
- i. Age 33 (c. 29 ad) – “The Passion” – traveled to Jerusalem to be crucified, buried and resurrected to bring salvation (bless) the world.
- j. Jesus’ final act was to instruct his disciples to take this saving blessing to all people.
- k. Jesus ascended to heaven and promised to return when this work had been done.

## 4. Conclusions

- a. God worked through human events and history to prepare the perfect setting for Christ.
- b. It took 2100 years for God to fulfill the third part of his promise.
- c. God is still at work today.