BIBLE LANDS STUDY GUIDE
Student Edition

A 20-week study resource tracking key events, covenants, and geography through the lands of the Bible.

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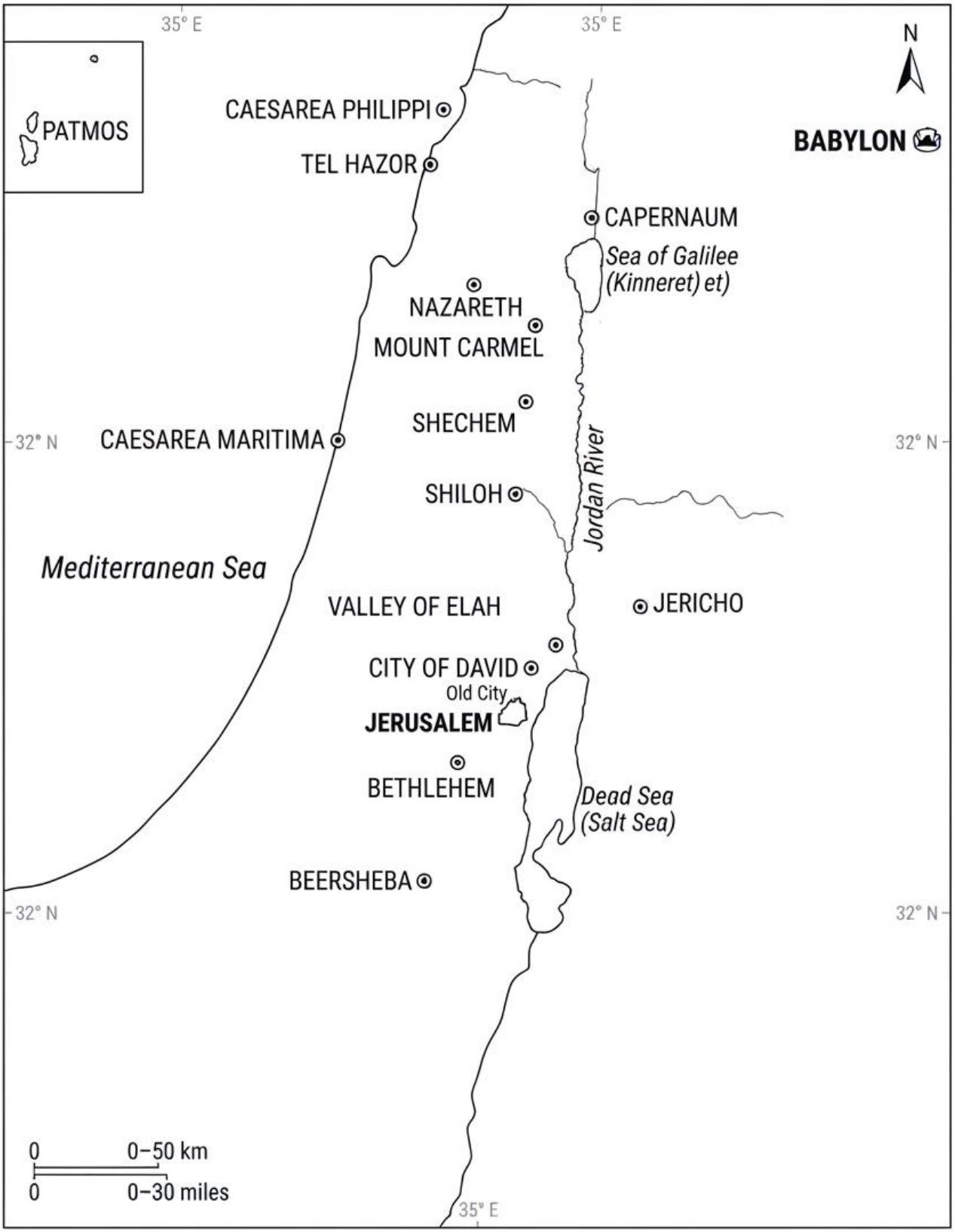
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REFERENCE MAP: 20 SIGNIFICANT BIBLE LANDS LOCATIONS



Beersheba

Weeks 1–5: The Patriarchs & The Conquest

Study Theme: The southern frontier and the patriarchal covenants.

Relevant Scriptures: Genesis 21:22-34, Genesis 26:23-33; 1 Kings 19:3-4

Significant Historical Events:

• Abraham digs a well, secures it with seven ewe lambs, and makes a covenant of peace with Abimelech, calling on the name of the eternal God.

• Isaac receives a renewal of the Abrahamic covenant from the Lord and digs his own well of oath (Shibah) here.

• Elijah flees from Jezebel to Beersheba, leaving his servant behind before wandering into the wilderness to pray to God.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are wells used as major focal points for covenants throughout Genesis?

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2. How does digging a permanent well show faith in a promise that won't be fully realized for generations?

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3. What can we learn from Elijah choosing Beersheba as his final boundary point before entering the wilderness?

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Shechem

Weeks 1–5: The Patriarchs & The Conquest

Study Theme: Altar building and national covenant renewal.

Relevant Scriptures: Genesis 12:6-7; Joshua 24:1-28; John 4:4-26

Significant Historical Events:

• Abraham builds his first altar upon entering Canaan.

• Joshua delivers his final challenge to the Israelite tribes.

• Joseph's bones are laid to rest following the Exodus from Egypt.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the significance of Abraham building his first altar precisely at Shechem?

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2. What does 'choose this day whom you will serve' mean in our modern daily context?

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3. How does Jesus' conversation at Jacob's Well redeem the historical brokenness of Shechem?

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Jericho

Weeks 1–5: The Patriarchs & The Conquest

Study Theme: Miraculous warfare and entering the Promised Land.

Relevant Scriptures: Joshua 6:1-27; Luke 19:1-10; Luke 10 :25-37

Significant Historical Events:

• The strategic fortress walls collapse supernaturally.

• Rahab and her entire household are redeemed and saved.

• Jesus passes through Jericho, bringing immediate salvation to the house of Zaccheus and healing blind Bartimaeus.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did God command six days of total silence before the final shout?

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2. How does Rahab's rescue challenge our understanding of who can be used in God's redemptive story?

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3. What might Jericho being a cursed city, and Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus there symbolize?

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Shiloh

Weeks 1–5: The Patriarchs & The Conquest

Study Theme: The era of the Judges and the Tabernacle.

Relevant Scriptures: Joshua 18:1-10; 1 Samuel 1:1-28; Psalm 78 :56-61

Significant Historical Events:

• The Tabernacle is permanently erected at Shiloh following the conquest, and the remaining tribal territories are distributed by lots.

• Hannah offers her agonizing, silent prayer for a son.

• The corrupt sons of Eli bring out the Ark from Shiloh as a superstitious war token, leading to its capture and Shiloh's subsequent destruction.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Hannah's prayer teach us about navigating deep, unfulfilled personal longing?

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2. Why did using the Ark as a good luck charm against the Philistines fail?

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3. What happens to a community when the spiritual leadership grows complacent?

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Valley of Elah

Weeks 1–5: The Patriarchs & The Conquest

Study Theme: The rise of the monarchy and active faith.

Relevant Scriptures: 1 Samuel 17:1-58; 1 Samuel 21:9

Significant Historical Events:

• The Israelite and Philistine armies camp on opposing ridges, with the Israelites paralyzed by the daily taunts of the giant champion Goliath.

• David rejects King Saul's heavy bronze armor, choosing instead five smooth stones and a simple shepherd's sling.

• David kills Goliath with a single strike, cutting off his head and catalyzing a sweeping military rout of the Philistines.

Discussion Questions:

1. What 'Goliaths' or systemic fears paralyze believers today?

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2. What is the danger of trying to fight spiritual battles using someone else's 'armor'?

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3. How does David's focus on God's reputation alter the entire dynamic of the crisis?

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City of David

Weeks 6–10: Kings, Prophets & Exile

Study Theme: The establishment of Jerusalem as the political and spiritual capital.

Relevant Scriptures: 2 Samuel 5:4-10; 2 Chronicles 32:1-8; Psalm 48

Significant Historical Events:

• David captures the Jebusite stronghold and makes it his capital.

• King Hezekiah carves a 1,749-foot rock tunnel to safeguard water from Assyrians.

• The prophet Jeremiah is imprisoned in a muddy cistern within the palace complex for declaring the imminent fall of the city.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why was consolidating the political and spiritual capital in Jerusalem crucial for David's kingdom?

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2. How does Hezekiah's preparation demonstrate a balance between practical work and spiritual trust?

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3. What does the deep excavation of this site teach us about the historical reliability of scripture?

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Tel Megiddo

Weeks 6–10: Kings, Prophets & Exile

Study Theme: Solomon's administrative power and prophetic judgment.

Relevant Scriptures: 1 Kings 9:15-19; 2 Kings 23:28-30; Revelation 16:12-16

Significant Historical Events:

• King Solomon builds a fortified administrative and chariot outpost.

• Good King Josiah is tragically killed trying to intercept foreign forces.

• The physical plains become the prophetic symbol for Armageddon.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can material success and strong security systems subtly erode relying on God?

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2. What lessons can we draw from the tragic, premature death of King Josiah at Megiddo?

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3. Why is this specific geographic choke point used as a symbol for the final battle in Revelation?

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Mount Carmel

Weeks 6–10: Kings, Prophets & Exile

Study Theme: Uncompromising prophetic witness.

Relevant Scriptures: 1 Kings 18:17-40; 2 Kings 2:25; James 5:16-18

Significant Historical Events:

• Elijah challenges 450 prophets of Baal to a duel to prove whose God is the true God.

• Elijah repairs the broken altar of God using twelve stones, pours water over his sacrifice, and watches God consume it with fire.

• The false prophets are executed in the Kishon Valley, and Elijah climbs to the peak prays to God, who brings rain upon the earth.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Elijah's question – 'How long will you waver between two opinions?' – mean for us today?

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2. What does the fire consuming a wet altar reveal about God's timing and power?

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3. How does Elijah differ from us allowing him to cause such a demonstration of God's power?

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Tel Hazor

Weeks 6–10: Kings, Prophets & Exile

Study Theme: The northern defense and the Assyrian destruction.

Relevant Scriptures: Joshua 11:1-11; Judges 4:1-24; 2 Kings 15:29

Significant Historical Events:

• Joshua defeats King Jabin of Hazor, hamstringing his massive chariot fleet and burning the fortified city to the ground.

• Hazor rebuilds and under a later King Jabin oppresses Israel until Deborah and Barak crush his general Sisera.

• King Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria completely levels Hazor, carrying its population into permanent northern exile.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did God explicitly command to burn Hazor and hamstring their horses?

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2. How does the recurrence of oppression from Hazor in Judges reveal the danger of incomplete obedience?

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3. What does the ruin of a great city say about the temporary nature of earthly strength?

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Babylon

Weeks 6–10: Kings, Prophets & Exile

Study Theme: Maintaining faith in a hostile culture.

Relevant Scriptures: Daniel 1:1-21; Daniel 3:1-10; Jeremiah 29 :1-14

Significant Historical Events:

• Daniel and his three friends are exiled to Babylon and subjected to rigorous cultural assimilation, renaming, and dietary pressures.

• Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to bow to Nebuchadnezzar's golden image and are thrown into a blazing furnace, only to walk out unharmed.

• Belshazzar sees the divine handwriting on the wall during a blasphemous feast.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why were Daniel & friends willing to be educated in Babylon, but not eat the King's food?

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2. What might the presence of the fourth man in the fiery furnace tell us about how God delivers His people?

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3. How does Jeremiah's letter (Jeremiah 29) help us live as cultural exiles today?

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Bethlehem

Weeks 11–15: The Life & Ministry of Jesus

Study Theme: The Incarnation and fulfillment of prophecy.

Relevant Scriptures: Ruth 1:22-2:3, 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Luke 2:1-20; Micah 5:2

Significant Historical Events:

• Ruth the Moabitess marries Boaz, becoming the great-grandmother of King David.

• The Prophet Samuel bypasses David's older brothers to anoint him as Israel's next king.

• Jesus Christ is born in a manger, heralded by angels to the shepherds in the surrounding hills around Bethlehem.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did God choose an obscure village and simple shepherds for His grand entrance?

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2. How does the interaction between Boaz and Ruth show a pattern for Christ as our Redeemer?

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3. What is the significance of the first announcement of the Messiah's birth going to field shepherds?

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Nazareth

Weeks 11–15: The Life & Ministry of Jesus

Study Theme: Jesus' hidden years and initial rejection.

Relevant Scriptures: Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 4:6-20; John 1:45-46

Significant Historical Events:

• Jesus spends nearly 30 years in obscurity, in Nazareth.

• He declares His public mission from Isaiah 61 in His local synagogue in Nazareth.

• The townsfolk reject His authority and message and try to throw Him off a rocky cliff on the outskirts of Nazareth.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can we remain faithful during the 'hidden' or unapplauded seasons of life?

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2. Why did Jesus’ declaration of grace to the Gentiles infuriate the people of Nazareth so intensely?

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3. How do we handle the pain of being misunderstood or rejected by those who claim to know us best?

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Jordan River

Weeks 11–15: The Life & Ministry of Jesus

Study Theme: Identity, submission, and public launching.

Relevant Scriptures: Joshua 3:14-17; 2 Kings 5:1-14; Matthew 3:1-17

Significant Historical Events:

• The priests stepped into the flooded Jordan. The waters parted, and Israel crossed into the Promised land on dry ground.

• Naaman the Syrian general at Elisha's direction, dips in the Jordan and is cleansed from his leprosy.

• John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan with the Father and the Holy Spirit's witness.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Jesus insist on being baptized by John if He did not have the guilt of sin?

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2. How does the Father affirming Jesus *before* He performed any public miracles frame our understanding of Jesus' identity?

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3. What does Naaman's initial resistance to dipping in the Jordan teach us about pride and obedience?

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Capernaum

Weeks 11–15: The Life & Ministry of Jesus

Study Theme: Discipleship and everyday miracles.

Relevant Scriptures: Matthew 4:12-17; Mark 2:1-12; John 6:24-59

Significant Historical Events:

• Jesus establishes this fishing hub as His primary ministry base.

• Four friends tear open a roof to lower a paralyzed man to Jesus.

• He teaches the foundational Bread of Life sermon in the Capernaum synagogue.

Discussion Questions:

1. What can we learn about spiritual community from the four friends who carried the paralytic?

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2. How do we handle it when Jesus focuses on healing our souls over fixing our comfort? (Forgiving the paralyzed mans sins before healing him)

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3. Why do you think Capernaum was so rejecting of Jesus, despite the great miracles seen in the city (cf. Matthew 11:23-24)?

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Caesarea Philippi

Weeks 11–15: The Life & Ministry of Jesus

Study Theme: The identity of Christ and the authority of the Church.

Relevant Scriptures: Matthew 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30

Significant Historical Events:

• Jesus questions His disciples near pagan shrines at Mount Hermon.

• Peter declares boldly: 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

• Jesus promises that the gates of hell will not overcome His Church.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Jesus pick a pagan stronghold to reveal His true identity?

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2. What does the phrase *'the gates of hell shall not prevail'* mean for the church's posture in the world?

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3. How does Peter's confession differentiate Jesus from ordinary cultural influencers or prophets?

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Mount of Olives

Weeks 16–20: Jesus' Last Week & Death, and the Early Church

Study Theme: Betrayal, weeping, and apocalyptic return.

Relevant Scriptures: 2 Samuel 15:30; Luke 22:39-41; Zechariah 14:4 ; Acts 1:9-12

Significant Historical Events:

• King David climbed the Mount of Olives weeping, barefoot, and with his head covered while fleeing his rebellious son Absalom.

• Jesus experienced intense agony and prayed fervently in Gethsemane.

• Christ ascends into heaven with a promise of a physical return.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the symbolic connection between the process of crushing olives and Jesus' experience in Gethsemene?

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2. How does Jesus' prayer – *'Not my will, but yours be done'* – serve as our blueprint for processing deep crisis?

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3. How should the certainty of Christ's return affect our daily priorities?

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Jesus' Tomb

Weeks 16–20: Jesus' Last Week & Death, and the Early Church

Study Theme: The Crucifixion, Burial, and Resurrection.

Relevant Scriptures: John 19:38–20:18; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Significant Historical Events:

• Jesus is crucified outside the city walls for the sins of humanity.

• His body is laid in a borrowed stone tomb sealed with a heavy rock.

• He rises bodily on the third day, conquering death permanently.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is the historical reality of the empty tomb essential to Christian faith?

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2. How does Christ's resurrection give us hope when facing dead ends in our lives?

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3. What is our responsibility as eyewitnesses and messengers of the resurrection today?

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Caesarea Maritima

Weeks 16–20: Jesus' Last Week & Death, and the Early Church

Study Theme: The global expansion of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Relevant Scriptures: Acts 10:1-48; Acts 24:1-27; Acts 26:1-32

Significant Historical Events:

• The conversion of Cornelius and his household at Peter's sermon took place here.

• The Apostle Paul is imprisoned for two years in the Herodian palace complex.

• Paul delivers powerful legal testimonies before governors and rulers.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do we overcome cultural biases to share God's truth with unexpected people?

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2. How should we view seasons of forced 'imprisonment' or delay based on Paul's two years here?

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3. What does Paul's bold testimony before top rulers teach us about our calling in secular environments?

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Antioch

Weeks 16–20: Jesus' Last Week & Death, and the Early Church

Study Theme: Cross-cultural missions and a new identity.

Relevant Scriptures: Acts 11:19-30; Acts 13:1-3; Galatians 2:11-14

Significant Historical Events:

• Believers are called 'Christians' for the first time in this multi-ethnic hub.

• Jewish and Gentile disciples worship together in unified harmony.

• The church fasts, prays, and sends Paul and Barnabas on international missions.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why was it appropriate that disciples were first called Christians in Antioch?

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2. What steps can our local church take to foster true cross-cultural unity?

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3. How do we balance our congregation's internal health with supporting preaching all over the world?

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Patmos

Weeks 16–20: Jesus' Last Week & Death, and the Early Church

Study Theme: Endurance under persecution and the ultimate victory.

Relevant Scriptures: Revelation 1:1-20; Revelation 21:1-7

Significant Historical Events:

• The elderly Apostle John is exiled to a harsh Roman penal colony.

• He receives stunning visions of the exalted, glorious Christ.

• The book of Revelation frames the ultimate destruction of evil, and the triumph of the Christ over all.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does John's exile on Patmos prove that human systems can isolate our bodies but never our spirit?

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2. Why is seeing Christ in His full, exalted glory vital during times of suffering?

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3. How does knowing the final victory of God change your view of current world trials?

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