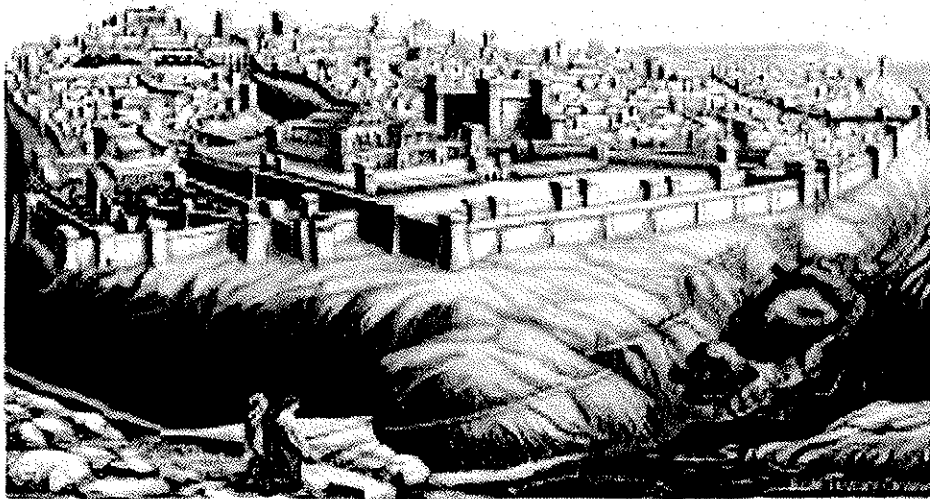


Year 8 Religion, Catholic Studies

The Setting of the Gospels



Name:

Teacher:

Class:

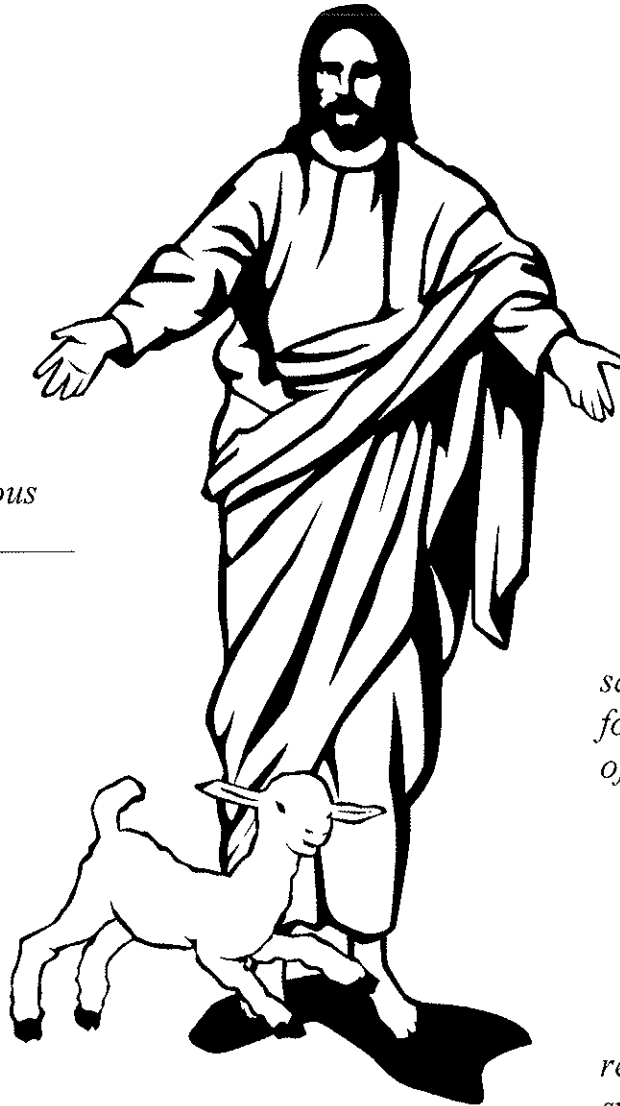
A8-3 The Setting of the Gospels

Jesus was a marvellous teacher, shaping his message for the people who heard it. He lived in a largely agricultural Jewish community in 1st century Palestine, governed by the Roman authorities and their own Jewish leaders. This unit examines the political context of events described in the Gospels, including the religious and social groups active at the time of Jesus, setting them in the context of the land of Israel. This background knowledge and understanding is necessary for a fuller appreciation of the teachings of Jesus and the events of his life.

The Jewish Jesus...

lived by the Torah and often entered into disputes about its meaning. _____

was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth, according to the Torah. _____



was 'born of a woman, born under the Jewish Law' (Torah)

observed the Jewish religious festivals. _____

saw his ministry as being only for 'the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' _____

encouraged others to follow the commandments of the Torah.

regularly attended the synagogue _____ and taught there. _____

did not seek to abolish the Torah, but to fulfil it. _____

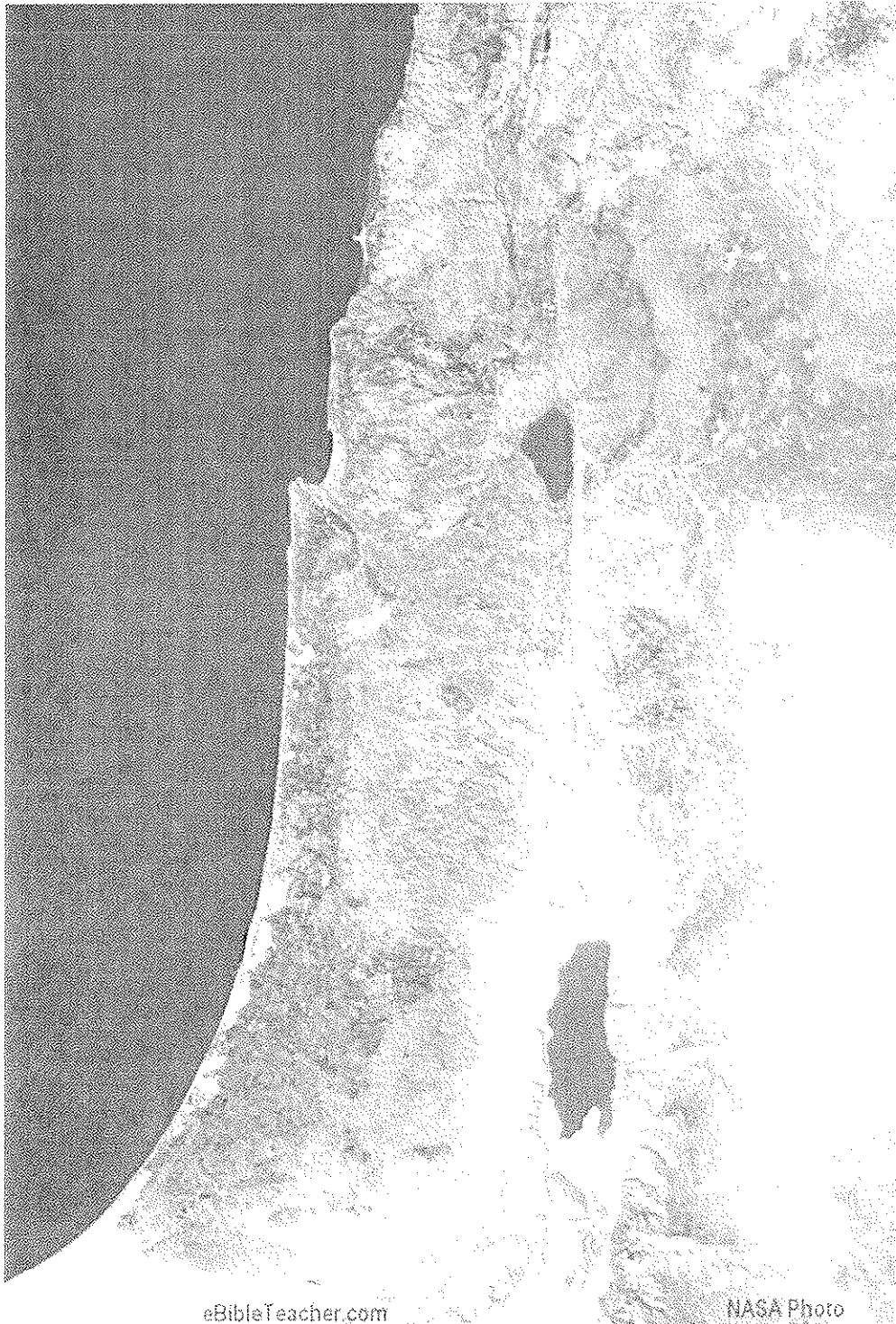
was presented in the Temple, as was the Jewish custom of the time.

Instructions

Match the following bible reference to the description of Jesus: Gal 4:4; Mt 5:17; Mk 12:18-31; Lk 2:21; Mt 8:4; Lk 2:22; Mk 6:2; Mt 15:24; Jn 2:13; Lk 4:16

Israel: Mapping Exercise

1. Use 'To Know, Worship and Love' (p7) and your Bible to label the following map of Israel with the significant towns that appear in the New Testament.
2. Explain how these towns featured in Jesus' ministry. That is, why did Jesus go to the town? What part did the town play in Jesus' life and ministry?
3. Look closely at the map below and describe the *terrain* (area of land).

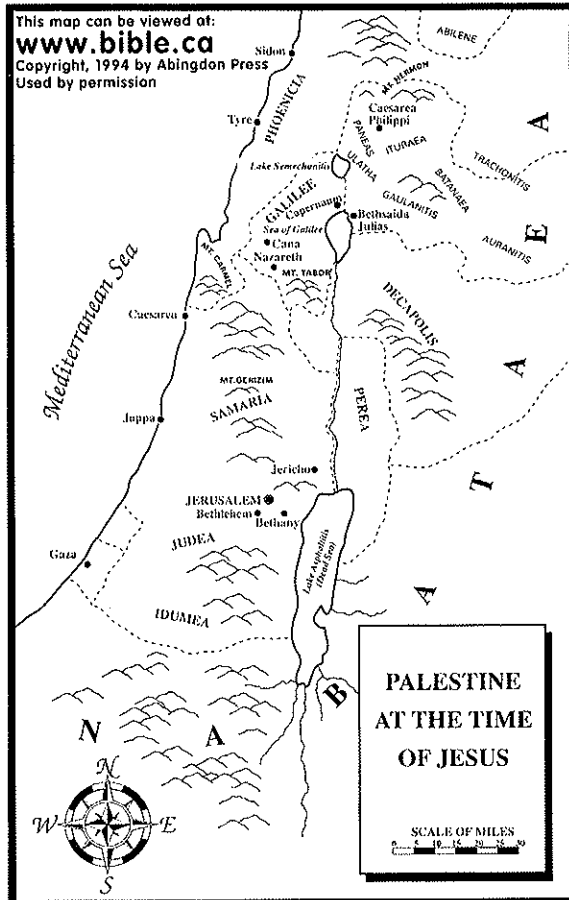


<http://www.ebibleteacher.com/imagehtml/mapblanks.html#Israel>

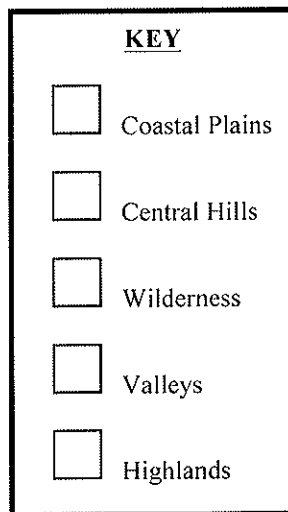
Israel at the Time of Jesus: Internet Task

ONE – Israel's Terrain

Use http://www.bible-history.com/geography/maps/map_palestine_physical_features.html to locate and identify the geographical regions of Palestine on the map below.



<http://www.bible.ca/maps/maps-palestine-33AD.htm>



TWO - Geography

Using <http://www.bible-history.com/> navigate the site to locate information about the geographical features of Israel. **Geography → Jesus → Background**

Under 'Background' locate the following features and answer the questions that follow about each feature.

Features:

1. Highways of Palestine
2. Springs of Water Beneath Jerusalem
3. The Central Mountainous Plateau
4. The Coastal Plain
5. The Great Desert
6. The Great Sea
7. The Rocky Hills of Palestine
8. The Valley of the Jordan

Activities:

1. Describe the geographical area.
2. Explain how this geographical area is connected to Jesus' life OR a part of his society or the time he lived.

THREE – Climate and Seasons

Using http://www.bible-history.com/geography/seasons_months_israel.html complete the following activities:

1. Identify the seasons at the time of Jesus (Note: Jesus lived in a time when the Jewish culture was influenced by the Greco-Roman civilization)
2. Describe the climate, the rainfall and the dew that effected Israel in the ancient world.
3. Account for the diversity (range) of crops that existed around the time of Jesus. (In your answer, name the crops, the month of the year they were grown and the location they were planted)

FOUR – Animals

Use the website <http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Canaan/Animals.html> to complete the following:

1. Name the animals that existed in both the Bronze and Iron Age
2. Describe one of the problems people had with farming cattle
3. Explain the changes over time in the farming of pigs
4. Explain the absence of seafood in the diet of these people
5. Name six other types of foods the people of this time produced
6. Research and record the dates of the Bronze Age, the Iron Age and the Hellenistic Period

FIVE – Flowers and Birds

Using http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/series_b_thanksgiving.htm look at the flowers and birds (the raven is the last image you need) and complete the following activities for each image:

1. Name the flower or bird
2. Outline why/how Jesus referred to this flower or animal

SIX – Housing in Villages and Cities 1st Century Israel

Use the website <http://www.jesus-institute.org/historical-jesus/jesus-firstcenturycontext.shtml> to complete the following activities:

1. Outline village life in the 1st Century Israel
2. Describe the housing in which people lived

SEVEN – Industry

A. Fishing

Use <http://www.bible-history.com/sketches/ancient/fishermen.html> to outline why fishing was a source of work in the first century and how it used to be done.

B. Agriculture, Trade and Building

Use <http://www.jesus-institute.org/historical-jesus/jesus-firstcenturycontext.shtml> to describe the three areas of economic life in 1st Century Israel.

Israel at the Time of Jesus

GEOGRAPHY

Highways of Palestine

The Rocky Hills of Palestine

The Coastal Plain

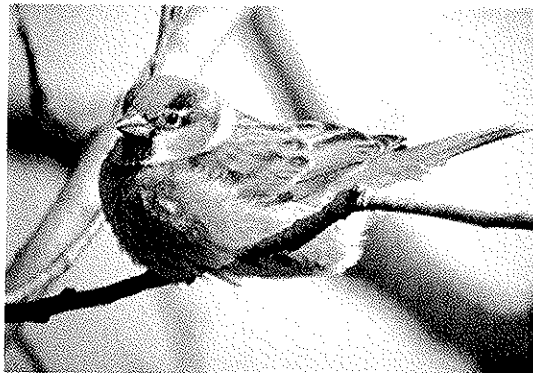
The Valley of the Jordan

The Central Mountainous Plateau

Samaria's Hills and Fertile Valleys

CLIMATE AND SEASONS

ANIMALS





1 Read each of these stories and then write an explanation of what Jesus meant when he talked about the Kingdom of Heaven.

Kingdom of Heaven

Create a collage using contemporary images that Jesus would use to illustrate the following;

The Kingdom of Heaven is like....

MY WORLD

Aspect of Australia	Outline current aspects and the effect on your life
Climate and Geography	
Social (e.g. lifestyle)	
Religious (e.g. multifaith)	
Cultural (e.g. multicultural)	
Political (e.g. local, state, federal government-democracy)	

POLITICAL SITUATION IN ISRAEL AT THE TIME OF JESUS' MINISTRY

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	What is this passage saying about the political situation in Palestine when Jesus' was born
Teacher Matthew 2:1-6	
Group 1 Matthew 2:7- 12	

Group 1
Matthew 2:13-
15

Group 1
Matthew 2:16-
18

Group 1
Matthew 2:19-
23

POLITICS AT THE TIME OF JESUS

For thousands of years, the Jewish people were under foreign rule with only short periods of independence.

What does 'independence' mean?

The Jewish people had been ruled by:

- Egyptians
- Syrians
- Babylonians
- Persians
- Greeks
- Romans

At the time of Jesus, the Romans ruled the area of Palestine (modern day Israel) – the area where Jesus was born and lived his life. The Romans had conquered Israel in 63 BC.

At this time, Palestine was divided into provinces (like states).

Name three of these provinces.

-
-
-

Which province was Jesus born in? _____

Which province did he grow up in? _____



How do you think the Jews felt towards the Romans during this time?

What do you think this would have resulted in?

The Romans established the family of Herod as the local rulers. Herod the Great ruled and maintained unity of his land from 37 to 4 BC.



What did Herod order at around the time of Jesus' birth?

Why do you think he did this?

When Herod the Great died, the land of Israel was divided into three regions – one for each of his sons.

- Philip inherited the north east region called Caesarea Philippi
- Herod Antipas ruled Jesus' home region of Galilee and Perea
- Herod Archelaus ruled the southern regions of Judea and Samaria

Mark these areas on your map from the beginning of the topic.

The rule of Herod Archelaus was a disaster. In 6 AD, the Romans forced him out of Israel and ruled the area themselves. In his place, the Romans appointed a procurator (like a governor). From 26 to 36 AD this was Pontius Pilate.



Mark the political events mentioned on this sheet on the timeline below



LIFE FOR JEWISH WOMEN IN BIBLE TIMES

FAMILY, WORK AND RELIGION

Go to this website: http://www.womeninthebible.net/3.1.Family_Work_Religion.htm

Click on the Link at the right of the Home page "JEWISH LIFE".

.. Define the following terms, in the context of Bible times, in your own words:

CLAN: _____

FAMILY: _____

TRIBE: _____

1. How was Family life different to our current day experience of "Family"? Give two examples

1. _____

2. _____

3. How is the word "FAMILY" often used in the Bible?

4. What TWO groups influenced the Family?

a) _____ b) _____

5. What is a "MATRIACH"? What role did this person play in the life of the Family?

5. List the 5 groups of people usually associated with a household in Bible times and describe their function;

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

What is the common stereotype about women in Biblical times? What was the reality?

Look at some of the social structures you encounter in your daily life, for example, your family, your group of friends, neighbours, etc.

8a. Who is in charge of the group?

8b. Who has real authority? Who makes the decisions? Is it the person in charge, or is it another member of the group?

8c. How is authority exercised in the group? (For example, through respect, intimidation, affection?)

8d. How do the structures of these groups compare with the structure of the family/clan of biblical times?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finding a respected, learned and well-to-do man to be her husband 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spinning and weaving cloth, to make the family's clothing and in the earlier period the tents they lived in 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making and selling finished items of clothing 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designing and making suitable clothing for all members of the household, for both winter and summer 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dressing herself well and attractively 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping herself physically and mentally strong and fit 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving religious instruction to her children: she was their first teacher 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gathering food and assembling a varied and healthy diet for the members of the household 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • administering the finances of the family and overseeing the family business, with all the necessary skills 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervising investments and making a profit from them, then re-investing the profits 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • buying investment property wisely 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performing charitable work and caring for the poor 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overseeing the emotional and physical well-being of all the members of the household 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being available at all times to anyone who needed her. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organizing and supervising the tasks of all the servants in the household 	

Groups in Jewish Society at the Time of Jesus - Mix and Match Activity

Mark 15:1

So the Pharisees and the _____ asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?'



Mark 7:5

SADDUCEES

Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the _____, and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Luke 6:12-16

SANHEDRIN

Now there was a _____ named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.'

SCRIBES

Matthew 2:4-6



ZEALOTS

... and calling together all the chief priests and _____ of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:
"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."'

John 11:47



The Pharisees and _____ came, and to test Jesus they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. He answered them, 'When it is evening, you say, "It will be fair weather, for the sky is red." And in the morning, "It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening." You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.' Then he left them and went away.

Matthew 16:1-4



ESSENES

PHARISEES

So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the _____, and said, 'What are we to do? This man is performing many signs.'

John 3:1-3



As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole _____. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.