

# World Christian Foundations

## Sample Study Materials

## Module 2: Guide for Lessons 11-15

Sample

Lesson 11: Getting Fitted with Mediterranean Glasses *Mulholland*

Lesson 12: The Times of the Gentiles *Osborne*

Lesson 13: Reshaping History: Alexander the Great and Global Civilization *Winter*

Lesson 14: The Effect of Hellenistic Culture on Jewish Life *Burg*

These lessons focus on the rise of Hellenism and its influence on the world. Within this world Judaism struggles to retain its identity. The resulting culture war takes many forms and shapes, including armed conflict. The Apocrypha is a major source of historical and religious information for the Jewish side of the conflict; thus it is important for you to be aware of its contents.

**Lesson 11.** Dr. Russell's hermeneutic challenge is to look at the Bible in the same way a first century AD person would. This is a challenge, for the Western individualistic molding sees the world quite differently than do other regions of the world. The concept of honor and shame vs. guilt is explored. Other cultural assumptions common to the Western missionary are presented in the reading by Paul Hiebert.

**Lesson 12.** Jerusalem lost its independence when the Babylonians captured the city and led captives to Babylon. Except for a brief respite, Jerusalem is controlled by foreign world empires for the rest of her history, right up to the modern era. The Bible calls it "the times of the Gentiles." World empires have powerful sway in other parts of the globe as well. Sometimes they abut one another and sometimes they do not. You need to be able to put them in a time-frame with one another, and there are charts in the books that help you do that. Finally, you are asked to nail down this Mediterranean world perspective with specific exegetical examples.

**Lesson 13.** Alexander the Great is the focal personality of the age which biblical historians term the Intertestamental Period. The Mediterranean world as well as Persia and part of India pivot around him. He left a legacy, Hellenism, that is still held in awe. The Renaissance saw a Hellenistic revival, as did later developments in the West. Alexander made it possible for a unified culture to exist in a far-flung world, within which the Septuagint was created and within which Christian missionaries later could work in a cohesive society.

**Lesson 14.** Judah finds itself in between two rival Hellenistic kingdoms. Each wants to control Judah so as to create a buffer from the other and to control the trade routes. Later Judah is under the domination of the Seleucids, who are aggressively Hellenistic and desire to Hellenize all the territory they control. Judeans reacted differently to this attempt, but they are all influenced in some way. Perhaps one can say that Judah won the battle, but Hellenism won the war. The period of the Maccabean movement was a strong reaction against the Hellenism of the Seleucids, but even the Maccabees were effectively influenced by Hellenism. Kurinsky's *The Eighth Day* is a source of

much good information, but the thesis of his book is controversial since he sees Judaic culture as having the greater influence on other cultures, including the Greeks, of that period.

**Lesson 15.** In this triad Dr. Winter explores the relationship between the Greeks and Christianity. It is a case study of the previously suggested influence of Greek ideas on the Christian faith. Dr. Osborne introduces the subject of the mystery religions, using Plutarch's introduction to the life of Alexander the Great as a grid. Mystery religions became very popular and later were a serious challenge to Christianity. Several readings present studies of their history and belief structure. Dr. Christensen explores the structure and content of the Apocrypha. Most evangelicals have only a hazy idea of what it is. Yet, it is a major source of information for this period. You are asked to read a section of the apocryphal book Tobit. You may be surprised at the missiological consciousness of its author. Where did such ideas come from?

**Note:** Are you ready for a breather week? Remember the suggestion that after a few weeks of study, a break week be planned. It can be used for rest, for catching up with everything that was set aside during the study weeks, for getting back on schedule, etc. It is wise to pace yourself so as to make continuous progress in studies without burning yourself out!

Remember that university studies tend to present more than many students can absorb. You are not expected to learn everything equally well. Keep practicing your skills of skimming and focusing on the main points in much of your work, while selecting a few topics for more intense study. In your Intellectual Journal, note those topics and readings you may wish to look at again later on—perhaps for your term paper, or after you finish the Module and have a broader range of perspectives on the subject.

The Midterm and Final Exams have essay questions, in which you are expected to synthesize your knowledge of a range of topics. The exam questions will be taken from the study questions which mentors should have already given to students. Students will not know exactly which questions will be asked until they take the exam. While the 45-60 minute essays should include specific data in support of your contentions, there is no need to memorize every fact you read. So, enjoy reading widely, without worrying about memorizing everything! After all, the rest of your life you will have access to books and journals to look up forgotten facts again. Get an overview of what God and mankind were doing during this period of time, and then focus your attention on aspects of particular lasting importance.



**Unanswered Questions & Review continued**

For your **Personal Response**, sit back and ask yourself what one thought during your study today was the most meaningful to you, most exciting, most inspiring, most startling, most stirring, most horrifying, most wrong, most unexpected, or most important, and jot it down. This section is “you.” There are no right or wrong answers, so you can’t be graded up or down on content, but you can be graded up or down on thoughtfulness, personal sensitivity, or the meaningfulness of your thoughts. Be as specific as possible.

These five pages and the five **Reflection Question** pages will constitute the meat of your time with your mentor. From time

to time your mentor may be asked to send us a copy of these pages for spot checking, which we will be doing on an unannounced basis. What you do on these ten pages each week will constitute much of one-third of your total grade.

In your **Intellectual Journal**, record ideas, insights, things you’d like to explore further, and anything else which will help you to remember what held your thoughts during this time. The journal will be of key importance when the time for term papers comes at the end of the module. After writing a few ideas on this page, you may want to develop them further in a separate notebook kept as your main Intellectual Journal.

**Personal Response**

(Greek font temporarily missing here)

*Ὁ Ἰησοῦς* ~ to his disciples: “You will receive *duvnamin* when *toῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος* comes upon you, *καὶ*; you will be *μαρτυροῦντες* both in *Ιερουσαλήμ* *καὶ*; *ἐν πάσῃ* /  
(in all) *Ἰουδαίᾳ* / *καὶ*; *Σαμαρείᾳ* / *καὶ*; to the extremity *τῆς γῆς* (of the earth).”

**Intellectual Journal**

# Module 2: Lesson 22

## Jewish Life and Missions in the Diaspora and Palestine

*Sample transcription of  
Introduction and Review  
tape for one lesson.*

William L. Osborne

### Introduction

We want to introduce you to some new titles. The first in your reading is ISBE, or the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, a four-volume work published by Eerdmans. It's an extended Bible dictionary, and therefore you may find it a very useful reference tool for your studies. Question number two is designed to test your critical thinking; we're giving you two different views on Jewish missions in the Diaspora. As you reflect on that, we hope that you begin to develop some skills to work on your research paper later on in the program.

Our focus today is going to be on Jewish missions, but before that, we want to again give the context of the Jewish world. We started doing that yesterday with our study on the Roman world. It's very important to realize that Judaism and Christianity are found in the broader context of the Roman world. We want to introduce you to a couple of our textbooks for this part of the module which will also be used in the next module. The first is *A History of Christianity*, by Kenneth Scott Latourette. This is a standard in the field. It's used by seminaries all over the nation, and was chosen especially because it's very missionary oriented. You'll discover that Latourette was the Sterling Professor of Missions and Oriental History, and fellow of Berkeley College at Yale University. In this book you'll read how the world was prepared for the Christian movement. We talked a little about that yesterday. But today we'll go even deeper.

In his book, Latourette explores the different religious options available to the world in the first century. You have the mystery religions, Judaism, Christianity, and, of course, the traditional polytheism of the Roman and Greek empires. There are two implications: one is that Judaism is not only the cradle found in the Roman world, but also its opposition. The

second implication is that, in addition, Judaism is caught up in the intrigues of the Roman world. You find flashes of nationalism: people revolt, form their political opinions. Some accommodate themselves to the Roman world, others do not. The Jewish people are separated on a political basis: the radicals, the conservatives, the middle-of-the-road people. Because of all this mix and the radical nature of the Zealots, who finally seem to get enough momentum to have revolts against the Romans, the people in general suffer. Those who buck the Roman system pay for their folly.

It is said that there were so many Jews in the Empire that concessions had to be made by the Romans to the Jews, especially in the religious arena. They kept making appeals to the Romans to give this exemption and that exemption, and they won some of these exemptions. But the extremists were never really satisfied with the exemptions they got. They wanted independence. So part of the whole mix is the messianic fervor that revolves around the political aspect of the Messiah. Actually, in some parts of the world we find this still going on. Some of the liberation theologies in the world are still involved in the political mix.

The second church history book I want to introduce is *Two Kingdoms*, published by Moody Press and authored by Clouse, Pierard, and Yamauchi. From Module One you know the name Yamauchi, professor of history at Miami University in Ohio. The other two men worked together at Indiana State University and came together to publish this book. That's another one of our standard texts, especially for the third module. In this selection the authors want us to think how Christianity interacted with Rome, especially during the first century. How did imperial policy affect Christians? How did it affect Jews? How did the policies of the emperors directly affect the Christian

movement? How did they affect Paul? How did they affect Jesus? How did they affect James? and so on. The second half of this reading talks about the Jewish background of Christianity. Since Christianity was a Jewish sect for one hundred years at least, we need to recognize that the way Rome treated the Jew was also the way Rome treated Christians in the first century.

Now we want to turn our focus to the missionary aspect. In recent years there has been a lot of discussion: Was there really missionary activity to the world among the Jews? There's broad disagreement. Scot McKnight, in one of your readings, wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on this topic and later published it as a book in 1991. More recently, Louis Feldman in 1992 studied this whole question very extensively from the third century BC roughly up to the second century. Then he did another study from the third century to the fifth century AD, and came to the opposite conclusion than Scot McKnight's. Feldman is a Jewish scholar, McKnight is a Christian, and they came out on opposite sides of the question. McKnight does not see direct missionary activity; Feldman does.

Another author who comments about this period from the first century AD up to the sixth states that Judaism earnestly sought to bring a weary world under the wings of the *Shekina*. He wrote in 1934 that the motive was to make the world one in the worship of the true God. Ezekiel Kaufmann would agree with that: he says Israel is sent to the nations. He sees Jeremiah as the first prophet to speak the missionary message (Jer 10:11) when he addressed the people of the world at that time in the language of Aramaic, a verse that seems to suggest that he wanted them to abandon idolatry and turn to the true worship of God. Kaufmann called this a practical universalism, and he calls Jeremiah the father of the Jewish missionaries.

However, there's a third position you can take. You do not have to be totally pro or con; you can take the middle road. Samuel Sandmel, another Jewish scholar, takes this middle position. He said, "It is perhaps correct to characterize Judaism in contrast to Christianity as relatively non-proselytizing; yet there was at least a recurrent, or sporadic, thrust toward it."

These authors used the same sources, but they come up with different results. Why? What is the hermeneutical grid through which they sift the evidence? Clearly related to the whole question of proselytizing is the question

of how many Jews there were in the Roman world—a question of demographics. Here we have a writing by Seneca, referring to the Jewish people: "The customs of this most accursed race have prevailed to such an extent that they are everywhere received; the conquered have imposed their laws upon the conquerors!" According to that statement you'd assume that there were millions and millions of Jewish people in the Diaspora. If the number was high, why was it so high? Can we really grasp the significance of that?

In a book you were introduced to earlier in this module, *The Eighth Day*, Kurinsky studies the question of the demographics. He says we cannot explain it on the basis of natural birth, but he never tells us how to explain it. Where did all these people come from? He says—not he only, but others say—we cannot explain it on the basis of natural birth. Can we explain it on the basis of missions? As you look at the numbers, you find that many people question the numbers; it's an elusive concept of how many people there were. Estimates range between four and eight million, and most of those lived outside of Palestine. The *Atlas of the Jewish World* says there were probably over eight million Jews. This is 4.5% of all the population of the world, if you consider the total to be 170 million; but how do we know that? That's even more elusive. They say there were more than two million Jews in Judea; and Alexandria in Egypt had over a million Jews, plus those in Syria, Asia Minor, and Babylon.

The classic study on the demographics of the Jewish population is that of Harnack. He says that there were 4–4.5 million, and that's 7% of the world population. Should we throw up our hands and say we just don't know how many? One scholar says there's no way to know how many Jews there were; he threw up his hands. I recently read a review on the demographics of the ancient world, and the author ripped to shreds the methodology that scholars have been using to discover how many people lived in the ancient world. Yet, Johannes Blauw, in quoting another scholar named G. Bertram, says that the Jewish Diaspora cannot be completely explained by exile and immigration, and he accepts the 4.5 million figure of Harnack. Thus you see the complexity of the question. We want you to try to sort it out, to get involved in the rigors of analysis. Just to sweeten the deal for you, we've given you an original source from Josephus.

## Review

**Question #1** continues question #3 from Lesson 19: “What contributions did the Romans make to the world which would facilitate missions?”

We talked about the political unity, the roads, and the commerce on those roads. Latourette also talks about the language: Greek was pretty much the universal language, and in the Western empire, Latin was used quite frequently. So Latin and Greek were the basic languages, and most of that world spoke or understood Greek. Then he talks about the religious and moral hunger of the people, about the general lack of faith in the old religions. People were searching for something new. Latourette says that the pagans desired spiritual reality in their lives; therefore there was a built-in hunger, which was part of God’s grace as well, as he worked in the world.

At the same time, the philosophers in Greece were casting doubts upon the gods, and this began to invade the popular culture, just as when the intellectual philosophers today start talking about ideas, eventually their ideas invade our popular culture as well. Latourette talks about social dislocation for various reasons: it could be disease or war; it could be because people were ushered into slavery as captives. In many ways there was social dislocation. We know from our own experiences that people who are dislocated are much more responsive to the Christian message. At the same time, they needed a sense of community. They had lost their community, and Judaism, especially in the pre-Christian era, gave the people a sense of community—they were a close-knit, a unified people.

Then we can talk about the Diaspora as well. This was part of God’s plan to prepare the way for Christianity, because now you have a monotheistic people scattered throughout the Roman Empire. Paul went to these people; that’s the way he was first successful whenever he went into a city, if there was a synagogue there. He had these God-fearers who responded very quickly to the Gospel. The Diaspora was part of that whole Roman Empire mentality, that people went wherever they wanted to. So we find Jewish settlements all over the world.

Let’s go to **question #2**: “Evaluate the evidence for Jewish missionary presence in the second century BC through the second century AD.” The first place you probably want to begin

is with definitions. This is where McKnight begins: he talks about the missionary definition, a conscious design to reach the outsiders. At the end of his book, where you have the chapter that you’re reading today, you have the conclusion: he says that he cannot find in Judaism a conscious, aggressive push to bring in the Gentiles that you would expect from a missionary religion. Now, Feldman talks about an active missionary presence. Are they using the same definition of missionary? It appears not.

Another writer says that conversion was a voluntary act by the masses of Gentiles who wished to join the Jewish converts. Is this a similar definition? Conversion included those people who joined the covenant of Israel. So we need to talk about definitions: are we talking about the same thing?

The second line of attack you might want to take is: what does the Bible say, especially the New Testament? Of course, you are all familiar with Matt 23:15, where Jesus condemns the Pharisees for crossing land and sea to make one proselyte. How do we understand this passage? Do we take the natural meaning of that and say that the Pharisees would go to any length they could to win converts to Judaism, especially Phariseeism? Or are we to interpret this verse as the Pharisees going to the other sects of Judaism to convert them to Phariseeism? Or are we to take another escape route and say that Jesus is really exaggerating here to make a point, and that the success of their missionary activity is really slight? But even if you say that, there is still some kind of emphasis there that the Pharisees feel compelled to go.

Another verse you want to look at is Acts 15:21: “Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.” How would you understand that verse? If Moses is preached, is it that there is a synagogue in every city, and therefore Moses is being taught in the synagogues? Or is it more missionary oriented: the people preaching Moses to the Gentiles? Paul says in Gal 5:11 that he preached circumcision; that was before he became a believer. What did he mean by that? Was he a Pharisee missionary who went to the Gentiles and said: “We want you to become Jewish, and to do that, you must also be circumcised”? Or is he talking about Gentiles who attached themselves to the synagogues and refused to be circumcised? The reading from Josephus indicates some people did that, such as King Azotus.

Philo also mentions this. Philo was willing to say: to become Jewish, it's not necessary for you to become circumcised to be part of our religion. Others would say the first generation is okay; the second generation will automatically become circumcised. So what's the problem? Was Paul against that kind of mentality? Exactly what does the biblical evidence mean? You may also have reflected upon John the Baptist when he was baptizing Jews through his message of repentance. Was Paul doing the same type of thing?

When Jesus talked about his personal resurrection, you know the disciples couldn't understand it. When he talked about the concept of the Messiah's suffering, they were dull-minded, according to Mark. They could not understand his comments about it. But when he talked about the mission of the disciples to go into the Gentile world, there was no reaction. Why? Was it an idea that they were already familiar with? If it was a brand new concept of Christianity, why wasn't some kind of reaction portrayed? Was Paul surprised when he was called to be a missionary? He seemed to accept it as par for the course. Does this reflect his early experience of being a missionary to the Gentile world as a Pharisee? Where did the whole idea of a missionary come from? Why was it not controversial enough to be commented on?

Some of you may be mathematicians. Dr. Winter pointed out that if you take the formula of progression and work through the numbers, beginning in 586 BC, of 150,000 Jews in Judea, at a growth-rate of .627%, you come out with 8 million Jewish people by the year AD 50. In that case the number would not seem to be extravagant. If you went to .536% it would be 4.5 million people. How do these numbers work out with the idea that the Jewish religion was a missionary religion? It's also interesting that in the Sybilline Chronicle, the author says that around AD 50 there were 6,944,000 Jewish people in the Roman Empire. This number was based, according to the author, upon Emperor Claudius's census in AD 42.

The fourth line of attack you might want to take would be to look at the ceremonies within Judaism that allowed proselytes to become Jewish. What was the procedure? We find they had pre-conversion classes and a discipleship

time. You find Nero's wife almost became Jewish through this procedure. This evidence is not conclusive, because all kinds of people have initiation rites to bring people in, even if they just come a few at a time with no particular push. But at the same time you have all these God-fearers attached to the synagogues throughout the Roman Empire. Were they just people who happened to stumble upon Judaism? Or was something more involved?

A fifth line of attack would be to sift through the evidence of the Septuagint. In Module One we talked about Gen 28:14-15 in the Septuagint, where you have the north, south, east, west being pointed out and the expression that's very close to Jesus' words, "Lo, I am with you always." Some people claim that the Septuagint became a great missionary book of the early church. Professor Blauw points out that it's not so much what is in the Septuagint, but the way it was interpreted, that is very important. For example, let's look at Isa 55:5 from the Hebrew text. You find there's not really any missionary thrust there. But the Septuagint says, "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations—*plural*—that knew thee not ..." In the Hebrew text, that "nations" is singular, *goy*; it's not a plural, *goyim*. By changing it to plural, you suddenly get a missionary thrust. Also, we pointed out before that the word *ger*, which means "a stranger" in the Old Testament, in the Septuagint becomes the word for "proselyte."

Then you could talk about the forced conversions that took place during the Hasmonean empire. Why did they feel the necessity of forcing people to become Jewish? Was it simply a flexing of their military muscles, that they wanted to prove who they were? Or did they want to make all the people in the land that they controlled Jewish? If so, does that hint at a missionary idea in the back of their minds, that it was necessary to make these people Jewish? They had already lived there for three centuries or so, so why now did they suddenly become Jewish?

Those are some of the avenues that you would have to investigate. There are many other things that you could point out as well, and I am sure you went some other directions with this. This is only a sample of the method, the rigor that's involved in working on a thesis.

# **Inductive Bible Study**

# The Inductive Method of Study

## Inductive Bible Study Syllabus

Mary L. Graham

### Texts:

1. *Inductive Bible Study Explained* by Mary Creswell Graham.
2. A version of the Bible with paragraphs, preferably a formal or dynamic translation.

### PART I (Genesis 1 - 11)

The inductive approach goes back at least to the time of Aristotle, and probably before that. It has been the method of science. During the past one hundred years inductive method has been applied, in a formal sense, to a study of the Bible.

Studying the Bible inductively is not only a great adventure, but also a process that enables us to formulate our own spiritual convictions. What is it?

Briefly put, *induction* means going from observation of the details to generalizations. *Deduction* means beginning with generalizations and going to the details for support. The best way to understand the inductive process is to do it. We will begin with the book of Genesis.

- A. Read *Inductive Bible Study Explained* (hereafter referred to as *IBSE*), pp. 1-8. Write down six suggestions to follow in approaching your study.
- B. Read Genesis 1-11 **before** you hear or read anything about the book of Genesis. Using the Chart for Genesis 1-11, write down a **name for each paragraph**. (Read *IBSE* pp. 9-10 on how to do this.)
- C. Write down **ten observations** from this section, Genesis 1-11. Read *IBSE* pp. 11-15 on how to make observations. (For example: The main characters are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. In comparing ch. 1 with ch. 2, I notice \_\_\_\_\_.)
- D. Discovering the **form** or structure of a book helps us understand the purpose of the author. Read *IBSE* pp. 16-17 about Subject Matter, Form, and Meaning. Looking at your chart, you see that chapter 5 is a different kind of writing—genealogy. The double lines set off this chapter as well as chapters 10-11. Then notice that the chapters are grouped into sections. Give a title to each chapter and then give titles to the sections. How are the chapters related to each other? Review *IBSE* pp. 14-15 for help.
- E. Give an overall title to Genesis 1-11. Write it at the top of the chart.

### PART II (Genesis 12 - 50)

- A. Seeing the **whole** is important in getting the message of a book. The best way to do this is to make a **chart**. Read *IBSE* pp. 18-25 on how to make charts.
- B. Since Genesis is so long, our basic unit will be **chapter** titles rather than paragraph titles. Use two sheets of 8 1/2" x 11" paper. These are provided for the Chart for Genesis 12-50. Paste them end to end so that you have a sheet 8 1/2" x 22". You may use shelf paper that is 12" or 18" wide, if you want more space.

- C. **Chapter** titles of ch. 1-11 are put on the chart for you. Add the rest of the chapter titles, by reading according to the assignments below.
  1. Read and give titles to ch. 12-15. Add to your chart.
  2. Read and give titles to ch. 16-19. Add to your chart.
  3. Read and give titles to ch. 20-25. Add to your chart.
  4. Read and give titles to ch. 26-36. Add to your chart.
  5. Read and give titles to ch. 37-50. Add to your chart.
- D. Give titles to the **sections** also. Then decide on an **overall title** for the book. Read *IBSE* p. 28 on giving an overall title to the book. Give much thought to the matter.
- E. Read the rest of *IBSE* pp. 26-38. Do the following:
  1. List several **characteristics** of Genesis.
  2. Write down possible **topics** to trace through the book.
  3. Write five **conclusions**. (Observations are facts. Conclusions are interpretations.)
  4. Write down five **personal applications** from the book of Genesis.

### PART III (Jonah)

- A. Review *IBSE*.
- B. Begin a **chart** of the book of Jonah, using as many suggestions as possible from pp. 18-19. Use shelf paper 18" wide so that you may include many details. Begin by naming paragraphs. Include some **detail** under each paragraph title.
- C. Name the chapters. Show relationships between the parts by **connecting lines**. Indicate words that are **repeated**, etc., as suggested in *IBSE*.
- D. Refer to p. 36 for suggestions to complete your study of Jonah. Be sure to choose an overall title that gives the message of the book. Think carefully. State the purpose of the author in your own words.

### PART IV (Esther)

- A. Begin a study of the book of Esther inductively. Use all the suggestions possible in *IBSE*. Begin a **chart** by:
  1. Naming paragraphs in ch. 1-4.
  2. Naming paragraphs in ch. 5-8.
  3. Naming paragraphs in ch. 9-10.
- B. Complete your chart by following the suggestions in *IBSE*, pp. 18-19.
- C. Note especially p. 27 in *IBSE* on how to trace a **topic** through a book. Choose a topic to trace through Esther, other than emotions, described on p. 27. Write down your conclusions.

### PART V (Haggai)

Study the book of Haggai using the inductive method. Use p. 36 of *IBSE* as a guide. Make your chart on paper that is 12" or 18" wide. Include as much detail as possible without causing confusion. Be sure to indicate relationships.