

Lesson #15 - LIFE OF JESUS

His last 40 days

Before starting this lesson, read **Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:12-20; Luke 24:13-53; John 20:19 - Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; John 1:1-18 or Harmony of the Gospels, SECTIONS 181 - 188**

At the end of the last lesson, Jesus had risen from the dead, while it was still dark.

Just before sunrise, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb. Finding it empty, she thinks the body of Jesus has been stolen, so she leaves.

After sunrise, a series of people come to the tomb

The women with spices

Peter and John.

Mary Magdalene returns.

She is the first to see Jesus and talk with Him.

Jesus next appears to the women with spices as they are on the way back to the upper room in Jerusalem.

Later that morning Jesus spends time with Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane.

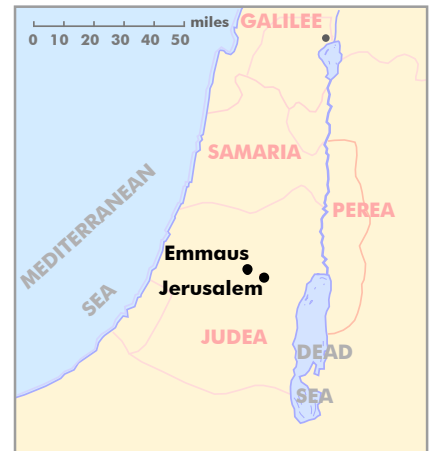


Mid-afternoon, 2 followers of Jesus leave Jerusalem for Emmaus, 7 miles to the northwest.

Jesus suddenly joins them but keeps His identity hidden. They tell Him what they have heard that morning - that Jesus had risen, the women saw Him and they saw angels at the tomb. But like the apostles, the 2 men admit they do not believe it.

As they continue walking, Jesus starts explaining verses from the Old Testament that describe the Messiah. They have known these verses all their lives, but now for the first time, these verses make sense to them and it all fits together. Yes, the prophets talked about a suffering Messiah who would die.

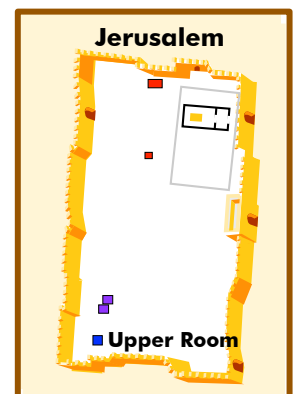
When they arrive in Emmaus, they invite Him to stay for early supper. From His teaching they know He is a rabbi, so they ask Him to give the Jewish blessing over the food. As He broke the bread, recited the blessing of thankfulness and began to give it to them, they suddenly realize it is Jesus Himself. But just as suddenly He disappears.



They are so excited, they leave their meal and run back to Jerusalem to tell the apostles. However, even with the testimony of these men, the apostles refuse to believe.

Altho the apostles have been told 3 times to leave Jerusalem and go to Galilee, the majority do not believe He is alive. So they want to stay in Jerusalem to see what further develops. In grace, Jesus now goes to them. It is after sundown, in the evening. By Jewish time, it is the beginning of Monday. But John is writing at the end of the century when no one understands Jewish time. So thruout his book, he uses Roman time and says it is Sunday evening.

Ten of the apostles are together in the upper room, with the doors locked. Then suddenly Jesus is in the room with them and speaks to them. They think they are seeing a ghost, since He came thru locked doors. To prove He is real, Jesus has them feel His flesh and bones, look at His wounds and then He eats some broiled fish.



THE APOSTLES COMMISSIONED

Jesus now gives them their ministry. He tells them,

As My Father sent Me to represent Him, so I am now sending you to represent Me.

John 20:21

So they can understand this ministry, He gives them the Holy Spirit. Here again, we are still in the Old Testament Jewish Era. The Holy Spirit is only **OVER** people for ministry. If they disobey, the Holy Spirit leaves them.

The Holy Spirit had been **OVER** the apostles for ministry with Jesus.

But in the last 2 days, they deserted Jesus and they have refused to believe. This is why the Holy Spirit left them.

Now with Jesus' words, the Holy Spirit is **OVER** them once again. The Holy Spirit will help them understand and remember Jesus' instruction over the next 6 weeks. The Holy Spirit will work from the outside.

Then on the day of Pentecost when the Church begins, they will receive the Holy Spirit to live **INSIDE** of them forever.

The apostles have been given their **ministry**

They have been given the **Holy Spirit** to be over them.

Jesus gives them **authority to deal with sin**. This will involve their Gospel message. John 20:23

They will tell the people,

If you repent and accept the payment of Jesus, your sin is taken away.

If you refuse to believe in Jesus as deity and Savior, God cannot forgive your sin.

Animals sacrifices no longer forgive sin.

The apostles can speak with authority about the requirement to be forgiven.

Jesus also gives them **authority to use church discipline**.

When others try to hinder God's work, they will have authority to declare God's judgment.

Peter used this authority to bring instant death to Ananias and Sapphira in the Jerusalem church when they lied to the Holy Spirit.

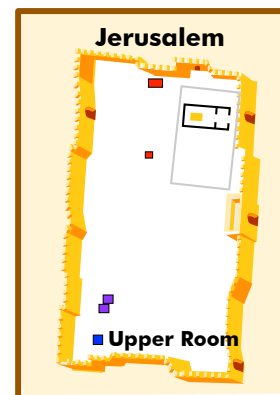
Paul used it later to excommunicate a church leader in Corinth and then to forgive him and accept him back when he repented. He reinstated him in leadership.

In this time with the apostles, Jesus has commissioned them for ministry.

Just as suddenly as He appeared, Jesus now leaves the apostles. **Thomas** has not been there. When the others tell him about this time, he says he cannot believe until he can actually see Jesus and touch His wounds.

This is why one week later the apostles are still together in Jerusalem. Thomas is not convinced and they do not want to leave without him. So Jesus again appears to them in the upper room and shows Himself specifically to Thomas.

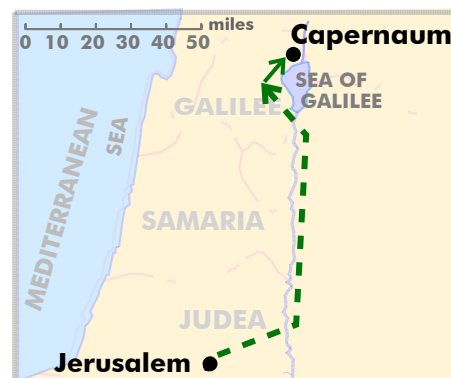
Altho he is a natural born doubter, Thomas is now totally convinced. He responds, *My Lord and my God*. It is important to notice that Jesus accepts the title of **deity** because He is deity. It is yet another evidence of His deity in Scripture.



Jesus now goes to Galilee by Himself.

Eventually the apostles get there. They have not understood anything of their coming ministry and have no idea of the Church. This is why 7 of them join Peter in fishing, the occupation they are familiar with.

But in spite of fishing all night, they do not catch anything. Early the next morning they see a person standing on the shore. He tells them to put in their nets again. They do and the nets are full. They know beyond any doubt the person is Jesus.



When they get to shore He has breakfast of grilled fish and bread waiting for them. He is teaching them about their future ministry. They will not have to work in their old occupations to support themselves; He will provide for them.

During breakfast by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus restores Peter in front of the other apostles. They need to know Peter's denial has not affected his ministry or leadership. To appreciate the passage in John 21, we first have to get some background.

Peter's original name was Simon. When Jesus first met him, He told him he **would** be Peter.

The name means small **rock**.

In other words, Jesus was saying that one day Simon would be stable and firm like a rock. He would become a "Peter". But according to John 21:15, Jesus now calls him by his old name, Simon. With his denial, it is obvious he is not yet stable and firm.

The word **know**, that Peter uses, means **divine knowledge**.

The word **love** uses 2 different Greek words with contrasting meanings.

Phileo means feelings of devotion and loyalty. It is a response determined by **feelings** and **emotions**.

Agapao means obedience; doing what is right. It is a response always determined by the **will**, regardless of emotions.

In addition, we have to remember the conversation between Jesus and Peter at the Passover meal.

Peter had bragged in front of the other apostles that even if all of **them** left Jesus, **he** never would.

His commitment was greater.

Now 2 weeks later, Jesus is with the apostles at the Sea of Galilee. To understand the conversation more clearly, I am going to paraphrase it.

Jesus asks, *Simon, Do you still say you will obey Me **more** than the other apostles?*

Peter replies, *No, I can no longer say **that**. But just as Your divine knowledge knew the brashness and over-confidence I had before, You know the depth of feeling and devotion I have for You now.*

Jesus then asks, *Simon, can you say you will obey Me **equal** to the other apostles?*

Peter replies, *No, I cannot even say that. But You know the depth of feeling and devotion I have for You now.*

Finally Jesus asks, *Simon, are you **sure** you have depth of feeling and devotion for Me now ?*

Peter replies, *Sadly, that is all that I am sure of, but I have learned my limitations. In Your divine knowledge, You know the depth of feeling and devotion I have for You now*

By his answers, Peter shows he has learned honesty, humility and reality. As a result, he will have a 3-fold ministry.

1. He will **teach basics** to new believers - *feed My lambs*.
2. He will **watch over and care** for other believers - *tend my sheep*
3. He will give mature believers more **advanced teaching** - *feed My sheep*.

Jesus also tells him he will be martyred and die by crucifixion because of his faithful obedience, based on the will.

This happened some 35 years later, in the mid-60's AD.

From the gospel accounts, we know that in the following weeks, while still in Galilee, Jesus tells the apostles they are to make disciples. He means they are to help people develop in their spiritual faith. They are to do this in 3 steps.

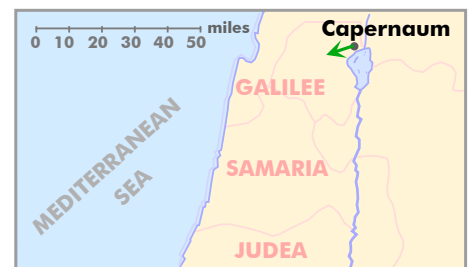
First by **explaining what Jesus did and said**.

Then **leading them to a commitment** when they are ready.

And finally, **by teaching them to understand Scripture** so they become mature.

It is the in-depth study of Scripture that brings maturity.

From 1 Corinthians 15:6, we know Jesus appears to more than **500** of His disciples - those who had followed Him while He had been in Galilee. The logical place would be on a mountain in Galilee where He had taught them during the 2nd year of His ministry.

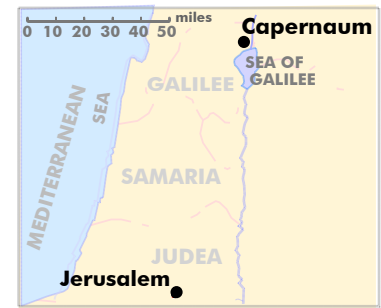


Jesus also appears to **James**, one of His blood relatives, probably in the town of Capernaum.

This is when James becomes a believer.

Some years later, when Peter has to go into hiding, James becomes head of the Jerusalem church.

A few years after that, he writes the book of James that is in our New Testament.



Jesus uses these last 40 days to teach the **apostles**. He continues to explain what the Old Testament said about Him. Because it includes information about the coming kingdom, they ask,

Lord, now are You going to set up Your perfect kingdom and we can help You rule?

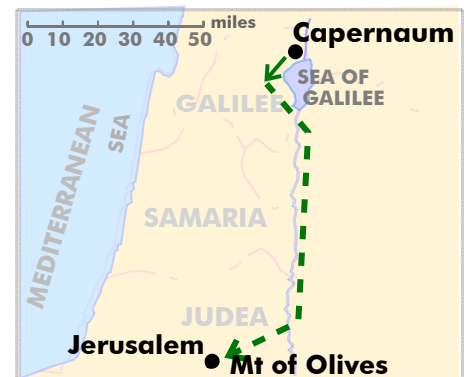
He has to again remind them that perfect kingdom has been postponed indefinitely. They do not need to know the exact time it will come.

After 40 days of encouragement and instruction, Jesus takes the apostles south to the eastern slopes of the Mt. of Olives. He tells them to wait in Jerusalem until they receive the Holy Spirit. Then, instead of having power to **rule**, they will have spiritual power to **teach** others as He has taught them.

They are to start with the Jews in Jerusalem and gradually expand thruout the province of Judea.

Then they are to give the message to the people in the province of Samaria, who are part Jewish and part Gentile.

Finally they are to open their hearts to give the Gospel to Gentiles thruout the lands where they live.



With these words Jesus is taken into heaven until finally a cloud hides Him from their eyes. Two angels appear. They do not say Jesus will return to the same **place**. They say He will return in the same **way**. As they saw Him go up in the clouds, so He will physically return in the clouds.

Jesus will return for us, the Church, by coming in the clouds. We will meet Him in the air and He will take us to where He has prepared a home for us.

Later, when Jesus returns to this earth to set up His promised kingdom, He will come in the clouds and go directly to Petra, also called Bozrah, to rescue the Jews about to be attacked by Satan's man, Anti-Christ. Later He will go to the **Mount of Olives where He will begin to form the kingdom.** 20:53

JESUS - YESHUA, THE PROMISED MESSIAH

Thruout the centuries, the Jews were always expecting their Messiah. But by the first century, so many of them were only looking for a political king. They could not believe He would come to first suffer and die. Even when the apostles were sure that Jesus was the promised Messiah, they still could not understand nor accept the idea of His suffering.

Jesus had to remind them,

See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For He will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging Him, they will kill Him, and on the third day He will rise. But the disciples did not understand any of this. Luke 18:31-34

He had to remind 2 dedicated disciples,

These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Luke 24:44

God knew that Jews, past and present, would always have difficulty with the suffering and death of Jesus. How could **He** be their promised Messiah?

So He picked 4 men - each to write an abridged biography of the life of Jesus, describing what He did and what He experienced. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they would show that what the prophets said about the suffering Messiah is exactly what happened to Jesus.

While the prophets said the coming Messiah would be King, they also said He would be a Suffering Messiah.

He would be falsely accused, scourged and hated without a cause Psalms 35:11 - Isaiah 50:6 - Psalm 35:19; 69:4

His hands and feet would be pierced. He would be given gall and vinegar. Psalm 22:16 - Psalm 69:21

His side would be pierced. Zechariah 12:10

He would say, *My God, why have You forsaken Me; It has been accomplished.* Psalm 22:1 - Psalm 22:31

He would pray for His enemies. Psalm 109:4

People would mock Him, soldiers would gamble for His garments Psalm 22:7-8 - Psalm 22:18

He would die alongside of criminals. Isaiah 53:12

The gospel stories tell how all of these things happened to Jesus. It is proof that He is the promised Messiah. He was the Suffering Messiah in the past and will be Messiah King in the future.

JESUS, THE OLD TESTAMENT "WORD" - "MEMRA"

The apostle John, writing the biography of Jesus at the end of the first century, wants to convince his readers about the deity of Jesus. He includes the statements of 7 people who declare that Jesus is deity.

He describes miracles that only deity can do.

He presents Jesus as the "Yahweh - the I AM" of the Old Testament.

He presents Jesus as the "Word" of the Old Testament.

It is this last idea that I want to explain because most of us in the west have always explained Jesus as the "Word" based on Greek concepts and teaching - the Greek concept of Logos". I am totally indebted to Dr. Fruchtenbaum in his study of the "Word" for the following insights.

John begins his gospel with the words,

In the beginning was the Word. John 1:1

Since John is writing in Greek, he uses the word "Logos". *In the beginning was the Logos.*

However, even tho he is writing in Greek, he is a Jewish man who thinks in Jewish concepts in the Hebrew or Aramaic language. He thinks about the Jewish rabbis and what they taught about special words or ideas in the Old Testament.

The Hebrew for *Word* is *Devar*. The Aramaic for *Word* is **MEMRA**.

Aramaic was the language the Jews spoke in the 1st century. So in his mind, John is thinking, *In the beginning was the Memra*. We know this by how he develops the idea in the first 18 verses of chapter one.

In the beginning was the **MEMRA** - the WORD - the LOGOS

In the four hundred "Silent Years", (400 - 0 BC), Jewish rabbis had made an in-depth study of what the Old Testament said about the *Word* - the *Memra*. From that study, guided by the Holy Spirit, they developed 6 concepts about the Word as it related to God in the **Old Testament**. These concepts were taught in all Jewish synagogues during the 1st century.

1. The *Word* - *Memra* was separate from God, but also the same as God. For example, *He sends His command to the earth; His Word (Memra) runs swiftly.* Psalm 147:15
SEPARATE, BUT THE SAME. The rabbis knew this was a contradiction. They could never explain it; they just knew it was a fact.
2. The *Word* **CREATED** things. David said, *By the Word (Memra) of the Lord the heavens were made.* Psalm 33:6
3. The *Word* **BROUGHT SALVATION**, physically or spiritually.
God spoke - the *Word (Memra)* - gave instruction to Moses about crossing the Reed Sea so the Jews as a nation were saved from the armies of Pharaoh.

4. The **Word (Memra)** was the **VISIBLE FORM OF GOD** known as the Shechinah - often seen as glory or light.
For example, in Exodus 3, Moses saw a burning bush and then the Word spoke from the bush,
Take off your sandals for... you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your fathers....
5. The **Word (Memra)** **MADE GOD'S COVENANTS**
The Lord made a covenant and said Genesis 15:18
6. The **Word (Memra)** **REVEALED GOD and HIS CHARACTER** Genesis 15:1
The Word of the Lord came to Abraham...I am your shield, your very great reward.

These were the 6 concepts about the Word as it related to God in the Old Testament. John begins his gospel by saying,
Everyone knows about the Greek Logos - meaning an expression, an idea, an "it".
Let me tell you about the Jewish Logos - a He.
Jesus is the Memra - Logos - the Word. He was revealed in the Old Testament as the Memra - Word.

John then uses the list of the rabbis to develop the next verses in chapter one.

1. **The Word was separate from God but the same as God.** So John says about Jesus, in John 1:1.
In the beginning was the Word, meaning He always existed.
And the Word was with God, meaning He was separate from God the Father.
And the Word was God, meaning Jesus was the same as God - He was deity.
2. The rabbis said **the Word created things**, so John says of Jesus in verse 3
Thru Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.
3. The rabbis said **the Word brought salvation**. Speaking of Jesus, John says in verse 12,
Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.
Jesus gives the right to enter God's family - He brings salvation.
4. The rabbis said **the Word was the visible form of God** - the Shechinah means to *live or dwell*.
John says of Jesus in verse 14,
The Word became flesh - became visible - and lived - He "shechined" among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and only Son who came from the Father.
5. The rabbis said **the Word made God's covenants**. So John says of Jesus in verse 17
For the Covenant of the Law was given thru Moses; the New Covenant of grace and truth came thru Jesus Christ. The New Covenant was made with the death of Jesus.
6. The rabbis said **the Word revealed God the Father**. John therefore says of Jesus in verse 18,
No one has ever seen God the Father, but the Son who is at the Father's side, has made God the Father known.

John, at the end of the 1st century, wants people to know as they start reading his Gospel...

Jesus is the real *Logos*.

He is revealed as Deity, Creator, Savior, the visible presence of God, the maker of the New Covenant
the revelation of what God the Father is really like.

As we studied the life of Jesus here on earth, we may have wished we could have been there –
to see Him, to follow Him, to listen to His teaching and watch Him work miracles.

However, we forget about the limitations there would have been.

Even if we could have followed Him full time, we might not have been able to hear all that He said.

We would not have heard what He said to the apostles.

We would not have been able to personally talk with Him anywhere at anytime.

The good news is that because He returned to heaven and sent the Holy Spirit,
in the 21st century, we can enjoy a better relationship.

The moment we accept His payment for our sin, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. As a result...
We can talk with Jesus anytime and anywhere, with the assurance that He hears us and will answer.
We have Scripture – God’s Word – that gives us all the teaching He wants us to have.
The Holy Spirit helps us understand what it means and how to use it in our lives.
We see and experience God’s hand in our lives, in the lives of those around us and thruout the world.

Our relationship with Jesus, as well as with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, can be far more personal now than it would have been in the first century. The important questions is,

Are we utilizing the opportunity?

Are we enjoying the privilege?

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MINOR SOURCES

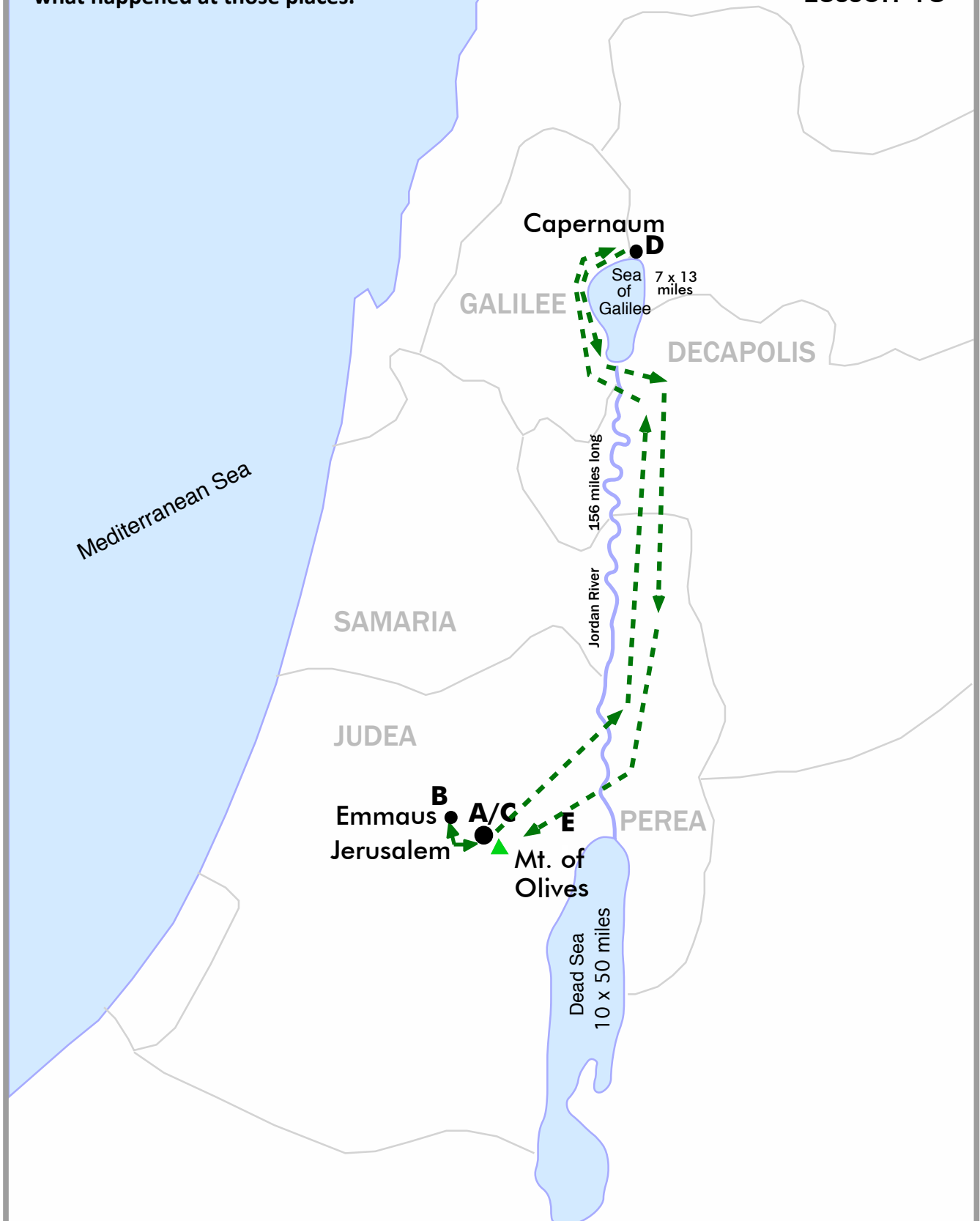
At least 100 other sources were used for development or verification.

An abridged form of these lessons was used as my master’s thesis.

The complete map and outline are on the next pages.

The letters A-E are from the Outline on the next page. Each letter gives you the geographical locations and what happened at those places.

TRACKING JESUS in His **LAST 40 DAYS** Lesson 15



LAST 40 DAYS

DEVELOPED OUTLINE Last 40 Days

Jewish Time

A. In Jerusalem

Sunday morning

1. An earthquake; Jesus rises from the dead; an angel moves the stone.
2. The 15 Roman soldiers leave to tell the Sanhedrin. Matt. 28:11-15
3. Mary Magdalene arrives at tomb, sees nothing, leaves to tell Peter and John. Jn. 20:1-2
4. Two other women come, see 1 angel, then 2; receive message for disciples and Peter Matt. 28:5-8, Luke 24:1-8
Salome and Mary, wife of Clopas, (sister-in-law and sister of Mary, mother of Jesus) John 19:25
5. Peter and John come to tomb; John believes, Peter wonders; they go their separate ways. Luke 24:1-8
6. Jesus appears to:
 - Mary Magdalene when she returns to the tomb Jn. 20:11-18
 - Salome and Mary, wife of Clopas and mother of James, on the way to the apostles Matt. 28:8-10
 - Peter (probably in Garden of Gethsemane) Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5

B. On the Emmaus Road 7 miles Luke 24:13-34

Sunday afternoon

1. Jesus appears to 2 followers.

C. In Jerusalem, Jesus appears to:

Monday

1. The 10 apostles on the beginning of Monday, right after sundown Lk. 24:36-43
2. The 11 apostles the beginning of the next Monday, right after sundown Jn. 20:26-31

One week later

D. In Galilee, near Capernaum, Jesus appears to:

1. 7 apostles by the Sea of Galilee Jn. 21:1-24
2. The 11 apostles daily so He can teach them Lk. 24:44-49; Acts 1:3-6
3. Apostles on a Galilean hillside; 500 disciples 1 Cor. 15:6; Matt. 28:16
4. James, one of His blood relatives 1 Cor. 15:7

E. On the Mt. of Olives near Bethany Acts 1:6-12

Forty days later

1. Jesus gives final instruction to the 11 apostles and then ascends into heaven.