

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course*An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries*

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

GOSPELS

Lesson 1 Introduction

return pages 7 & 8

The four gospels were written to give a complete picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. If someone had to sculpt a bust based upon a portrait, the task would be much easier if there were four portraits. An image of the front, the back, and each side would enable the sculptor to present a more perfect likeness than would a single portrait. Such is the case with the gospel accounts.

The synoptic theory that Matthew, Mark and Luke are largely one (syn) view (optic) and that John is a rogue account has little support from the scriptures.

Suppose you were hired to work as a clerk for a trucking firm. Upon reporting to work, as a new employee you were given a employee handbook containing the requirements, regulations and standards for all company employees. Throughout the manual would be specific instructions for delivery personnel, maintenance workers, mid and upper-level managers, telephone operators, etc. Much in the handbook of company policy would not apply directly to you.

Such is the case with the Bible. It concerns the Lord and His instructions to man. However, there are certain specific instructions to a people called Israel, certain matters pertaining exclusively to Gentile nations and directions for the church of God alone.

We must learn and study the whole Bible, for it is the whole of God's revelation to man. We must seek to obey those portions of the scripture that give direction to "our department."

Let us compare and contrast the four gospel accounts. God showed the prophet Ezekiel a vision of four cherubim. The cherubim are a special class of heavenly beings connected with the throne of God, having wings, unlike the angels who do not. The creatures Ezekiel saw (Ezekiel 1:10) each had the faces of a lion, an ox, a man and an eagle. These picture diverse groups of God's creatures and are symbolic of the four gospel records:

- Matthew speaks of Christ the King, possessing the royal majesty of a lion. *And the first beast was like a lion* (Revelation 4:7). *The Lion of the tribe of Juda... hath prevailed* (Revelation 5:5). *A lion which is strongest among beasts* (Proverbs 30:30). He has been made man but He is greater in might and majesty than His fellows.

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

- Mark presents Jesus, the servant of Jehovah, possessing the strength and patient service of an ox. *And the second beast like a calf* (Revelation 4:7). *Much increase is by the strength of the ox* (Proverbs 14:4). The ox has strength which is spent in service of man. It is a type of the laborer (1 Corinthians 9:10). It is also the fullest sacrifice set forth in the law.
- Luke sets forth the man Christ Jesus, possessing all the qualities of sinless humanity. *The third beast had a face as a man* (Revelation 4:7). *I drew them with cords of a man* (Hosea 11:4).
- John sets forth the Lord Jesus Christ, possessing the high glory and dominion of an eagle. *The fourth beast was like a flying eagle* (Revelation 4:7). *The way of an eagle in the air is too wonderful for me* (Proverbs 30:18-19).

The four gospels also describe the Branch foretold by the prophets:

- Matthew pictures David's righteous Branch. This perfect monarch was foretold by Jeremiah: *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth* (Jeremiah 23:5).
- Mark reveals God's servant. The Branch, spoken of by Zechariah: *Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH* (Zechariah 3:8).
- Luke sets forth the man whose name is The Branch, whose coming was also viewed by Zechariah: *And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying. Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD* (Zechariah 6:12).
- John shows The Branch of Jehovah spoken of by Isaiah: *In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel* (Isaiah 4:2).

Thus, the four gospels present God becoming man to serve at His first advent and reign at His second.

The wording of the Old Testament prophecies call on us to behold these aspects of the Redeemer's person. In Zechariah 9:9 we read *Behold thy king*. In Isaiah 42:1 is *Behold my servant*. Zechariah 6:1-2 says *Behold the man*. And Isaiah 40:9 has *Behold your God*.

Let us recall the one river that flowed from Eden and how it was parted into four heads (Genesis 2:10). The wording indicates the river was not parted until it left the garden and went forth to water the earth. So Christ left the

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

paradise of heaven and these four parts of His earthly ministry are given for our refreshing.

Another type illustrating this truth is found in Exodus 26. The veil of the tabernacle, which covered the glory of God, was hung upon four pillars. Hebrews 10:19-20 tells us that veil pictured the body of Jesus Christ which covered His glory as he walked the earth. The four pillars upon which the veil was displayed speak of the four gospels in which the second veil is displayed.

Take careful note of the beginning of each gospel record:

- Matthew traces the lineage of the Lord Jesus Christ through the royal line to Abraham. This establishes his purpose in writing about the King of the Jews.

Mark contains no genealogy, for the ancestry of a servant is of no consequence.

- Luke records Jesus' line as running all the way back to the first man Adam, after giving background on His mother and foster father.

John, writing to declare the deity of Christ, places the Lord in Genesis 1:1 and begins his gospel with a declaration that the One who became flesh and dwelt among us is the eternal God.

Next, consider the ministry of John the Baptist in each gospel:

- In Matthew the forerunner is announcing the coming kingdom. Only in Matthew is John the Baptist apprehensive at the baptizing Jesus, for He is the King and John a subject.

- In Mark he is preaching the work of repentance.

- In Luke the prophet is instructing men as to their manner of living. 1-1

- In John he is bearing witness to the Light and the Lamb that all might believe on Him.

Now look ahead to the close of each gospel and consider the commission given by the Lord to His disciples:

- The commission in Matthew is to convert nations to obedience. This relates to the end of the world, which is identified as the close of the great tribulation (Matthew 28:19-20).

- The commission in Mark is to preach to every creature while working miracles (Mark 16:15-18).

- The commission in Luke is to bear witness that sins can be remitted through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and that this salvation is available the world over (Luke 24:45-49).

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

- The commission in John is a straightforward command to follow the Lord (John 21:19,22).

Consider the ascension of Christ as presented by the four evangelists:

- There is no ascension record in Matthew for as King of the Jews His place is on the earth.
- The ascension record in Mark indicates that Christ ascended so that from His exalted place He might continue His work with His disciples.
- The ascension record in Luke speaks of His being carried up into heaven, implying His human need for the Father's assistance.
- There is no ascension record in John for as One with the Father (John 10:30), the Lord Jesus has been on earth and in heaven jointly all the while (John 3:13).

In each gospel the crucifixion is linked with a different one of the offerings of Leviticus 1-5:

- Matthew emphasizes Jesus Christ, the trespass offering.
- Mark stresses Jesus Christ, the sin offering.
- Luke bears out Jesus Christ, the peace offering.
- John points to Jesus Christ, a whole burnt offering.

Let us take a word from our Lord found in each of the gospels to underscore what we have just considered.

- Matthew, true to the Jewish idea, records, *I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill* the law (Matthew 5:17).
- Mark, illustrative of Christ's work, records, *the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister* (Mark 10:45).
- Luke, who is particularly concerned with the gospel of redemption, says that Christ is *the Son of man* who *is come to seek and to save* (Luke 19:10).
- John appropriately associates Christ with His Father and writes that He said, *I am come in my Father's name* (John 5:43).

Let us consider the differences in how the four gospels record a situation common to each of them - Jesus being rebuked for allegedly breaking the sabbath.

- Matthew, Mark and Luke tell of a particular Sabbath day when Jesus and his disciples were walking through a corn field. To satisfy their hunger they ate and were censured by the Jewish leaders.

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

- In Matthew, the heir to David's throne answers. *Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered...* (Matthew 12:1-7). This is the appropriate response for the Son of David. He adds, *Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you. That in this place is one greater than the temple.*
- Facing the same charges in Luke, the recorded answer omits the references to the priests and the law, for there He is the Son of man and the account is aimed at those beyond the scope of the law of Moses.
- In Mark, where the servant is in view, the portion telling of one greater than the temple is passed over, for a declaration of kingly power would be out of character within the theme of that gospel.
- In John the reply of God manifest in the flesh, on the occasion of healing a man on the sabbath, is much different; *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work* (John 5:17).

There is but one miracle common to all four gospels, the feeding of the 5,000. The variations in the accounts given serve to underscore the theme of each narrative. It is found in all four (Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-13) because it contains a truth which underlies all four records. *The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world* (John 6:33). No matter which of the four views we take of the Lord, this is why He was manifest in the flesh.

The occasion of the miracle is found in Matthew and Mark. It was after the execution of John the Baptist. In Matthew, where it would have a special bearing upon Christ's presenting the truths of His kingdom, it appears He withdrew from the persecution of Herod. This was because there was more to be done before He too walked through the door of death. In Mark we are told He withdrew owing to the pressure of the work. Only Luke mentions that this took place near Bethsaida while John connects it with the Gentile name of the Sea of Tiberias. The first three writers point out this was a desert place. John does not, for to the Divine Lord the whole world was a desert. The three evangelists tell of evening being nigh, while John omits this. Upon the Light of the world night cannot fall and to the Light of the world men are ever in darkness. Likewise, the first three tell of the Lord's seeking privacy, while in John there is no mention, for God is never alone. All tell of the multitudes, but with different detail.

- Matthew tells of the King's compassion in healing the sickness among His subjects.

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course*An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries*

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

- Mark tells how the people ran ahead, outracing the Lord and His disciples who came by ship. Mark tells of their being scattered as sheep and needing the labors of a Shepherd to gather them.
- Luke speaks of both the preaching and healing of the perfect man.
- John says they followed because of the miracles. John shows Christ's deity by including the conversation with Philip, showing His anticipation of the disciple's questions and His foreknowledge of what He would do.

The account of feeding the five thousands in all the Gospels the people are told to sit down, whereby the giving of thanks and the meal was provided. In the three accounts the Lord looks up to heaven when He prays, there is no such upward gaze in John, for why would God need to look into heaven. All four tell of the disciples being used to carry God's blessing to the multitudes and of the leftovers. The fourth gospel only adds a note showing the Lord's displeasure with man's wasting His bounty. *Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.*

Matthew adds that there were women and children besides the 5,000 men, for the King is responsible for all His subjects.

Notes.

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course*An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries*

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

GOSPELS

Lesson 1 Introduction

Name _____

All answers must have scripture back-up to receive full credit

1. Ezekiel 1:10 shows us a picture, explain how it relates to the four gospels.

2. Explain why it is important to understand these pictures.

3. Who are the three different classes of peoples that the Bible has specific instructions for?

4. In light of our lesson, explain the definition of Heb 2:17-18?

5. There are two accounts of the lineage of Jesus Christ, what are the differences, and why are the differences important?

6. Jesus mentioned in one of the Gospels that He was Lord of the sabbath, in light of our lesson, explain the Gospel examples.

7. Explain the different uses of the following terms:
 - a. Son of Man

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course*An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries*

5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

b. Son of David

c. Son of God

8. There is one miracle that appears in all four gospels. What is it? And how does it relate to each of the four gospels in depicting the personality of Jesus?

9. In three of the gospels Jesus before distributing the bread and fish looks into to heaven and prays. In one of the gospels He does not look into heaven when He prays. What is the significance in this difference?

10. Explain why Jesus gave the meal to his disciples rather than distributing it directly to the people.

true/false

- Matthew, Mark & Luke copied off each other when writing their book.
- Luke depicts Jesus as a man.
- The Branch is Israel.



Memory verses, write these out on the back of this page. (must be in KJV)
Hebrew 4:15-16; Hebrews 10:19-21; Romans 5:2.

any questions?