

Jesus and the Teachers

Key Verse:
“The Jews were amazed and asked: How did this man get such learning without having studied?”

John 7:15

Extra: What sort of questions might Jesus have been asking the Teachers? (v46)

Level 5 lesson 29

Read: Luke 2:41-52 and Ecclesiastes 12:1

This month, we begin a series of lessons based on the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SILENT YEARS: We are told little about our Saviour’s life from his infancy until He commenced His public ministry at the age of 30. Scripture only records the family’s visit to Jerusalem when He was 12 years old. It sums up His early life at Nazareth with this lovely quote, “The child grew and became strong; He was filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him” (Luke 2:40). What a wonderful thing to be able to say about Him!

It is safe to assume Jesus helped His earthly father, Joseph, in the carpenters’ workshop; which was normal practice for young men of His day. Jesus was human (as well as Divine), and received boyhood training like other boys. However, His learning was without sin. We see from the Jews’ question in the Key Verse, that our Lord didn’t attend any religious schools of the day. Humanly speaking, we know that He learned everything from the Old Testament Scriptures. Then as an adult, Jesus also received new truth from God the Father, with whom He lived in unbroken communion. So from boyhood, Jesus was prepared in private for His life’s work later on.

A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE: Let’s look at what happened during that family trip to Jerusalem for the annual ‘Passover’ festival. Now, you may remember a while back, that we studied the first Passover event during the life of Moses, when God’s Angel “passed over” all those who put the blood on the door-posts of their houses, and spared their first-born. And so in Jesus’ time, people still celebrated the Passover Feast annually at Jerusalem. But to safely get there and back, they had to travel in large groups.

Finally, Jesus’ family arrived with the huge crowds of people who attended this festival, and enjoyed a wonderful celebration together, remembering how God graciously delivered His people all those years ago.

Later, they began the long trip back home to Nazareth, 100 kilometres away. After travelling for a day, Mary and Joseph suddenly realised that Jesus was not with them! They couldn’t find Him anywhere - not even with their relations and friends. If you’ve ever lost a family member, you’ll know how anxious and worried Mary and Joseph were! (v45)

So Jesus’ parents hurried back to Jerusalem to look for Him. After three days, they found Him sitting in the Temple with the Teachers, listening and asking questions (v46). These men were astonished at His understanding and answers: how could a boy have such wisdom? They didn’t realise of course that He was the Son of God!

Mary scolded Him, “How could you do this, Jesus? Your father and I have been so worried!” He replied, “Why were you searching for me? Didn’t you know I had to be in MY Father’s house?” (meaning His Father God’s temple) Jesus had to remind Mary that God was actually His real Father, not Joseph. Jesus’ one purpose in life was to do God’s will, and that’s what He was doing in the Temple.

A GREAT GOAL: Mary and Joseph didn’t really understand Jesus’ reply, but Mary “treasured the words in her heart.” She knew her son was no ordinary boy! Jesus, obedient as always, went back home with His parents. What an example Jesus is for us! He came into this world to please God His Father at all times and to do His will. Jesus did this throughout His life, and then ultimately, He fulfilled God’s will by dying on the Cross for our salvation. This was His goal as a boy, and His last adult words, “It is finished,” tell us He had achieved this goal (John 19:30)

We too, can make it our goal to please God at all times. We may fail now and then, but we can always ask for forgiveness, and then press on. Sometimes we are not sure of God’s will. Think of Jesus as a boy, listening and asking questions about God and His Word. That is a great way to learn. So try your best to read the Bible passages carefully and answer the questions each lesson. We will be glad to help if there is anything you don’t quite understand.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. How did Jesus gain his learning as a boy?	.....
2. Why was the Passover Festival held every year?	.....
3. Where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus, and what was He doing?	.....
4. What was the one purpose Jesus had in life?	.....
5. How did Jesus fulfil His Father’s will?	.....

My Name is Age

The Baptism of Jesus

Key Verse:

“Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven...”

Acts 2:38a

Extra: What other calls to repentance can you find in the Bible?

Level 5 Lesson 30

Read: Matthew 3:1-17 and John 1:19-28

As we explained last lesson, the Scriptures tell us little of Jesus’ life until our passages in today’s reading. Luke 3:23 tells us that Jesus was now 30 when He was baptised by John the Baptist. We do know from Jesus’ words in John 8:46, that during these 18 years, our Saviour lived a perfect, sinless life. God the Father confirmed this in a remarkable way at Jesus’ baptism, as He began His public ministry; let’s see how!

JOHN THE BAPTIST’S MESSAGE: In today’s lesson, we find Jesus coming to John the Baptist to be baptised. John the Baptist was the one who Isaiah prophesied would come to “prepare the way of the Lord”. His message was “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is near.” What’s repentance? It’s a change of mind, which leads to a change in conduct and action. Because of their sinful lives, the people needed to truly repent, to forsake their sinful ways and turn back to God.

So John prepared the people for their coming Messiah, the Lamb of God, whom he was about to reveal. He told them to be baptised; that is, to be immersed in water. This act was an outward symbol of their repentance from sin and inward cleansing. Their repentance was the important matter, and they were happy to show it. Verse 6 tells us, “Confessing their sins, they were baptised by Him in the Jordan.”

John turned some away that came to be baptised, it seems they had not truly repented. They were trusting in their relationship to Abraham (being Jewish) to save them. John told them plainly, unless they showed evidence of true repentance, they would perish in the fires of Hell. He taught them of the mightier ONE that was near (referring to Jesus Christ), and what He would do when baptising with the Holy Spirit and with fire (v11).

THE LORD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS: Shortly after this, Jesus came and asked John to baptise Him. John couldn’t understand this, and said, “Why do you come to me? I should be baptised by YOU!” He knew Jesus was sinless and didn’t need to repent, and yet Jesus still wanted to be baptised. John was a bit perplexed. Our Lord explained to John, “Let it be so now, to fulfil all righteousness.” This was a part of God’s righteous will and plan, and it symbolised Jesus’ righteous “cleanness”! So John, eager to do God’s will and make the Messiah known to Israel, agreed to baptise Him.

THE TRIUNE GOD: As Jesus the Son of God rose from the water, some remarkable things took place: God the Holy Spirit - in the form of a dove - descended upon Jesus. At that same moment, the voice of God the Father was heard from Heaven saying, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” This amazing scene involved all three persons of the Triune Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! This signalled the beginning of Christ’s earthly ministry as The Messiah.

While John the Baptist’s message was given to the Jews to start with, it was also the same message that was preached by the Apostles to other Jews and Gentiles during the early church period, and thousands of them also repented, believed, and were baptised. Even today, God still speaks to our hearts through John’s message: if we are to be truly saved from sin, we too need to repent of our sins and turn in faith, to obediently follow Jesus Christ for our entire life.

Jesus is the Messiah who HAS ALREADY COME and died on Calvary’s cross to pay for the sin of each one of us. So don’t delay in repenting, believing, and being baptised, because Jesus is the Messiah who IS COMING AGAIN to take only true believers back to Heaven!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What does repentance mean?	.....
2. How must people show true repentance?	.....
3. Why was John surprised that Jesus wanted to be baptised?	.....
4. What did God the Father say about Jesus after He had been baptised?	.....
5. How can we be truly saved?	.....

Satan Tempts Jesus

Key Verse:
“Because He [Jesus] Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.”

Hebrews 2:18

Extra: Where else in the Bible do we learn of the devil tempting people?

Level 5 Lesson 31

Read: Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13

This is quite a mysterious, yet inspiring lesson from the life of our Lord: Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (who is also called Satan). Remember, the devil is a real person, a mighty spirit-being, a fallen angel; but not a mere influence. The word “devil” means “accuser,” and that is exactly what Satan does to God’s people (see Revelation 12:10).

THE CONFLICT: Why did Jesus need to be tempted? The answer is that because He is a man (the “second Adam”), Jesus had to be tested like the “first Adam” (who was tempted in the Garden of Eden, but unfortunately sinned). Yet amazingly, Jesus was “tempted in every way - just as we are - yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:14-16). This proved Jesus was a pure man!

The temptation also proved to the world that the Lord Jesus Christ really was God, because all attacks on Him by the enemy were futile. Notice where, how, and when the temptation took place: He was in the desert, alone by Himself, and He had just gone without food for 40 days! (Mark 1:13)

TEMPTED TO SELF-PLEASURE: Satan always tries to tempt people at their weak points! So knowing of Jesus’ hunger, the Tempter taunted Him with these words, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” What he meant was, “God is not looking after you, so you’d better take care of and prove yourself.” Jesus refused to do it, saying, “It is written, ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” He had come in complete dependence and obedience to His Father God. Jesus would continue to trust God to meet His physical needs, and later at the right time, to vindicate Him to truly be the Son of God.

TEMPTED TO DISOBEY: So the devil tried again: He took Jesus into Jerusalem and stood Him on a pinnacle of the temple. Again he suggested that Jesus prove He was the Son of God by putting His Father to the test. “Jump off” he told Him, and “God will catch you! Doesn’t the Bible say, ‘He will command His angels... and they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone?’”

How cunning Satan is! Jesus had just claimed complete faith in God the Father, and now the devil was saying, “Do you really have complete faith in Him?” He even misquoted Scripture to support the temptation. Read Psalm 91:11-12 and compare! Jesus refused to succumb to the devil’s trickery and said, “It is also written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Jesus knew that to listen to Satan and jump off would be untrusting and disobedient to God the Father. So Jesus resisted the temptation to do ‘magic tricks’ for His own benefit, and His obedience again proved He was the Son of God.

TEMPTED TO SURRENDER: For his final attempt, the devil took Jesus up to the top of a mountain. There he displayed to Him all the glorious kingdoms of the world and said, “All this I will give you, if you will bow down and worship me.” Now the mask is off! The devil could hide his motive no longer. This has been his desire since he first said, “I will make myself like the Most High God” (Isaiah 14:12-14)! Satan desired to be worshipped by Jesus, but this privilege of being worshipped is due to God alone!

Satan still desires to be worshipped by everyone today! Our Lord Jesus rebuked him with complete authority, “Away from me, Satan! It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’” The devil should have been bowing down before Jesus, but instead he fled, leaving no doubt as to Jesus’ Deity and the power of God’s Truth. What a lesson for us in our struggles with temptation! We too can overcome the devil’s temptations by using and obeying the Word of God: WE MUST read it, learn it, and obey it!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why did Jesus need to be tempted by the devil?	.....
2. How did Jesus answer the first temptation?	.....
3. In what way did the devil wrongly use the Scriptures?	.....
4. Why do you think the devil used these temptations?	.....
5. What is the great lesson for us in this study?	.....

“Look - The Lamb of God!”

Key Verse:
“And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world.”

1 John 4:14

Extra: What more can you find out about the Lamb of God?

Level 5 Lesson 32

Read: John 1:15-34 and Luke 3:1-18

While Jesus was away in the wilderness, John kept telling people that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah. “This is who I was talking about” he said, “the One who comes after me is greater than me, because He was before me!” What does that mean? How could Jesus be before John and after him? It’s simple: as the Son of God, He existed before John because He is Eternal, but as a man, Jesus was born and began His ministry after John!

JOHN: GOD’S MESSENGER

The Jews in Jerusalem were curious about John the Baptist: could he be the Messiah? So some came and asked him, “Who are you? Are you the Christ? Are you Elijah? Are you the Prophet?” “No!” said John, “I’m none of those.” “Well who are you?” they asked again, “What have you got to say for yourself? Give us an answer for them that sent us.”

So John said, “I am the voice of One calling in the desert, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’” How humble! His concern was not that people notice him, but that the message be heard. He wanted only to be a voice for God. However, when the Pharisees heard that, they questioned his right to baptise people (v25).

John’s defence was that he was only preparing the way for a greater One to follow: One so great, he was “not worthy to even untie His sandals!” This great One was already among them, John said, but they did not recognise Him. John’s only authority was in being His messenger. There’s a lesson for all of us who are Christians! We are to humbly make Christ known everywhere, while at the same time remember what a privilege it is to be a voice for God! I pray you will think as highly of Christ as John the Baptist did.

JESUS: THE LAMB OF GOD

The next day, John saw Jesus walking towards him. “Look!” he exclaimed, “The Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world!” What an amazing statement!

It is interesting John called Him the “Lamb of God.” Isaiah 53:7 predicted that the Christ would be “brought as a lamb to the slaughter.” Although Jesus was King of the Jews, John knew Jesus’ main purpose was to die as a “sacrificial lamb” for our sin.

Under the Law, millions of lambs had been slain as sacrifices for people’s sins over the hundreds of years since Moses’ time. Each sacrifice pointed forward to Jesus, whom John now proclaimed to be God’s Lamb! Only Jesus could satisfy all of God’s Holy demands regarding sin’s punishment. Christ’s death would mean the end of all sacrifices, and so forgiveness from sin can now be found through faith in Christ - the “LAMB OF GOD”! (Romans 3:25-26)

JESUS: THE SON OF GOD

This “Lamb of God,” John continued, “is the One I have been talking about!” He told them, “I wouldn’t have known Him, except that He (God) who told me to baptise with water, also told me, “The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and rest like a dove, He is the One who will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.” “I have seen that,” said John, “and I tell you clearly, this is the Son of God!”

What a wonderful, clear testimony! This is important because, in order to have a perfect sacrificial lamb that could take away sin “once for all”, ONLY JESUS - the perfectly righteous and Holy Son of God - could step into this world and be that “Lamb of God” who takes away the sin of the world. Every other person ever born, has been spoilt by sin (Romans 3:10-12, 23) and must die for their own sin (Romans 6:23). However, His precious blood - shed on Calvary’s Cross - is able to cleanse every sin from anyone who personally believes in Him as Saviour, and so He is able to save and give us eternal life! (Romans 5:9)

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What was John doing during Jesus’ absence in the desert?	.....
2. How could Jesus be both before and after John?	.....
3. What proves that John was a very humble man?	.....
4. Why did John say that Jesus was the “Lamb of God”?
5. What does it mean to know Jesus as your personal Saviour?

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