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GSL Israel Course

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This chapter explains, Historical Geography of The Gospels to better understand the significant events of Jesus' birth, Ministry, Baptism, travels, and the last days of Jesus.

In this chapter, we see where Mark and John open the gospel with the ministry of John the Baptist, while Matthew and Luke give in detail the story of Jesus' birth. The author states that the difference in both scriptures identifies the place of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

According to the scripture, Lk 1:26 records the story of Joseph and Mary; their residence was in Nazareth in Galilee. Yet, this chapter explains that Luke did not explain in detail why Joseph came to Nazareth in the years before Jesus was born. So there is external (outside) information from the New Testament about this Galilean village. This outside information does not mention Nazareth; their rabbinic tradition reports only priests in the town. Herod's story in this chapter gave me a broader understanding of who he was. The word of God does not provide information about Herod in detail. It simply speaks about him sending out to kill all boys. This chapter explains the external corroboration in Matthew's account, which the author says is "lacking." This chapter gives a broader understanding of Herod, how wicked and cruel he was, and how his son followed in his footsteps. While reading this part of the chapter gives readers an understanding of what God implied in their historical language. In the geographical settings of John the baptism, we see how Jesus' ministry goes hand in hand in all the gospels. The most important part of John the Baptism is preparing the people for the messiah's coming. As John told the people to repent, the kingdom of Heaven was near.

According to chapter seventeen, the setting of Jesus' Baptism, the gospel of John records the baptism as being at "Bethany beyond the Jordan, (Jn 1:28)." However, it seems that Luke and John presented different venues for the moving of the baptism not limited to any single location. Additionally, "According to the Septuagint, the region of Bashan is demarked like Bethany, beyond the Jordan." If "Bethany beyond the Jordan" does signal the region of ancient Bashan (Batanea), then it indicates that John's ministry reached northeast areas of the Sea of Galilee" (226)" While John was being persecuted, Jesus was beginning His ministry as Jesus saw the crowds he had compassion for the people because they were like sheep without a shepherd, which indicates that His people needed a new Leadership.

In the last days of Jesus to Jerusalem, all four gospels were agreeable to Jesus' crucifixion outside of Jerusalem by the Romans. However, the chapter indicates that new data has provided fresh insights. According to the Gospels, Jesus did not always use the same route in his pilgrimage to Jerusalem" (233). In the last days in Jerusalem, there was opposition, healing, and his time with Mary and Martha before He was killed. According to this chapter, "The route that would have taken Jesus within sight of the former Hasmonean and Herodian palaces at Jericho; It seems that the former physical residence of Archelaus, son of Herod, may have been the cue for Jesus to adopt the well-known story of the Herodian son who would be king" (233).

Amazingly Jesus steps before His arrest and execution, and He was able to teach daily during the Passover week in His Jewish traditions. Jesus, in these historical times, brought the people to the place of purification and walked about the temple.

In conclusion, these significant events of Jesus have been followed step by step in many studies of what really happened from Jesus' birth, baptism, travels, and His last days before His resurrection.

Work Cite

Historical Geography of The Gospel, Chapter Seventeen