

NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

The Bible At A Glance: (Dr. Wm. H. Griffith suggests that we remember four words to help us link together the whole of God's revelation.)

Preparation - In the Old Testament God makes ready for the coming of the Messiah.

Manifestation - In the four Gospels Christ enters the world, dies for the world, and founds His Church.

Appropriation - In the Acts and Epistles, the ways are revealed in which the Lord Jesus was received, appropriated, and applied to individual lives.

Consummation - In the Book of Revelation, the outcome of God's perfect plan is revealed.

Brief Presentation of the Relationship of the Old Testament and the New Testament

The Old Testament with the exception of the first eleven chapters, is devoted entirely to God's dealings with His own chosen race, the children of Israel.

"The Law"

1. **The nation of Israel was chosen as a repository of God's Word.** From the time the Law was given from Sinai's summit there was regard for its preservation, if not always obedience to its requirements.

2. **The law** (all of it, not just 10 commandments) **constituted all of Israel's national legislation.** The history of the prosperity and adversity of this people was written in accordance with their observation of or violation and neglect of God's law.

3. **Rulers were designated as righteous** insofar as they enforced the law and lived the law. Prophets were particularly raised up to revive and restore it.

4. **The moral law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.** (Gal. 3:11-29) The Ten Commandments are ALL restated in the New Testament with the exception of Sabbath keeping. The moral law is strengthened to include the thoughts and not just the actions. Law keeping will not bring us to salvation for redemption is only through the provision of Christ's death on the cross as He paid for our sins.

“Israel was the channel for Christ’s coming.”

1. **They were chosen for the introduction of the world’s redeemer.** You may trace the promises of the Messiah beginning with the first announcement. (Gen. 3:15), then the revelation of race (Gen. 11:10), the nation (Gen. 28:14), the tribe (Gen. 49:10), the family (II Sam. 7:16), the place (Micah 5:2) and the time. (Dan. 9:25).

2. **The New Testament, therefore reveals not only how,** “*when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,*” but also that Christ was **rejected by the nation** to which He was sent (John 1:11). The Kingdom of Israel was set aside for the time being and the Church established for the purpose of witnessing to all nations. (Acts 1:6-8).

3. **In the Old Testament an earthly kingdom was promised,** to be set up when the Messiah should come, and for which the faithful Jews were ever looking.

- a. Jesus was the Messiah, though they knew Him not, and He came to set up His Kingdom.
- b. It was a King of whom the angel spoke (Luke 1:32), a King of the Jews.
- c. A King was rejected and crucified, (John 19:19-22)
- d. At the beginning of His public ministry Christ offered Himself to Israel as King.
- e. When He was rejected, He changed the character of His teachings and began to speak of the *Church rather than the kingdom*, and to reveal plans for the formation of a new body of people together -- the church.
- f. We live in the church age... a mystery, a dispensation not seen at all in the Old Testament. (Ephesians -- chapters 2 and 3)

4. **This Kingdom is held in abeyance, not replaced by the Church** for in a future day Christ will set on the throne of David and will be accepted as King by His people, the Jews. It will be an earthly kingdom here on earth. The Church and the Kingdom with Israel are entirely two different things.

- a. The kingdom is to be set up ... the church is now being built.
- b. The kingdom is to be extended ... the church is called out, saved, sanctified.
- c. The kingdom has heirs (a nation) ... the church is made up of servants (bond-slaves, disciples) who are joint heirs with Christ to live sacrificially for the evangelization of the world.
- d. The kingdom is future ... the Church is being selected during this present age.
- e. The kingdom is to be reigned over *by* Christ ... the Church shall reign *with* Christ.
- f. The Holy Spirit is NOW calling out a people for Christ’s Name sake. The Kingdom is future in every sense.

The Four Gospels

Dr. Van Dyke said, “*If four witnesses should appear before a judge to give an account of a certain event, and each should tell exactly the same story in the same words, the judge would probably conclude, not that their testimony was exceptionally valuable, but that the only event which was certain beyond a doubt was they had agreed to tell the same story. But if each man had told what he had seen, as he had seen it, then the evidence would be credible. And when we read the four Gospels, is not that exactly what we find? The four men tell the same story each in his own way.*” The Holy Spirit led them in what they were to write.

What Are the Synoptic Gospels?

The Meaning of the Word “Gospel”

1. The word gospel is derived from the two Anglo-Saxon words *God*, meaning *good* and *spell*, meaning tidings or history. It is the good-news of salvation through Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. (I Cor.15:1-4)
2. The four writers of the Gospels are called evangelists, from the Greek word meaning ... *bringer of good news*.
3. They share the “**good news**” concerning Jesus, the Son of God, by four writers -- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John -- but there is but one gospel.
4. The word Gospel is never used in the New Testament of some book. It always meant “*good news*.” When we speak of the Gospel of Luke, we ought to understand that means the good news of Jesus Christ as recorded by Luke.

The Meaning of the word “Synoptic” Gospels

1. There is but one Gospel, with four presentations, but the question arises, “*Why four?*” Because one or two would not have given us a total portrayal of the life of Christ.
2. The first three Gospels -- Matthew, Mark, Luke -- are called the Synoptic Gospels because, unlike John, they give a synopsis of Christ’s life. The word synopsis is from the two Greek words meaning “*a view together, a collective view.*”
3. So these three Gospels may be viewed together and are similar in many ways. And we will see they are also very different from one another.
4. The Synoptic Gospels are striking in their similarities:
 - a. They narrate His ministry chiefly in Galilee,
 - b. they tell of Christ’s ministry in Judea,
 - c. they narrate His miracles, parables, and addresses to the multitudes,
 - d. they portray Christ in action.(We will see that the Gospel of John is distinctively different.)

Keys To the Gospels

1. **God has hung a key to the Gospel of Matthew right over the entrance.** The book opens thus: “*The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*” (Matthew 1:1) This shows **His covenant position** as the Son of Abraham, (Gen. 12:1-3) and His royal position as Son of David.
2. *Matthew is presenting Christ as KING;* he gives the royal genealogy in the first seventeen verses. A king is not chosen by popular ballot, but by birth.
3. Turning to Mark do we see a genealogy given? NO! The reason is that *Jesus is portrayed as a Servant,* and no one is interested in the pedigree of a servant.
4. A genealogy is given in Luke. Luke traces His line back to Adam. *Christ is presented as the ideal Man.* He was of the line of Adam, a son of man.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the difference between the kingdom and the Church?

2. In what portions of the New Testament is the Church given the larger place?

3. Why was the Kingdom offered and is now replaced for a time?

4. What was God's plan for Israel from the beginning of its existence?

5. What does the word "*dispensation*" mean?

6. How will we relate to the kingdom that Christ will receive in the future?

7. Upon whose throne will Christ set in a day to come?
