

Summary Handout

“That Ye Might Believe That Jesus Is the Christ

Lesson

1

Summary

Isaiah 61:1-3; Isaiah speaks Messianically—Messiah shall have the Spirit, preach the gospel, and proclaim liberty—In the last days the Lord will call his ministers and make an everlasting covenant with the people.

Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4-11; Christ shall come to fulfill prophecy, take away sins, bring salvation, and be a light, and he shall come in the day of power and the fulness of times. (compare Luke 3: 4-6)

John 1:1-14; An extract from the translation of the Bible as revealed to Joseph Smith. Christ is the Word of God—He created all things and was made flesh—John baptizes Jesus and testifies he is the Lamb of God—John, Andrew, Simon, Philip, and Nathanael believe in Christ and follow him.

John 20:31 Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

Time Line: The New Testament, mostly refers to the account of the thirty-three-year life of Jesus. It also describes a period including about one-hundred-sixty years following his life, and explains what his followers did. Most of those events happened in what we now know as Turkey. Using the common Gregorian calendar, Jesus lived approximately 12,053 days (33 full years X 365 days + 8 leap-years). Yet the New Testament only documents 31 days of His life.

The Atonement Is the Message: Wayne Brickey, at an Education Week lecture at BYU, taught that in Jesus’ first thirty years, just eighteen events were reported in the New Testament. In the next year, another eighteen events were reported. In the following year another, twenty-seven events were reported. In Jesus’ last year, over one-hundred-fifty events were reported; however, seventy-five of them occurred in the last six days of his life. The atonement is the message, anything else is added to enhance that message. The Jewish view of the Jesus’ life includes: “. . . the first three gospels portray him as a Jew faithful to both the written and the oral Mosaic law . . . he was closer in beliefs and lifestyle to the Pharisees than to the Essenes. His criticism of the Pharisees finds contemporary parallels in rabbinic literature and in the Dead Sea Scrolls.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

One of His Many Names – the Word: Gospel writers had different approaches to describing Jesus’ life. John’s purpose is to explain WHAT He is and begins by describing Him as the WORD. To the Jews, the scriptures, the words of God, are so special they must never touch the ground. Many use a pointer to read the words rather than touch the scrolls with their fingers. The scroll cabinet, the “Ark,” is said to contain the “presence of God,” meaning the “Word of God.” John’s book has twenty-one chapters that deal with the period before and during Jesus’ mortal life. The last chapter is after His resurrection. Of the first twenty chapters, half are devoted to His last six days in mortality.

Jesus and Jewish Holidays: Connecting us to the truthful symbols of the Old Covenant, John links almost everything Jesus does to a Biblical holiday. He mentions Passover, Pentecost, Sukkoth/Yom Kippur (Feast of Tabernacles) and even a non-biblical holiday of Hanukkah (Feast of [Temple] Dedication). We also find that John refers to light twenty-four times, to water twenty-eight times, to life fifty-two times, to lamb three times and to bread seventeen times. These metaphors were used prolifically as prophetic images of the life, mission, and gift of the Messiah.

Other Prophets Mentioned: In the fourth lesson, we’ll introduce another John, a Levite, whom the temple priests persecuted. He is the forerunner of the Messiah and he reiterates the prophesies of the coming Lord. Old testament prophets are often quoted in the New Testament. Moses is mentioned more than any other Old

Testament figure, although Isaiah is quoted most often. A comparison of some of the key words that both John and Isaiah use can deepen our understanding of the Savior's mission.

Light . . . “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.” (*Isaiab 9:2*) “In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” (*John 1:4-5*)

Water . . . “. . . with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” (*Isaiab 12:3*) “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (*John 7:37-38*)

Life . . . “O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.” (*Isaiab 38:16*) “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (*John 3:16*)

Lamb . . . “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” (*Isaiab 53:7*) “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (*John 1:29*)

Bread . . . “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” (*Isaiab 55:2*) “For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” (*John 6:33*)

Dark . . . “To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.” (*Isaiab 42:7*) “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (*John 8:12*)

Messiah Known in the Old Testament: Latter-day Saints feel that the doctrinal views within the Old and New Testaments are the same, but few Jews ever read the New Testament, and those that have read it view it mostly as anti-Semitic. “. . . the ministry of Jesus himself does not come under the heading of "Christianity," but rather . . . Jewish sects which followed Jesus' teachings . . . but added the belief that Jesus was the messiah. The Greek translation of the word *messiah* is *Christos* . . . followers came to be known as Christians . . . embracing gentile followers . . . and the "Church" could take the place of the Jewish people . . . the New Testament has served as a basis for Christian anti-Semitism throughout the ages.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Key to Recognizing the Messiah: The true meaning of his life and those who testified of him is revealed through the SPIRIT. The word for spirit in Hebrew is Ruach Elohim, the breath - the wind of God. Moses knew that gift well and desired that everyone would have it. “. . . Would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!” (*Numbers 11:29*) There are some people who do not have that gift yet, and those that do must exercise patience and love because eventually more will get that gift and be very happy. The gift of belief comes from God.

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available FREE at www.HolyLandsRevealed.com. (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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