



Daily Life in Galilee

Lesson Overview

1. Read

Jesus was born into a Jewish family. Where did Jews come from?

2. Watch Videos

Learn about farming and village life and traditions in Galilee in Jesus' time. Choose videos from a list. Discuss each video as you watch. pp.1-2

New Church Concept Olive and Grape

'Olive oil' means the Lord's celestial Divine Good. The expression 'the Lord's celestial Divine Good' is used because the origin of all good that really is good and exists in the heavens lies in what is Divine and the Lord's. Isaiah 24:13 associates the olive and grape harvests. 'The olive tree' means a Church that is governed by celestial good, and 'the vine' a Church that is governed by spiritual good. For in the Word wherever good is the subject, truth is also, on account of the marriage of them. In like manner wherever the celestial is the subject, the spiritual is also. See *Arcana Coelestia* 10261

FaithBuilder 3 | Lesson 4 | Life in New Testament Times

Read

Jesus was born into a Jewish family. Jews are descended from the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In Old Testament times Jews were called the “children of Israel.” Israel was the name given to Jacob, the last of the three patriarchs, when he wrestled an angel (Genesis 32). The descendants of all of Jacob’s sons were taken into captivity. Of these, only the descendants of Judah returned to the land, after seventy years of captivity. The other tribes never returned and are known as the “lost tribes” of Israel. After resettling in Canaan the descendants of Judah were re-named Jews. The land to which Jews returned had come under Roman rule. Although they lived in the same country Jews had their own distinctive ways of life. This lesson introduces daily Jewish life in Galilee, which is helpful for understanding the stories in the Gospel of John.

Whereas all worship in the Old Testament was to take place in the temple in Jerusalem, Jews returning after the captivity built synagogues locally in towns and villages where they read the Torah and prayed. They were important centers for learning. Each synagogue was presided over by a ruler. Men took turns reading the scriptures and then there was a sermon-like talk on what it meant. Rabbis, today’s Judaic leaders, did not emerge for some years. Most Jews were farmers. Land was inherited—passed down from father to son. Jewish life centered on farming seasons and practices. Jesus used these daily activities to illustrate the new spiritual messages He taught.

Choose Videos to Watch A variety of videos online show what life was like in Galilee in New Testament times. Choose several to watch from the DVD series *Daily Life in Galilee*.

Watch Videos

Nazareth in Galilee—Some Seed Fell on Good Ground (4 min 21sec) at bit.ly/NazarethInGalilee. Enter bitly link in web browser bar at the top of your screen.

1. How big was Nazareth? What impact would this have had on the activities people could do?
2. Compare your childhood with a child growing up in Nazareth in New Testament times.

Life of the Shepherd—Yeshua Is the Good Shepherd (1min 43sec) at bit.ly/LifeShepherd.

1. What caused conflict between farmers and shepherds?
2. The video suggests that shepherds were simple people. Think of shepherds in the Old Testament—King David, or Joseph’s brothers. Were they simple? In what ways is “simplicity” a good thing?

The Harvest and Pressing of Olives (2min 23sec) at bit.ly/PressOlives.

1. Why is the olive considered “supreme”?
2. Olives are pressed for their oil. What was the first “beaten” oil used for? Today we can buy first cold pressed olive oil—which is similar to the beaten oil. It is dark green and used for eating in things such as salad dressings. After this oil is extracted the olives are heated and more oil is then extracted. This oil lighter yellow in color and has a different flavor. It is used for cooking.

The Grape Harvest—Daily Life in the Time of Jesus (3min 31sec) at bit.ly/GrapeHarvest.

1. The narrator suggests that the Bible has been mis-translated and that our common understanding of what it means is incorrect. Whether or not we agree with him, it brings to light the importance of accurate Bible translation.
2. In what ways did Jesus use the vine as an example in His teaching?

The Wheat Harvest—His Winnowing Fork Is in His Hand (3min 29sec) at bit.ly/WheatHarvest.

1. What were the steps of the wheat harvest?
2. Compare the community needed to harvest wheat then with today’s machine farming practices. How do different farming practices change the nature of community?

Town Life of the Rich—The of a Needle (4min 59sec) at bit.ly/TownRich.

1. How did rich Jews make money?
2. Why might rich Jews want to imitate Roman customs?

The Village Life—Women (1min 33sec) at bit.ly/VillageWomen.

1. What were women’s primary roles?
2. How have women’s roles changed today?

The Village Life of Women—Wool (2min 54sec) at bit.ly/WomenWool.

1. Have you had any experiences that are similar to the jobs women did? If so, would you say their work was easy or difficult? Remember, they could not go to a store to buy clothing or baskets, so their work was very important and becoming good at these skills made a difference to everyone’s lives.

A Wedding—prayer shawl Tallit and Kippot in Daily life in the time of Jesus (5min 52sec) at bit.ly/WeddingGalilee.

1. Compare wedding practices in Jesus’ day with wedding practices today.
2. Jesus’ first ‘sign’ or miracle was turning water into wine a wedding in Galilee. Why might Jesus have chosen a wedding as the backdrop for his first miracle?
3. What is the marriage between the Lord and the church?

Galilee was named by the Israelites and was the tribal region of Naphthali and Dan, at times overlapping the Tribe of Asher’s land. The region’s Israelite name is from the Hebrew root *galil*, a unique word for "district", and usually "circle". The Hebrew form used in Isaiah 8:23, "*g'liil hagoyim*", meaning "Galilee of the Nations", i.e. the part of Galilee inhabited by Gentiles at the time that the book was written. The region in turn gave rise to the English name for the "Sea of Galilee".

In Roman times, Israel was divided into Judea, Samaria, the Paralia and Galilee, which comprised the whole northern section of the country, and was the largest of the three regions under the tetrarchy. After Iudaea became a Roman province in 6 CE (formed by a merger of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea), Galilee briefly became a part of it, then separated from it for two to three centuries.

The Galilee region was the home of Jesus during at least 30 years of his life. Much of the first three Gospels of the New Testament give an account of Jesus' public ministry in this province, particularly in the towns of Nazareth and Capernaum. Galilee is also cited as the place where Jesus performed many public miracles, including curing a blind man. After the death of Jesus, some accounts suggest his disciples returned to Galilee and their experience of his resurrection took place there. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galilee>