

Listening Guide

I. Introduction to Physical, Political, and Gentile Religious Settings

[1] What is the focus of this lesson?

(Note: You will benefit more from this lesson if you use a map of Palestine to locate the places mentioned.)

II. Topography of Palestine

[2] If we divide Palestine into zones, how many are there?

A. The Coastal Plain

[3] How wide is the coastal plain at its widest point?

[4] How wide is the coastal plain at its narrowest point?

[5] What are the southern and northern borders of the coastal plain?

[6] Is Mount Carmel in the northern or southern part of Israel?

B. Galilee and Central Hill Country

[7] What encloses the Jezreel plain?

C. Jordan Rift Valley

[8] How long is the Afro-Syrian rift?

[9] How wide is the rift valley in Palestine?

[10] How far below sea level is the Dead Sea?

D. Transjordanian Highlands

[11] What river enters the floor of the rift valley south of the Sea of Galilee?

[12] For what present states does this river provide a natural boundary?

III. Climate

[13] During what months do the early and late rains come to Palestine?

[14] What are the average temperature ranges for Jerusalem in January and August?

[15] What areas of Palestine get the most and the least rain?

IV. Everyday Life in Palestine

[16] What helped determine the primary way of life in Palestine?

[17] What science is especially useful when studying what life was like in Palestine in Jesus' time?

A. Agrarian Society

[18] What was the primary occupation of Palestine's citizens in Jesus' time?

[19] What largely determined the annual life cycle of Palestine's citizens?

B. Diet

[20] What was the main staple of the people's diet in Palestine?

C. Towns and Villages

[21] Briefly describe the two major styles of life in Palestine.

D. Family Life

[22] What was the infant mortality rate in Palestine in Jesus' time?

[23] What percent of women died in childbirth?

[24] What aspect of family life discussed by Dr. Blomberg is most interesting or troubling to you? Why?

V. Political Setting

[25] How did the Roman rulers govern their empire?

[26] How many Roman provinces are mentioned in the New Testament?

[27] In what two ways were Roman provinces governed?

[28] What made the difference in how they were governed?

VI. New Testament Roman Emperors

[29] How long did it take the Romans to become organized under a one-man government?

[30] When did the term Caesar become the title of the Roman emperor?

A. Augustus (Octavian; 27 B.C.–A.D. 14)

[31] For what was Octavian famous?

[32] When did the Roman Empire formally begin?

[33] What did the title Augustus imply?

[34] What was the genius of Augustus' reign?

B. Tiberius (A.D. 14–37)

[35] How would you describe Tiberius' influence on Palestine?

C. Gaius Caligula (A.D. 37–41)

[36] How influential was Caligula's reign? Why?

[37] What biblical king was appointed during Caligula's reign?

[38] What act relates Caligula to Palestine?

D. Claudius (A.D. 41–54)

[39] Why was Claudius a most unlikely candidate for emperor?

[40] How did Nero gain the role of Roman emperor?

E. Nero (A.D. 54–68)

[41] What was Nero's critical error?

[42] How did Nero's reign end?

VII. New Testament Kings

[43] What dynasty ruled over Palestine during New Testament times?

A. Herod the Great (37–4 B.C.)

[44] What are some things Herod the Great is remembered for?

B. Herod Antipas (4 B.C.–A.D. 39)

[45] What gave Herod Antipas a place in New Testament history?

C. Archelaus (4 B.C.–A.D. 6)

[46] What is Archelaus known for in Scripture?

D. Herod Philip II (4 B.C.–A.D. 34)

[47] What city did Herod Philip II rebuild that is mentioned in the New Testament?

E. Herod Agrippa I (37–44)

[48] To what extent did Herod Agrippa I extend his kingdom?

[49] What act did Herod Agrippa I commit that is mentioned in the New Testament?

F. Herod Agrippa II (53–70)

[50] In what way did Herod Agrippa II and Paul relate in the New Testament record?

VIII. New Testament Procurators

[51] What other title did Dr. Blomberg use for procurators?

[52] What role did procurators fill?

[53] What three procurators are most often referred to in the New Testament?

A. Pontius Pilate (26–36)

[54] How did Pontius Pilate relate to the Jews?

[55] How did Pontius Pilate's reign end?

B. M. Antonius Felix (52–59?)

[56] What group was especially active in opposing Felix?

C. Porcius Festus (59?–62)

[57] What is Festus known for in New Testament writing?

IX. Gentile Religious Setting

A. Greek-Roman Gods

[58] What was the chief feature of Roman religion?

[59] Where did many of the myths and ideas found in Roman religion originate?

[60] With what was Roman religion concerned?

B. Emperor Worship

[61] Which Roman emperor tried to breathe new life into Roman worship?

[62] What act by Claudius evolved into the cult of the reigning emperor and of Rome personified?

C. Occult

[63] Where did the strong belief in the occult originate?

[64] List some ways magic influenced religion in the Roman Empire.

D. Philosophical Speculation

[65] Where did Paul encounter philosophical speculation during his travels?

[66] How did philosophical speculation influence the newly founded churches?

[67] What New Testament books address philosophical speculation?

Reflection

Record one new fact or insight you discovered in this lesson

Application

Life in New Testament times was influenced by many factors from climate to geography to political and religious climates. What would you say is the most significant factor that shapes how you live as a Christian? How does it influence you positively and/or negatively? How does your Christian belief shape the way you deal with this factor in your life?