

Discipleship 201
Lesson 1

The Journey

This lesson belongs to: _____

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Key Verse: *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”* Hebrews 11:13-16 (NKJV)

Purpose: The purpose of this lesson is to help the student realize that the life of discipleship is a journey toward a divine destination.

1. This present world is _____ but our souls are _____.
 - 1 John 2:17 (NKJV) *“And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”*
 - The Greek word translated as “world” is *kosmos* that means “world system.” This present world system is also referred to as this present age. This current world system is “fallen” due to the fall of Adam and Eve through disobedience in the Garden of Eden. This current world system is corrupt and depraved due to the terrible deception and consequences of sin.
 - The Bible teaches that the human soul lives on after physical death. (Luke 16:19-31; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8)
2. This present world system is under the deceptive control of the _____ of this world who is _____.
 - 2 Corinthians 4:3–4 (NKJV) *“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”*
3. Jesus Christ came to die for our _____ AND to _____ us from this present evil age.
 - Galatians 1:4 (NKJV) *“who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,”*
 - This “present evil age” refers to the current corrupt world system established by unredeemed men who are blinded by the god of this world, i.e., Satan.
 - Through His Incarnation, Jesus entered this evil age to save and deliver men from the deadly grasp of sin and deception.
4. The Christian life is initiated by a _____ from God.
 - Hebrews 11:8–10 (NKJV) *“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”*
 - Abram’s journey of faith began with a call by God to come out from his sinful association and involvement with idolatry. This call was not only a call to come “out” of sin and idolatry but a call to come “in” to a saving relationship with the true and living God.
5. The Christian lives _____ this world but is not _____ this world.
 - John 17:15-16 (NKJV) *“I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”*
 - Although Christians live in this present world, Jesus Christ has delivered them from its power and control. They now live in His kingdom under His Lordship while on this earth.
6. The Christian life begins with a call to _____ from all fellowship with this world system.
 - 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 (NKJV) *“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord*

has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'¹⁷ Therefore 'Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.'¹⁸ 'I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty. ⁷ ¹ Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

- James 4:4 (NKJV) *"Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."*
 - As Christians, we are in this world to reach and save others. We are to befriend sinners to win them, but we are not to be friends with the world system from which we seek their freedom. We are not to be isolated from the lost but insulated from any contaminating associations with their sin. (1 Corinthians 5:9-13)
7. For the Christian, this mortal life is a _____ toward an eternal _____.
- Hebrews 11:9 (NKJV) *"By faith he (Abram) dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;"*
 - Hebrews 11:13–16 (NKJV) *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them."*
8. Each person's destination is determined by the _____ they enter and the _____ they choose.
- Matthew 7:13–14 (NKJV) *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴ Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."*
 - Psalm 1:6 (NKJV) *"For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."*
9. Only Jesus can _____ us to our heavenly destination. He is the only _____ to the Father.
- John 14:3–6 (NKJV) *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know."⁵ Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?' ⁶ Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'"*
10. The journey of faith involves _____ accompanied by a lifestyle of _____ in following Jesus. A journey of following Jesus the essence of _____.
- Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) *"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?'"*
11. The Christian journey is a journey of _____.
- Hebrews 11:13 (NKJV) *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."*
12. The eternal destination in this journey of faith is the city of God, the heavenly or "New" _____.
- Hebrews 12:22–24 (NKJV) *"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel."*
 - Revelation 21:2–4 (NKJV) *"Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.'"*
13. Travelers along this journey of faith are referred to as _____, _____, and _____.

- Hebrews 11:13 (NKJV) *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”*
- 1 Peter 2:11 (NKJV) *“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.”*
- A “stranger” is a non-citizen. They are not native to the country in which they reside. As such, Christians are like non-citizens in this world. They are not native to this world. This world is not their homeland.
- A “sojourner” is one who is passing through on a temporary stay. As such, Christians might be likened to “transients” on earth.
- A “pilgrim” is someone who journeys in foreign lands or one who travels to a shrine or holy place. As such, Christians are on a journey in this life to the heavenly Jerusalem to worship their God and King.

14. The Christian’s true _____ is in heaven.

- Philippians 3:20–4:1 (NKJV) *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. ⁴ ¹ Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.”*

15. A pilgrim’s citizenship is certified in heaven with the _____. They know live under the rule and blessing of the _____.

- John 3:3–5 (NKJV) *“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ ⁵ Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’”*
- Colossians 1:12–13 (NKJV) *“giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,”*

16. True Christians set their heart on _____.

- Psalm 84:5 (NKJV) *“Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage.”*
- This passage is a reference to the pilgrimage of the men of Israel to Jerusalem three times a year on Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles for corporate national worship. Those who set their heart on making a pilgrimage to worship in His temple are blessed by God. (Genesis 47:9; 1 Chronicles 29:15; Psalms 42:4; Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11)

Faith and Pilgrimage

Although Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob embraced the promise of the earthly land of Canaan for their descendants, they understood and confessed that this world was not their eternal home or inheritance. The promise made in an everlasting covenant by the Everlasting God meant that they would receive the promise ultimately in a heavenly realm (Genesis 17:7, 19; 21:33) through the resurrection from the dead. They embraced the spirit of the promise rather than the letter of the promise. They were content to be strangers (non-citizens), sojourners (transients), and pilgrims (travelers) on this earth as they looked through the eyes of faith for an eternal fulfillment of God’s promise. Therefore, we see that they understood the promise of God to be eternal in the heavens rather than temporal on this earth. As a result, they confessed that heaven was their home and that they were strangers, sojourners, and pilgrims on the earth. They lived in this world knowing that there is a God to whom all will give account. After the Exodus, God established a pattern of pilgrimage in worship to remind Israel of their status on this earth. Three times a year the men of Israel were to keep the three great festivals—Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

ALIYAH

“ALIYAH” is the Hebrew word for “ascend”. Jewish pilgrims refer to their journey to Jerusalem as ALIYAH.

Psalm 24:3–6 (NKJV) *“Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? ⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. ⁶ This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face. Selah”*

Regardless of the geographical terrain or direction from which they journeyed, the journey to Jerusalem is always referred to as an ascent. Their ascent or ALIYAH to Jerusalem is two-fold.

1. Physical ascent up Mount Zion, the hill of the LORD
2. Spiritual ascent to the Holy Place, the Temple of the LORD.

In addition to their ascent to Jerusalem, the journey to the Promise Land is also referred to as ALIYAH, their spiritual homeland. For the New Testament believer, ALIYAH relates to the entire life as we ascend together each day toward the heavenly Jerusalem and our heavenly homeland (Hebrews 11:13-16). Each day is a choice to step higher in the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).

Song of Ascents (Psalm 120-134)

The Jewish people lived in various places throughout Israel and the world. Therefore, God commanded the Jewish pilgrims to journey three times a year to the Tabernacle or Temple to worship before Him as “one man” (Ezra 3:1). In anticipation of their appearance before the LORD, these traveling pilgrims prepared their hearts through the meditation and use of fifteen songs called the “Song of Ascents” (Psalms 120-134). Each of these psalms focused on a different aspect of their lives as pilgrims:

1. Psalm 120 The Pilgrim's Renunciation
 2. Psalm 121 The Pilgrim's Protection
 3. Psalm 122 The Pilgrim's Worship
 4. Psalm 123 The Pilgrim's Servanthood
 5. Psalm 124 The Pilgrim's Preservation
 6. Psalm 125 The Pilgrim's Security
 7. Psalm 126 The Pilgrim's Joy
 8. Psalm 127 The Pilgrim's Work
 9. Psalm 128 The Pilgrim's Blessing
 10. Psalm 129 The Pilgrim's Triumph
 11. Psalm 130 The Pilgrim's Hope
 12. Psalm 131 The Pilgrim's Humility
 13. Psalm 132 The Pilgrim's Obedience
 14. Psalm 133 The Pilgrim's Unity
 15. Psalm 134 The Pilgrim's Praise
17. The journey of the pilgrim is a _____ of faith using the _____ of faith.
- Hebrews 11:13 (NKJV) *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”*
 - The Patriarchs had a visionary faith. They saw and embraced the promises from a distance through eyes of faith. True faith sees the invisible through spiritual eyes and the promise of God through the eyes of faith.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:6–7 (NKJV) *“So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight.”*
 - 2 Corinthians 4:17–18 (NKJV) *“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”*
18. The evidence of a true pilgrim is a _____ for heaven.
- 2 Corinthians 5:1–2 (NKJV) *“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,”*
 - Within the heart of the Christian is a homesickness for a homeland, a Fatherland, to which they have never been before.
 - Hebrews 11:14-16 (NKJV) *“For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”*
19. God has allowed us a _____ of our eternal destination.

- Revelation 21:9–27 (NKJV) *“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’⁹ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,¹⁰ having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.¹¹ Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:¹² three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.¹³ Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.¹⁴ And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.¹⁵ The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.¹⁶ Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.¹⁷ The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.¹⁸ The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,¹⁹ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.²⁰ The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.²¹ But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.²² The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.²³ And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.²⁴ Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).²⁵ And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.²⁶ But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.”²⁷*