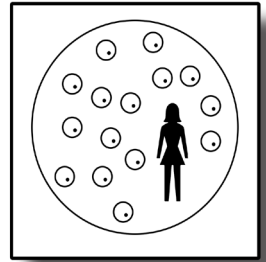


Act I, Scene Three

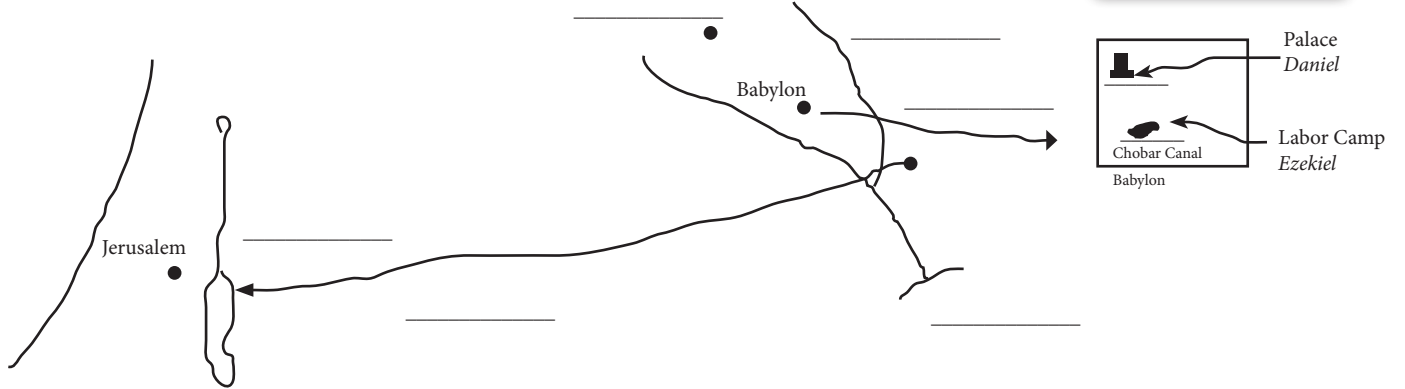
Step 3: The Diaspora (Esther)

Suggested Reading: Esther 1-10; Acts 2:1-13

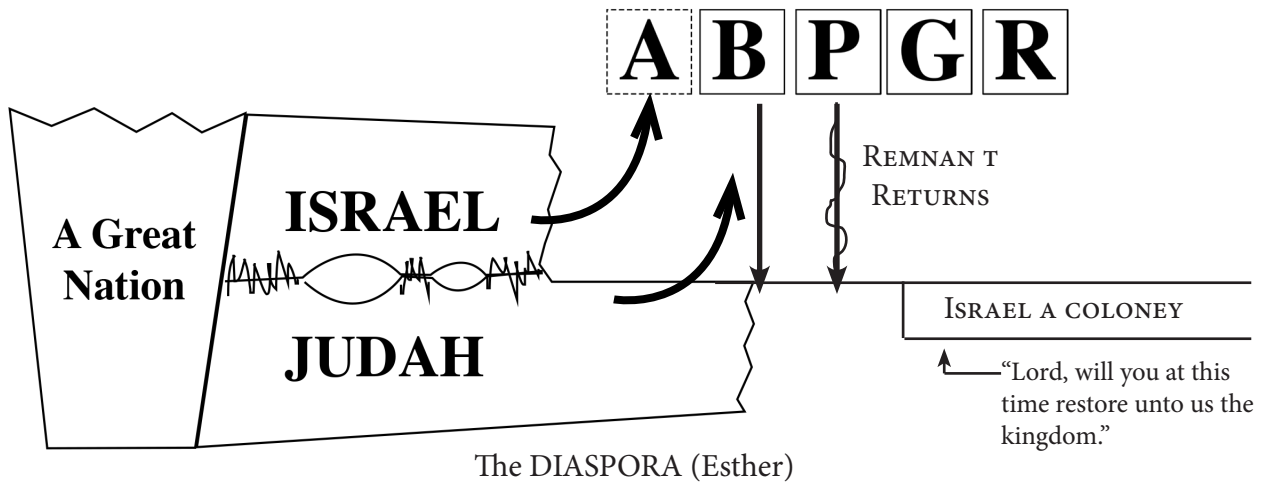
The Remnant (50,000) and the Diaspora



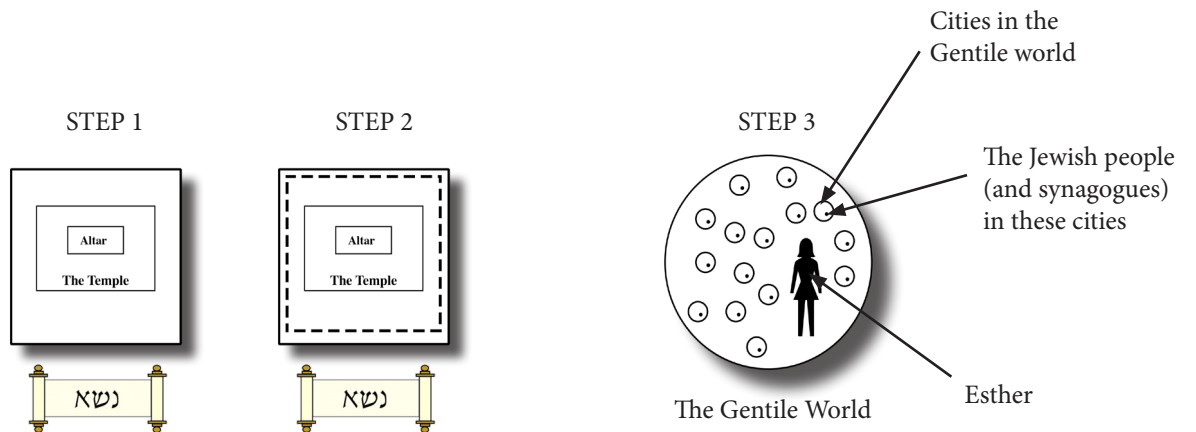
Geographic Overview



At the time of Christ...



“The Twins” and “The Orphan”



Persia

The Dominant Western Empire, c.a., 550-333 B.C.

God uses Persian leaders to return the remnant to Israel.

Cyrus: Decreed the return

Darius: Rebuilt the temple

Xerxes (Ahasuerus)

Artaxerxes: Rebuilt the walls

Esther's Story

1. Ahasuerus reigned over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia.
2. Haman: "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of other people."
3. Vashti out/Esther in
4. Mordecai & the plot against the king
5. Mordecai & Haman the Agagite
6. Mordecai asks Esther to intercede
7. Esther entertains the King and Haman
8. Haman honors Mordecai
9. Second dinner: Denouncement
10. Haman hung; the Edict of Defense and the slaughter of enemies
11. Deliverance and the feast of Purim
12. Mordecai's position of authority

Ezra and Nehemiah ("the twins") speak often of "the hand of God" being upon them, but where is God in the book of Esther ("the orphan")?

1. God is not mentioned nor directly referred to in the book of Esther; the Jews are never referred to as God's people; the book speaks of fasting, but not of prayer or worship.
2. The term "the Jews" is used over 40 times and reference is made to "the law of the Medes and the Persians," but not to Mosaic Law.
3. Esther: "the young lady pleased him; Esther found favor; she found favor; who know—for such as time as this."

Possible Explanations:

The book may have been written for public reading and/or entertainment at the Feast of Purim, where the use of God's name might have been inappropriate.

The author may have been a humanist who ignored God's place in the life of the Jews.

The book may have originally been among the annals for the kings of Persia.

The book may have simply been “telling it like it is”: perhaps God was not a significant part of the lives of these (secularized) Jews.

Despite the absence of His name, God is working in Persia...

...but not in the open as in Jerusalem. He is providentially (the care and guidance of God in the affairs of men) preserving His people among the nations.

A better question is: What is God doing, accomplishing, in Scene Three???

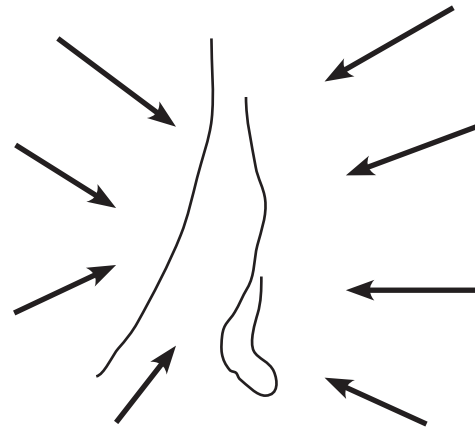
“It were a one-sided view to regard the Babylonian exile as only a punishment for Israel’s sin...there was always a positive element of actual progress; a step forward, even though in the taking of it something should have to be crushed. And this step forward was...”
Edershiem

Acts 2:5ff!!!

“In Jerusalem for Pentecost were Jews from every nation under heaven” —2 million square miles! Acts 2

In the synagogue (gathering place) for Jews who were Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicians, and Asians. Acts 6

The gospel was initiated in synagogues at place after place, at Damascus, Slamis, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Cornith, Ephesus, Corinth...
Acts 13ff



James: “It is my judgement that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God...For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.” Acts 15

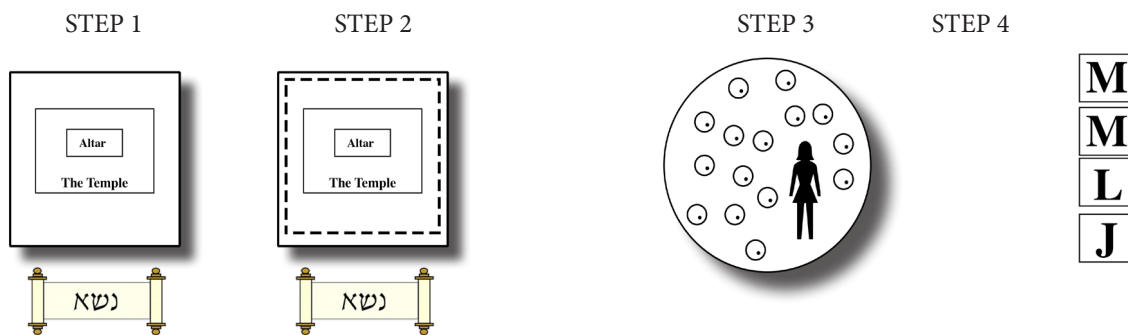
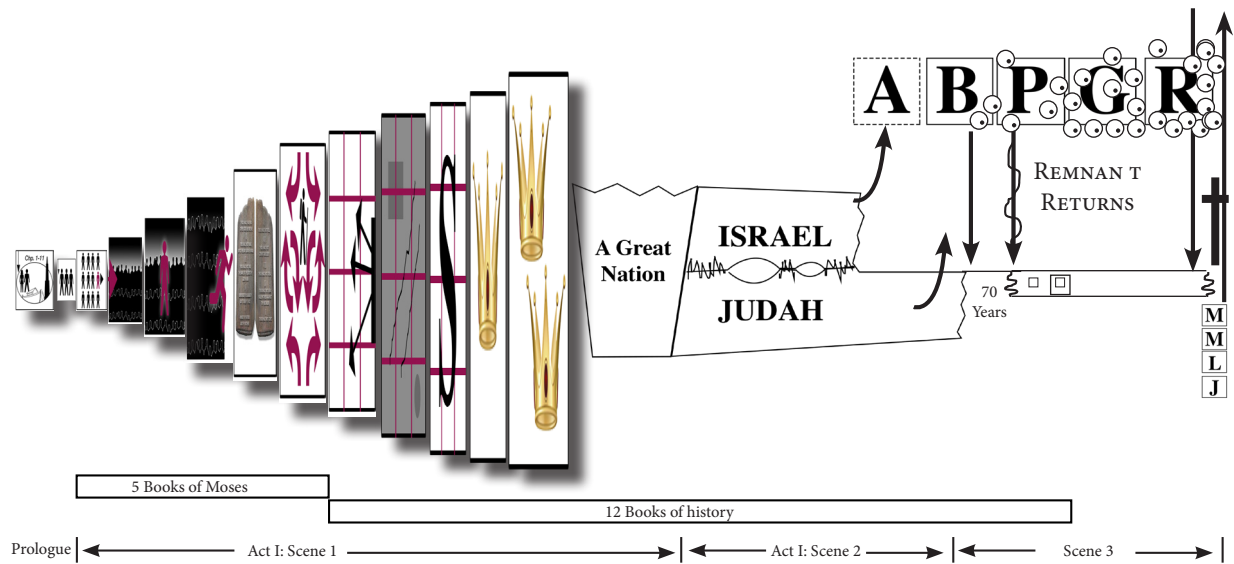
All the families of the earth will be blessed.
(Genesis 22)
All the earth will be filled with His glory.
(Numbers 14:21)
I will make you a light for the Gentiles,
that you may bring my salvation to the
ends of the earth.
(Isaiah 49)

Jesus: “...to the uttermost parts of the earth.”
Acts 1:8
Paul: For this is what the LORD commanded us,
[to] bring salvation to the ends of the earth.
(Acts 13:47)

We can finally finish the Edershiem quote:

“It were a one-sided view to regard the Babylonian exile as only a punishment for Israel’s sin...there was always a positive element of actual progress; a step forward, even though in the taking of it something should have to be crushed. And this step forward was the idea of
the _____
_____ in it’s relationship to the _____
_____.”

A Graphic summary and transition to Scene Three, Step 4



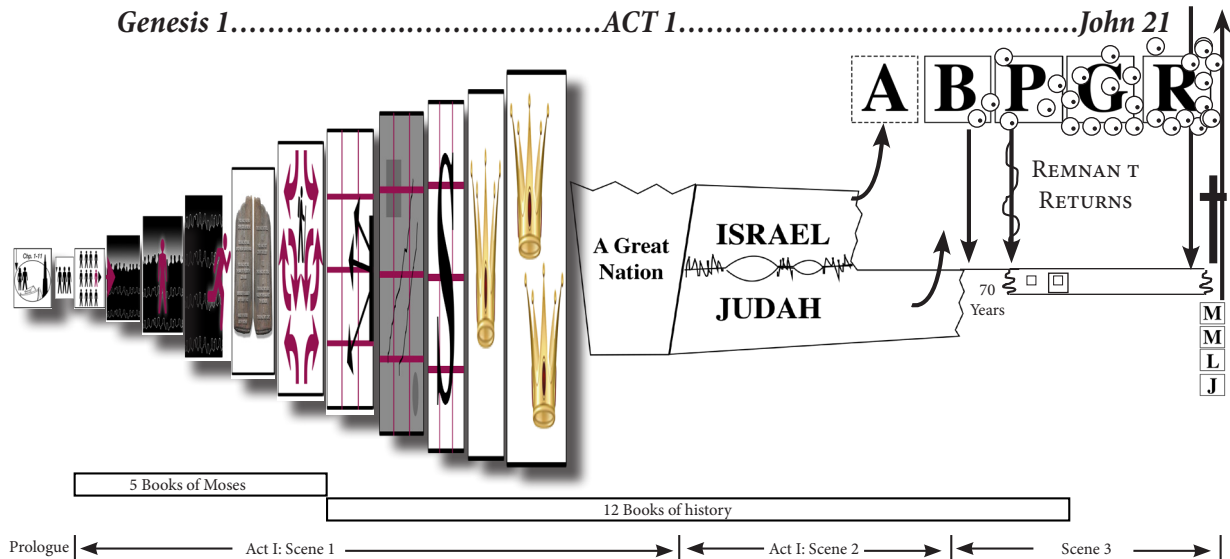
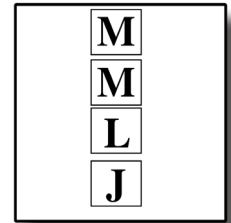
Review Questions and Vocabulary: Act I, Scene Three, Step 3, The Diaspora

1. Why do we refer to Esther as an “orphan”?
2. What positive work was God doing through the diaspora in regard to his Promise?
3. Sketch this and be prepared to identify the specifics of graphic illustrations of Scene Three, Steps 1,2, and 3.

Act I, Scene Three, Step Three (Esther/the Diaspora) Vocabulary/Concepts

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Diaspora | 5. The Orphan | 9. Purim |
| 2. 50,000 | 6. Xerxes | 10. Providential |
| 3. Remnant | 7. Mordecai | 11. Pentecost |
| 4. Susa | 8. Haman the Agagite | 12. 2 million sq. miles |

Act I, Scene Three
Step 4: Jesus Christ (M, M, L & J)
 Suggested Reading: Malachi 3, 4; Matthew 1-3; 27-28
 Acts 3:11-26; Galatians 3:6-14



The case for ignoring the break between the Old and New Testaments.

1. No great changes in Israel or in Jewish culture between the return from the exile and the cross.

Palestine was still a colony (of Persia, Greece, Rome).

The Jewish temple system was still in effect.

Other Specifics:

2. “The period described (in the Gospels) is culmonatife of the Old Testament age, predatory to and predictive the new age (Act II),but to of the new age itself”

(Merrill Unger)

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might relieve the full rights of sons.” Galatians 4:4

“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days (eschatos) he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed

heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.” Hebrews 1:1-2

“...but with the precious blood of Christ, a lam without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times [at the end of the times] for your sake.” I Peter 1:19-20

“For we do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, the our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they passed through the sea...Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert.

...These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.” **I Corinthians 10:1-11**

“At the end (consummation) of the ages.”

Hebrews 9:26

3. The word pleroo ([4137]) “**to complete; fulfilled**”) is often used in reference to Jesus and His ministry, and He often used it Himself, with the sense that what He is doing and is bringing something to a conclusion. Note, for example, the references in Matthew’s Gospel alone:

1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 3:15; 4:14; 5:17; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14; 35; 21:4; 26:54, 56; 27:9

4. There is a smooth transition between the last chapters of the last book of the Old Testament [**Malachi** closes by pointing the way to John the Baptist and the coming Messiah] and the first chapter of the New Testament, which links Jesus directly to Abraham and David.

“See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.” **Malachi 3:1** “See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse” **Malachi 4:5**

Matthew opens on the same theme (the Lord appearing), with no abrupt change of topic.

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham.” **Matthew 1:1**

5. Matthew 1:17 rejects our outline for **ACT I Scenes One-Three**

Scene One

Scene Two

“Thus there were fourteen generations in all...

... fourteen from Abraham to David and Solomon,

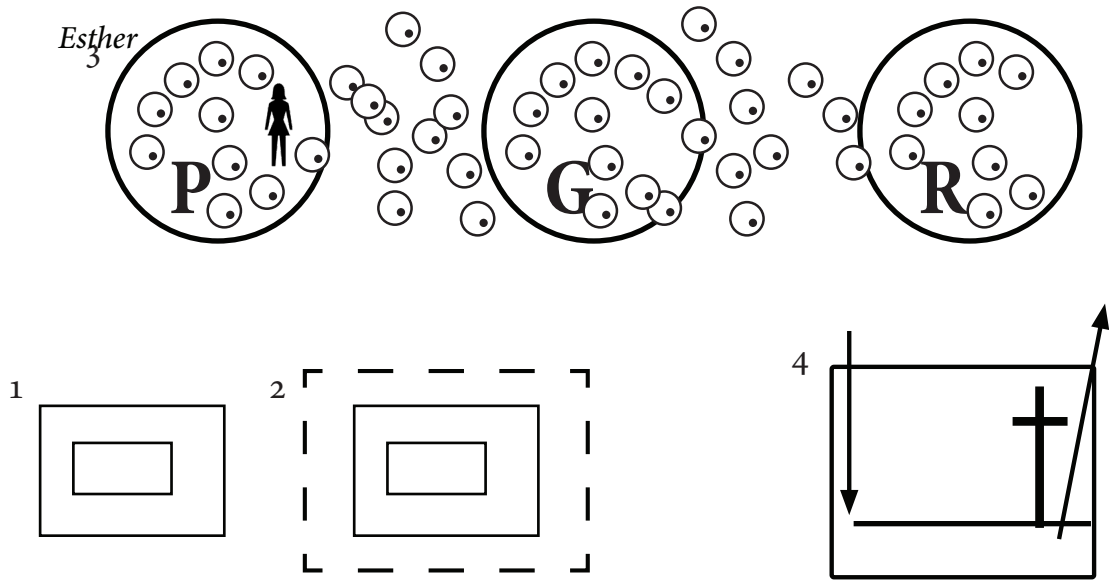
... fourteen from Solomon to the exile to Babylon,

... and fourteen from the exile to Jesus, who is called to Christ.”

Scene Three

Step 4: Jesus Christ (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

A Graphic overview of *Scene Three*



“... Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. The man was headed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised I’m from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.” Acts 2:22-24

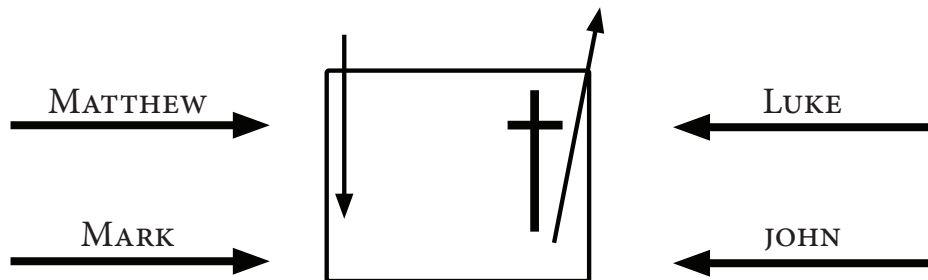
There is often an inseparable connection between what God did (history) and what He said, and this is especially so in Christ: “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...” (Hebrews 1:1)

In this course we call what Christ did the _____ of the _____.

Examples: _____

And what Christ said we call _____

Examples: _____



Christ's coming is so significant, the Bible provides us a four-dimensional view: Though the four gospels may have differences in purpose and presentation of events, they all center on the greatest, most wonderful thing God has ever done!

1. He came to train and prepare the disciples...(the second most prominent topic)
2. ... but, most importantly, He came to die on the cross!

Finally! There problem of SIN is death with!!

“May it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Galatians 6:14)

With Step 4 we see a mystery of two realities. The book of Hebrews indicates that the Old Testament temple and sacrificial system were “copies” of things in heaven.

“It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves went better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a man made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, not to appear for us in God’s presence. Noe did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to do away with sin by sacrifice of himself.” (Hebrews 9: 23-26)

Man’s most terrible sin in history resulted i the greatest blessing the world has ever known!

Genesis 12:3ffb “...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”



Acts 3:18-26 “This is how God fulfilled [pleroo] what He had foretold though all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God, so ***that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord...*** Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on... have foretold these days. And you are the heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. ***He said to Abraham, ‘Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of your from your wicked ways.***”

Galatians 3: 6-9, 13-14 “Consider Abraham, ‘He believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.’ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announce the

_____ in advance to Abraham: ‘_____’

will be _____.’ So those who

have faith are _____ along with Abraham, the man of faith. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.’

He redeemed us in order that the _____ *given to Abraham might come to the*

Gentiles through Jesus so that by faith we might receive the _____ of the Spirit!

John 8:56 “Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

So, what is the blessing?

Genesis 12

END OF ACT I

John 21

Summary of Transition

ACT I God brings the _____ to the cross.

ACT II God takes the _____ to the world!

Review Questions and Vocabulary: Act I, Scene Three, Step 4, Jesus Christ

1. Summarize the evidence for the statement, “the gospels are an extension of the Old Testament system.”
2. In what sense was the time Christ in the gospels the “last days?”
3. What, specifically, is the “blessing” promised through Abraham? Support your answer with scriptural evidence.
4. What evidence is there to justify saying the the death of Jesus Christ on the cross is “the greatest most wonderful thing that God has ever done”?
5. Sketch and be prepared to identify specifics of a graphic illustration of Scene Three.

Act I, Scene Three, Step Three (Esther/The Diaspora) Concepts

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Colony | 5. pleroo | 9. Synoptic |
| 2. escheatos | 6. Matthew 1:17 | 10. “Copies” |
| 3. “At the end of the times” | 7. Facts | 11. Acts 3:18-26 |
| 4. Consummation | 8. Doctrine | 12. Galatians 3:6-14 |