

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 6-1

In the New Testament letter of Philemon, the apostle Paul writes on behalf of a slave named Onesimus. Part of identifying the historical-cultural context of Philemon includes knowing something about the institution of slavery in the Greco-Roman world. Consult several New Testament histories or Bible dictionaries or encyclopedias and read their articles on slavery. Then write a two-page summary of the practice of slavery in New Testament times.

Assignment 6-2

Look up Haggai in an Old Testament survey or introduction and read what the author(s) has to say by way of introduction (e.g., author, date, audience, situation, purpose). Use what you have learned to write a one- to two-page description of the historical setting of this prophetic book.

Assignment 6-3

Read Revelation 2-3 and list the seven churches that receive a letter. Next, copy a map of Asia Minor from a Bible atlas and locate the seven churches. On your copy trace the route among the seven churches that a messenger probably followed to deliver the letters. Finally, look up Revelation 3:14-22 in a commentary or background commentary and make a list of every historical-cultural fact about Laodicea that you can find.

Assignment 6-4

Read the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman recorded in John 4:1-39. Then read an article on "Samaria" or "Samaritan" in a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia and make a list of all the ways the article helps you understand the conversation between Jesus and the woman.

Assignment 6-5

Use a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia to answer the following questions about the book of Nehemiah:

1. How much time passes between the month of Kislev (or Chislev) in Nehemiah 1:1 and the month of Nisan in Nehemiah 2:1?
2. Where is Susa (Neh. 1:1)?
3. For which empire did Susa serve as one of three royal cities?
4. What other biblical character lived in Susa?
5. Did this character live before Nehemiah or after?
6. Which empire did King Artaxerxes rule over, and when (Neh. 2:1)?
7. What was a cupbearer's (Neh. 1:11) status in the royal court?