

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 10-1****The First Christians** *For use with pages 342–350***Key Terms****messiah:** a savior or someone who rescues another from harm (page 344)**disciple:** a person who follows the teachings of another (page 344)**parable:** a story that teaches a lesson using everyday events (page 345)**resurrection:** act of rising from the dead or coming back to life (page 347)**apostle:** one of the early Christian leaders who started new churches and taught Jesus' message (page 348)**salvation:** being delivered or saved from sin, destruction, or evil (page 350)**Drawing from Experience**

Have you ever been forced to do something that you did not want to do? Did you fight back, or did you go along with the rules?

In this section, you will learn how some Jews opposed the Roman rule of Judaea peacefully, while others fought back. You'll also learn how Jesus' teachings brought about a new religion called Christianity.

**Organizing Your Thoughts**

Use the diagram to help you take notes on some of the first Christians.

<b>People</b>	<b>What did they do? (cause)</b>	<b>What happened? (effect)</b>
King David & King Solomon	<b>1.</b>	<b>2.</b>
Zealots	<b>3.</b>	<b>4.</b>
Jesus	<b>5.</b>	<b>6.</b>
Peter	<b>7.</b>	<b>8.</b>
Paul	<b>9.</b>	<b>10.</b>

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 10-1 (continued)****The Jews and the Romans** (*page 343*)

**Main Idea** Roman rule of Judaea led some Jews to oppose Rome peacefully, while others rebelled.

During the 900s B.C., King David and King Solomon brought the Israelites together to create the kingdom of Israel. Jerusalem became the capital. This kingdom did not last long and was split into two smaller kingdoms: Israel and Judah. These did not last long either and were taken over by more powerful neighbors. Israel was ruined, and its people went in different directions. The people of Judah, called the Jews, survived.

**Roman Rule** The Romans took over Judah in 63 B.C. For a time, Judah was ruled by Jewish kings. Then, in A.D. 6, Emperor Augustus changed the country's name to Judaea. He made Judaea a Roman province or territory. It was ruled by a Roman governor called a procurator instead of a king.

The Jews were divided over what to do about the Romans. Some wanted to work with the Romans, but others did not. Some rebelled by closely following their Jewish traditions. Others rejected the Romans and moved away to places where they could live by themselves and share their belongings.

**The Jews Rebel** Some Jews, called Zealots, wanted to fight the Romans and get their kingdom back. In A.D. 66, the Zealots fought with many Jews against the Romans, but they lost. The Romans destroyed the temple and killed thousands of Jews. Jewish general Josephus wrote about how horrible the war was. He had fought in the war, but changed to the Roman side.

In A.D. 132, the Jews fought against the Romans again and lost again. This time the Romans forced all Jews to leave Jerusalem and would not let them return to the city. Many Jews were very sad they lost Jerusalem. They found homes in other places.

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By A.D. 700, Jewish communities were set up as far west as Spain and as far east as central Asia. In later centuries, they formed communities throughout Europe and the Americas. Even though they were not all living in one location, they kept their faith alive by studying and following their religious laws.

11. How many wars did the Jews fight against the Romans? Did they win any of them?
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## **The Life of Jesus** *(pages 344–347)*

**Main Idea** Jesus of Nazareth preached of God's love and forgiveness. He was eventually crucified and then reported to have risen from the dead.

During Roman times, many Jews hoped that God would send them a **messiah**, or a leader who would rescue them from the Romans and help them win back their freedom. Long ago, Israelites who heard from God predicted that a messiah would come. Many Jews thought this messiah would be a great king and would give them back their kingdom.

A few decades before the first Jewish fight against the Romans, a Jew named Jesus left his home in Nazareth and began preaching. From about A.D. 30 to A.D. 33, Jesus went throughout Judaea and Galilee to the north and taught his ideas. Crowds would come to hear him teach and soon he had 12 close followers called **disciples**.

**What Did Jesus Teach?** According to the Christian Bible, Jesus taught that following Jewish religious laws was not as important as having a relationship with God. Jesus said that God was his Father. He preached that God was coming soon to rule the world. He asked people to turn from their sins.

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 10-1 (continued)**

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount gives the main points of his teachings. He taught God wanted more than people who just followed religious laws. He wanted people to love and forgive from the heart. "Blessed are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy" and "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" are two of Jesus' sayings.

Jesus taught about love and forgiveness because God loves and forgives people. He said that God's command is simple. He repeated the age-old Jewish teaching: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." Jesus also stressed another teaching: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus' message of love and forgiveness helped shape the values many people in Europe and America hold today.

Jesus used stories to teach a lesson. These are called **parables**. He used everyday events to teach spiritual ideas. In the story of the prodigal (wasteful) son, Jesus told how a father welcomed back his son with open arms. He forgave his son's mistakes. In another story, he told how a shepherd left his entire flock of sheep to go find one lost sheep. Both stories taught that God forgives mistakes and wants all people to turn away from bad deeds to be saved.

The best known parable is about the Good Samaritan. This story is about a man who is beaten by robbers. A priest and another religious leader will not help the injured man, but a Samaritan, a person looked down on by Jews, stops to help the man. He cleans his cuts and pays for his stay at an inn (hotel). Jesus asked his followers, "Which man do you think truly showed love to his neighbor?"

**What Is the Crucifixion?** People had strong responses to Jesus and his message. Many said he healed the sick and did other miracles. They said he was the messiah. Other Jews did not agree and said he was tricking them. The Roman

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 10-1 (continued)**

rulers were scared of what might happen because of Jesus' teachings. They thought a person who could get such strong reactions might threaten law and order.

To celebrate an important Jewish holiday, Passover, Jesus went to Jerusalem in about A.D. 33. Large, cheering crowds met him. In an event known as the Last Supper, Jesus celebrated the holiday with his 12 disciples. The leaders in Jerusalem feared trouble, so they arrested Jesus. He was charged with not being loyal to the government. He was punished by being crucified, or hung from a cross until dead. This was Rome's way of punishing lower-class criminals and people who spoke up against the government.

After Jesus' death, his followers made a surprising claim. They said that Jesus had been **resurrected**, or raised from the dead. Christian tradition states that Mary Magdalene, one of Jesus' followers, was the first to see Jesus alive again. Others, including Jesus' disciples, reported seeing him as well. The disciples said that Jesus' empty tomb was proof that he was the messiah. All of this led to a new religion called Christianity.

**12.** What is a parable? Give one example that Jesus used.

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## **The First Christians** (pages 348–350)

**Main Idea** Jesus' life and a belief in his resurrection led to a new religion called Christianity.

Jesus' disciples spread the news about his teachings and resurrection. Small groups in the Greek-speaking cities of the eastern Mediterranean agreed with this message. Some were Jews, but others were not. People who believed Jesus Christ and his teachings became known as Christians. The word *Christ* comes from *Christos*, the Greek word for "messiah."

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The early Christians made churches for worship and teaching. They met in people's houses. Many of these homes were owned by women. In these meetings, Christians prayed and studied the Hebrew Bible. They also shared in a meal like the Last Supper to remember Jesus' death and resurrection.

**Who Were Peter and Paul?** Christian leaders who started new churches and taught about Jesus were called **apostles**. They helped to spread Christianity. Perhaps the two most important apostles were Peter and Paul.

Simon Peter was a Jewish fisherman. When Jesus was alive, Peter knew him and was one of the 12 people Jesus called to preach his message. Christian tradition says that after Jesus died, Peter went to Rome and helped set up a church there. Today, the leader of Catholic Christians is in Rome.

Paul of Tarsus was another important Christian leader. He was a well-educated Jew and a Roman citizen. At first, Paul hated Christianity and treated Christians very badly. The head Jewish priest in Jerusalem sent him to a city in Syria called Damascus. The priest wanted Paul to stop Christians in Damascus from spreading their ideas.

On his way to Damascus, something strange happened to Paul. According to Christian belief, he saw a great light and heard Jesus' voice. Paul became a Christian on the spot. He spent the rest of his life spreading Jesus' message. He traveled a lot and started many churches throughout the eastern Mediterranean.

**What Do Christians Believe?** Christians taught that Jesus was the Son of God and had come to save people. By accepting Jesus and his teachings, people could gain **salvation**. This means they could be saved from sin and allowed to enter heaven. Like Jesus, after death they would be raised to live with God forever.

Because of their faith in Jesus, Christians began to understand God in a new way. Like the Jews, Christians

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believed in the God of Israel. They studied the Hebrew Bible. But most Christians believed that the one God was three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This idea became known as the Trinity, which means “three.”

- 13.** If someone was known as a Christian, what did that person believe in?

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