



FIRST QUARTER

WEEK ONE

James Tissot was a very careful artist. He usually made several preliminary drawings of his subject before starting his finished work. For this reason, his pictures are always pleasing because they are so well-balanced.

In most of the *Way of the Cross* paintings and *Jerusalem* paintings, there is a general coloring, as of sand, not surprising since so much of that area is covered with sand. When we see current photos or television shows, we see that same sand color. Even the military uniforms of those in the area are sand-colored.

In the Introduction, we see the painting called *Young Lady Singing in Church*. This painting is a typical Tissot painting because of its intricate detail. It is almost like a photo. Notice the framed mirror above and to the left of the organist, in the upper right corner of the painting. See how the mirror reflects the podium where the singer stands. This helps the organist to keep track of the actions of the singers. Notice the organist, on the far right of the painting. Her hand is playing a chord on the organ while her other hand is turning a page of music.

Notice also the cellist's left hand maintaining a note on his instrument. Look at all the details in this painting. How many items could you list?

BEHOLD, HE STANDETH BEHIND OUR WALL

In the painting on page xi, we can see the face of Jesus behind the lattice wall. The message from this painting could be: Our wall of everyday activities keeps us from noticing Our Lord Who waits for us to see Him. Notice Our Lord's right hand in the middle of the lattice on the left. His hand presses against the lattice, perhaps saying, "Let Me in!"

Look at the painting on p. xii: *Portrait of a Pilgrim*. Notice that the flames of the candles are blowing in opposite directions. Could Tissot be trying to illustrate that the flames of Truth go in all directions around the world? Here he depicts himself as a teacher, holding two fingers up, often as Our Lord is depicted when He was instructing. He shows himself surrounded by funeral wreaths, a container for holy water, a bouquet of violets, a crucifix on a cloth over a chair. Notice the heavy velvet pillow behind the chair. Behind him on the large wreath are the initials of his given name: Jacques Joseph Tissot.

WEEK TWO

Tissot's Victorian Paintings (pages 1 – 5)

This is an optional chapter to introduce the artist and his work.

Victorian Paintings

THE GALLERY OF H.M.S. CALCUTTA

In the painting of the gallery on the ship *H.M.S. Calcutta*, Tissot uses colors in various shades of blondes. We see that it is a very sunny day beyond the hats and fan. Notice the delicate shadow of the figures in the window at the back. While it could be figures behind the glass, it could also be the shadow of the figures on the deck being reflected in the glass window.



Notice a little story is revealed as the lady in the foreground hides her sight from the couple so they have privacy.

THE FAREWELL

This painting was painted by Tissot shortly after leaving his home in Paris. This painting is in typical Tissot style, darkness surrounding main figures. What light there is, focuses on the girl.

THE BRIDESMAID

In *Bridesmaid*, notice all lines converge on the central figure; all the other figures are giving their attention to her. Again, darkness surrounds the figures. The main colors are blue and oranges.

YOUNG WOMAN IN A BOAT

Tissot uses his basic yellows against shades of dark in this painting. Notice the oar is caught in the weeds, and the other is lost. Notice the look on her dog has the same disgusted expression as its mistress. Tissot loved to tell a story in his paintings which made his work popular because many of them were “fun.”

Tissot carefully depicted the effects of light and shadow, creating a wonderful realism.

JULY: SPECIMEN OF A PORTRAIT

On page 5, we see again his favorite colors of yellows and whites, with background of blues and darkness in the beautiful painting titled: *July: Specimen of a Portrait*.

WEEK THREE

Tissot's Old Testament paintings

CREATION

Study *Creation* on p. 6.

This painting shows that Tissot believed that God created with powerful movements which seem to be represented by clouds gathering shape evidently separating water and atmosphere.

Some of the paintings by Tissot were oil on canvas. Many of Tissot's other paintings use a technique called Gouache, which has a chalk base rather than oil base in the paint.

LAMECH WITH HIS SON, NOAH

Read about the painting *Lamech with His Son, Noah*, p. 7.

Study the painting and notice the dark tent background. Notice the primitive clothing of animal skins of Lamech. Noah's mother seems to be more concerned about her appearance as she wears a decorative head covering, and bracelets around her arms and wrists. The center of attention is the newborn baby, Noah, held high over the heads of his parents. Notice all the details of the bedding of Noah's mother, the sandal and ankle wrapping, as well as the long hair and yellow hat of Noah's father.

BUILDING OF THE ARK

Notice in this painting of *The Building of the Ark*, the same blondes and yellow colors, with the contrast in dark, dark blue, and some reds or oranges. Tissot cleverly starts this series of paintings with plenty of sunlight. Spend some time looking at the details of the boards, vertical and horizontal. Do you see blue sky through the boards, perhaps giving a reason to the people why they believed Noah was crazy to think that a great flood was coming. How many men are in the painting? What is each doing? What else do you see?