

# Jesus

*I Am - The Way - to the Comforter*

## The Life of Christ



*Rev. Charles E. Darnell, Ph.D*





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## Foreword



Through the journey of life God has led me to serve my fellowman via active duty military service in the Air Force over a period of twenty-seven years. Along the way God allowed me to increase my knowledge and He began a process of stepping stones that have taken me across all fifty of our United States and through twelve other countries around the globe. I was shown a parallel pertaining to the discipline of the military and my fellowship with God. With each step I would again knock on the door and ask God to show me what it was He wanted me to understand. He has shown me the greatness of His creation through landscapes, seas and sky, animals from the very small to those of great size and, of course, mankind itself. I learned the character of various races, their customs and their diversified religious beliefs. All of this was leading to another very large stepping stone: to change from the service of military duty to the duty of serving God by writing what I had been shown.

As each day passes I wonder what the heck is going on with the world as a whole. There are great storms that may result in floods, deep snows, mud slides, or the destruction of property. There are killings that lead to riots and looting in our major cities. We see politicians who overlook the obvious and govern according to the good-ol'-boy club or by changing the structure of our government to a socialist system. One section of the country is in a drought and another is having massive forest fires. We see terrorist actions that leave many dead and our children are being lured into taking part of these terrorist activity. Many people will believe that there is something wrong with this picture. On the other hand all these acts of chaos might be acts of God to indicate that He is unhappy with His creation. We are His creation, you and I! We may be causing these results by our disobedient actions toward God. This is not being done by any one particular denominational group. It incorporates all denominations and their teachings of misguided actions. Remember what Jesus had to go through in the time of His public ministry with regard to the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees. Somehow it seems that mankind has become present day Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees against God and God is unhappy.

Turn around and look at our churches. Jesus taught love and care for one another. He brought God's free gift of eternal life! He did not bring to us a new religion. The Greek term for church is not a church in the manner that we currently use the term. Ekklesia means assembly or congregation. Jesus led a congregation, or an assembly of disciples and He never asked any disciple to worship Him. He asked those He healed to repent of their sins, to sin no more and to honor the Father in obedience. Now look where we are. We went from one church (assembly) to over 20,000 denominations in the World Council of Churches. Why? Why can't we agree and understand the will of God and to whom Jesus was sent? Matthew 15:24, *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* Interesting term, the house of Israel! What does it mean? Yes! It does include the present day country of Israel but there is a lot more that many people do not understand. There are others who are a part of *the house of Israel*. These other lands and peoples who are a part of the house of Israel and all of the prophecies of the Old Testament referring to Israel and Judah still apply to the present day country of Israel (Judah) and those remaining of the house of Israel. God is very unhappy with lost Israel and many of the actions we are currently seeing on the television and on the Internet are a result of God's disappointment with His people. Christians as a whole need to go back to God's Word and study once again what God says will take place in the final days.

Read this book to get a better idea of the life of Jesus and what He brought to mankind. Pray, and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in your understanding of the life of Christ.



Reverend Charles E. Darnell, PhD, DD



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## Chapter 1

# Credits of the Characters

Who are the characters? We are inundated with this information every time we go to the theater, opera, ballet, the movies, turn on television or attend a sporting event. However, we no longer pay attention to the scrolling list of credits or the information given in the program; yet there's hidden information in many of the credits. Many times in the movies a character has a name but the name is never spoken. If you didn't read the credits, you'd never know the name for that one character. Here's an example: Most of us have watched the Star Wars Trilogy and in the second movie Han Solo is encased in a block. It was the bounty hunter, Bubba Fett, who captured Han. How did you learn the name of the bounty hunter? For most of us, it was the trivia questions after the movies that provided the information. But where did this information come from? In the case of Bubba Fett, it wasn't because his name was spoken, only because the name was shown in the credits and the clues to the identity of the character that led to the conclusion of the identity of Bubba Fett.

That's ancient history and very outdated material, you say. That's funny. I can easily show you material that is fourteen hundred years old, or older, and most people can't tell who the players are, much less the clues leading to the identity of the characters. The players are the three religions that stem from the same patriarch Abraham: Jewish, Christian and Islam. To what do I allude and why the concern? If all three take their basis from Abraham why is there so much hatred among the three. My viewpoint of Judaism or Islam may offend many and be taken as an attack, when it is not meant to be. As religious people, we tend to only listen, read or attempt to understand the religion with which we are associated. In the case of the three major religions, who claim to worship the same God, interaction to seek any common truth is mute. Christians do not attempt to understand Jews or Muslims. Jews do not attempt to understand Muslims or Christians, and, Muslims do not attempt to understand Christians and Jews. Each, as a religion, points its finger at the other in blame and disgust, claiming it's their fault or they are not following the proper prescribed method to worship God.

For the sake of discussion we must establish that there is a difference between religion and truth. On the one hand, religion establishes the tenants of ceremony and mannerisms of worship. In theory, religion seems to be the just and proper answer to the means of how to worship a deity. Reality, on the other hand, should clearly illustrate that in practice, religion becomes the taskmaster to our own enslavement. We become slaves for several reasons.

First, the leadership of society, or our religion, enslaves us. We become enslaved because of our human nature. Most of us do not want to step forward and be the leader. There's responsibility that goes along with leadership and those who step forward, in the purest sense, must demonstrate the qualities of a true leader by being responsible for their actions and the actions of others. For the most part, we tend not to want to be held responsible for our own actions, and in a supervisory role be accountable for the actions of others. Now, take the salt of greed and influence of power and sprinkle these over the leader and see what you get. Under these conditions, the leadership is looking out for itself, and no one else, especially the little guy who is following under their leadership. Unchecked, the influence, control and manipulation by fear leads to laws of ceremony or circumstance, followed by a horde of tolerance checkers who must observe every aspect of life to see that you have not broken any one law. In some cases, these controls are boldly proclaimed and in the open. In other situations the controls are subtle, masked and part of cultural makeup. You could possibly call this the book of the law or hide it in words and say it was the faith of the

believer, or maybe the practice of shunning another. No matter the means, the effect is still enslavement.

A second means by which we are enslaved is by the influence of others. Passion, for whatever cause, inflames mankind to want the same affect. The most notable illustration is simply what's going on around us. If a friend comes to you with a story of great love, you want the same experience to be part of your life. If the person down the street has a new car, you want one also. If a new believer in a cause or faith demonstrates a perceived halo, you try to find how you can get one for yourself. If a businessperson in the next block has struck it rich, you want to mimic the idea. If someone in your area just won the lottery, you spend all your extra money buying lottery tickets so you can be the next winner. All in all, we become enslaved because someone else did it or said it. We are coveting what another has.

Finally, we become enslaved because of ourselves. For the most part, we are all lazy creatures. We will not research what we are told to see whether it is true or not. If we see something on television or written in a book, we take it as truth just because it is on television or in print. If a friend tells you something, you take it as truth because of the friendship. If our social position indicates something to us is a standard, we never question to see if the standard is correct or not, especially if it is compounded by the other two means of enslavement of influence and leadership. We permit ourselves to become enslaved because of family feuds, society standards and personal pride. Yet, a small investment of time to learn the circumstances or situations would lead us from enslavement to being free. Free to know because we went to the source. But, at the same time we tend to permit this word *free* to take on a meaning of its own and somehow believe that because of freedom we do not have to be moral, ethical, chaste, honest, or sincere. We somehow have accepted that freedom means you do not have to adhere to any authority nor do you have to respect anything other than yourself.

You foolish people! Who has deceived you? Paul made the following statement of the Galatians: Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. Galatians 3:1 NIV, *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?* Paul then asked the following to these same people: Galatians 3:2-4:9 NIV, *I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much for nothing—if it really was for nothing? Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?*

*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 announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.*

*All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith." The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, "The man who does these things will live by them." 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 blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.*

*Let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ. What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later,*

does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.

What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.

Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world. 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 receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

Galatians 4:21-31, Tell me, you who want to be under the law. Are you not aware of what the law says? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a promise. (Paul left out the other six sons of Abraham by Keturah, Genesis 25.)

These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written: "Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband."

Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.

Do you find fault with anything written in the blue letters? If so, do not blame me! These are not my words, they are the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians. Now, read the following:

*Glory to God Most High, full of Grace and Mercy; He created all, including man. To man He gave a special place in His Creation. He honored man to be His Agent. To that end, He endowed him with understanding, purified his affections, and gave him spiritual insight, so man should understand nature, himself, and know God through His wondrous signs and glorify Him in truth, reverence, and unity.*

*For the fulfillment of this great trust, man was further given a will, so his acts should reflect God's universal will and law. His mind, freely choosing, should experience the sublime joy of being in harmony with the Infinite, and with the great drama of the world around him, and with his own spiritual growth.*

*But, created though he was in the best of molds, man fell from unity when his will was warped, and he chose the crooked path of discord. Sorrow and pain, selfishness and degradation, ignorance and hatred, despair and unbelief poisoned his life, and he saw shapes of evil in the physical, moral, and spiritual world, and in himself.*

*Then did his soul rise against himself, and his self-discord made discord between kith and kin. Men began to fear the strong and oppress the weak, to boast in prosperity, and curse in adversity, and to flee each other, pursuing phantoms, for the truth and reality of unity was gone from their minds.*

*When men spread themselves over the earth, and became many nations, speaking diverse languages, and observing diverse customs and laws, the evils became multiplied, as one race or nation became alienated from another. The brotherhood of man was now doubly forgotten, first, between individuals, and secondly, between nations. Arrogance, selfishness, and untruth were sown and reaped in larger fields; peace, faith, love and justice were obscured over masses of men, as large tracts of land are starved of sunshine by clouds floating far on high.*

*But God, in His infinite mercy and love, who forgives and guides individuals and nations, and turns to good what seems as evil, never forsakes the struggling soul that turns to Him, nor the groups of men and women who join together to obey His will and law and strengthen each other in unity and truth. God knows the nations that dwell in mountains or valley, heat or cold, in regions fertile or arid.*

*God sees the work of societies that roam over land or seas, or hunt, or tend flocks, or till the soil, or seek the seas for food or oil or fat or gems, or dig out from the bowels of the earth precious stones or metals or stored-up heat and energy, or practice arts and crafts, or produce abundant wealth by machines of ingenious workmanship, or live a frugal life of contemplation.*

*All are children of One God, share His loving care and must be brought within the realm of His eternal unity and harmony.*

*So this Light of eternal unity has shone in all ages and among all nations, through chosen Apostles of God, who came as men to dwell among men, to share their joys and sorrows, to suffer for them and with them, —aye, and to suffer more than falls to ordinary mortal lot, —so their message and their life might fulfill the eternal and unchanging purpose of the Most High, —to lead man to his noblest destiny.*

*Even this eternal light of unity, this mystic light of God's own will, has shone and shines with undiminished splendor. The names of many messengers are inscribed in the records of many nations and many tongues, and many were the forms in which their message was delivered, according to the needs of the times and the understanding of the people. Manifold (diverse) were the lives of the*

*messengers, and manifold also was the response of their people; but they all witnessed to the One Truth: God's unity, might, grace and love.*

*As the records of man are imperfect, and the memory of man unstable, the names of many of these messengers are known in one place and not in another, or among one people and not among others. Some of their names may have perished utterly, but their message stands, one and indivisible, even though it may have been forgotten, or twisted by ignorance, error, superstition or perversity, or misunderstood in the blinding light of time or tortuous circumstance.*

*Many were the faiths in the composite world of Western Asia, Northern Africa, and Europe, and many were the fragments of ancient wisdom, saved, transformed, renewed, or mingled. Many new streams of wisdom were poured through the crucibles of noble minds: prophets, poets, preachers, philosophers, and thinking men of action. Many were the conflicts, and many the noble attempts reaching toward Unity, and many were the subtle influences interchanged with the other worlds of further and Eastern Asia, aye, and perchance with the scattered Isles of the Pacific and the world between the Atlantic and the Pacific.*

*At length came the time, when the voice of unity should speak and declare to the people, without the need of priests or priest-craft, without miracles save those that happen now and always in the spiritual world. Without mystery, save those mysteries which unfold themselves in the growing inner experience of man and his vision of God. They declared with unfaltering voice the unity of God, the brotherhood of man, and grace, mercy, bounty and love, poured out in unstinted measure for ever and ever.*

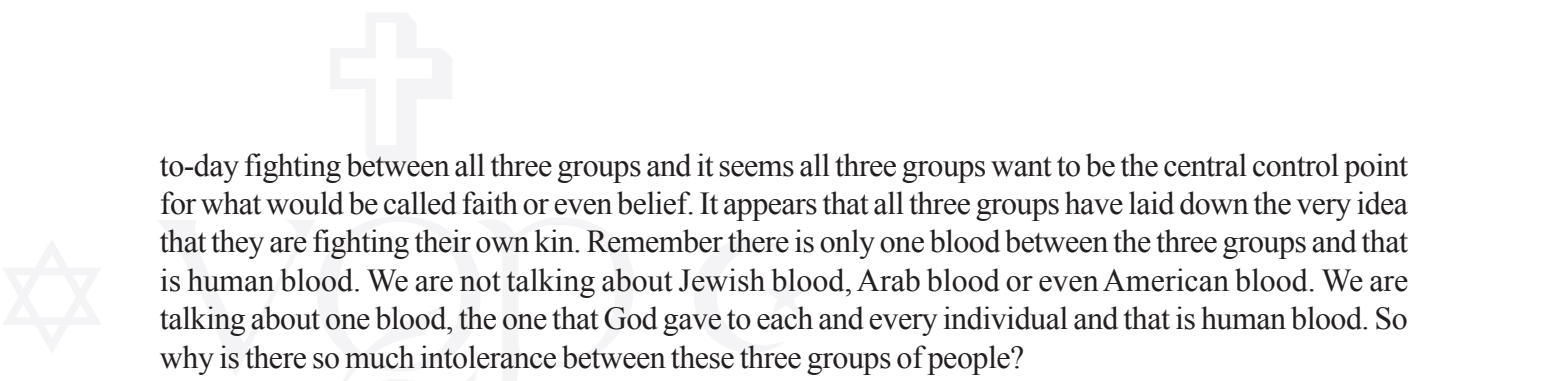
*This great healing Light shone among a people steeped in ignorance, brave and free, but without cohesion or union, simple and rude, but with an easy familiarity with nature. A people accustomed to nature's hardships and her rugged resistance to man, but dreaming of the delights of gardens and fruitful fields. Who was cruel, yet with a rough sense of equality, and wielding a tongue, flexible, beautiful, and able to respond, with brevity and eloquence, to the most sublime thoughts which man could conceive.*

*Who were fit to be vehicles of this Light? Not men intoxicated with words and mysteries, not men whom politics had debauched or tyranny had subdued, men whose refinement had ended in vices. Not men who saw nature only through books or artificial conceits, or in moods which bred softness, indolence, or luxury, who spoke of love and justice. Not men who practiced gross selfishness between class and class, sex and sex, condition and condition, and had perverted their language, once beautiful, into jargons of empty elegance and meaningless futility.*

*The glory of Hellas (Greece), and her freedom and wisdom had departed. Rome's great systems of law, organization, and universal citizenship had sunk into the mire of ecclesiastical formalism, and dogmatism, and exclusive arrogance. The living fire of Persia's prophet demonstrated her fervent devotion. In India, countless castes and kingdoms cancelled the unity of Buddha's teaching. The wounds of China had not yet been healed by T'sang culture, and Japan was still a disciple of China.*

Let me ask the question once again: Did you find fault with anything written in italics? These also are not my words, they are the words of Abdullah Yusuf Ali as the introduction to the 1943 version of the Holy Quran.<sup>1</sup> Now why did I place something from the Quran in a book written about Jesus? Here is a simple answer: Because very few of the three religions that say they go back to Abraham really understand the written record in their Holy Book. That means the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims. There is day-

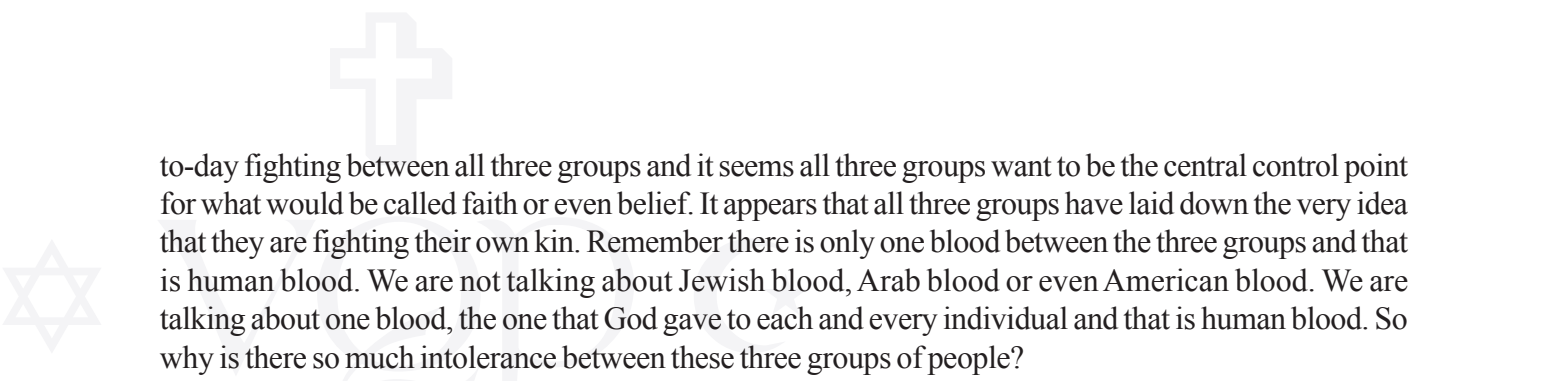
<sup>1</sup>*The Holy Qurán, English translation of the meanings and Commentary. The Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA, Call and Guidance, Printing Rights reserved for King Fahd Holy Qurán Printing Complex, P.O. Box 3561, Al-Madinah, Al-Munauarah.*



to-day fighting between all three groups and it seems all three groups want to be the central control point for what would be called faith or even belief. It appears that all three groups have laid down the very idea that they are fighting their own kin. Remember there is only one blood between the three groups and that is human blood. We are not talking about Jewish blood, Arab blood or even American blood. We are talking about one blood, the one that God gave to each and every individual and that is human blood. So why is there so much intolerance between these three groups of people?

As I said in the beginning of this, there is information hidden in the credits. Now, to fully answer my question to which I allude and why the concern. My observation indicates there are very few people in either of the three religions named that have taken time to read the entire Book and attempt to understand it. Most are enslaved and haven't a clue. My concern is for all the children of the free woman.

With that I'm sure I could find many who would say Muslims fall under the premises of the slave woman. Little do you know, if you believe this! Throughout the Holy Book of God, there is a difference between flesh and spirit. On the side of flesh, Muhammad was descended from the slave woman through Ishmael. However, every Muslim I've ever spoken to has indicated their tie point to biblical characters is through Amelek. That being the case, we can see the spiritual side. Simple reading will show that Amelek was the grandson of Esau. Esau is the twin brother of Jacob, both represent the grandsons of Abraham through the free woman. Thus, all three religions tie to the promises given to Abraham through the free woman and are heirs to the promise. Muhammad spoke truth, recorded truth and left the truth with his followers just as Yoshua Bin Yusuf (Joshua, son of Joseph), known to many as Jesus (His name in the Greek), left his authority with the church. Oh what a mess we now have because of enslavement, deception and lack of concern to seek the truth. Come along, bring an open mind and invest a little time, because we are now on a journey to investigate and see what truth may be hidden in the Holy Bible concerning the life of the man named Jesus, the Son of God, King of kings and Lord of lords.



## Chapter 2

# Names for God

My observations made concerning mankind, as a whole, indicate they do not desire to study God's words given to mankind. It doesn't matter if you are speaking the words of Moses, the words of Jesus or the words of Muhammad. Mankind will accept what they want, reject what is outside their environment and never take the time to do a serious study to determine what is truth; whether their beliefs are based upon that truth or based upon the ideas of another individual.

First major statement concerning this work: God never requested mankind to have religion! God requested obedience: In other words, mankind's following of what was good and righteous by faith. God never sought mankind to build huge edifices in His name or honor, nor did He demand that certain laws be continually added so mankind would have guidance to live life. These changes, and the religion that goes with the changes, are all the work of man himself and not by the hand of God.

Adam knew God and God gave Adam one rule: do not eat of the tree in the middle of the garden. Abraham was the friend of God and God only gave Abraham one rule: Obey me and believe in my promise to you. God gave Moses ten rules we call the Ten Commandments, ten rules of moral code and nothing more. These rules are not religion nor are they a religious document. Jesus condensed these down, once again, to one rule: Love each other as I have loved you. The additions to these rules become laws, laws for the sake of mankind, given by mankind, to mankind because mankind will not abide by moral or ethical standards. The additions to the simple rule also permit control, power, and influence to become the mainstay of the rules and greedy people will jump at the chance to be the person in the center of this control.

With that said I feel it is necessary to recall some of the names by which we have called God. After that study we shall look at the names pertaining to Jesus.

The following is edited from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary.<sup>2</sup>

## Yahweh

**Yahweh** (ya'way). The Hebrew tetragrammaton (YHWH) traditionally pronounced Jehovah; is now known to be correctly vocalized yahwe. New inscriptional evidence from the second and first millennia BCE point toward this fact. The old view of Le Clerc,<sup>3</sup> later propounded by Paul Haupt<sup>4</sup> and developed by W. F. Albright,<sup>5</sup> has commended itself in the light of the phonetic development and grammatical evidence of increased knowledge of Northwest Semitic and kindred tongues. This thesis holds Yahweh to be originally

<sup>2</sup> Merrill Frederick Unger, AB, PD, ThM, ThD, 1909-1980, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, (1988), Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Le Clerc, 1657-1731, *A Harmony of the Gospels in Greek* (1834) Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, LLC. A Swiss theologian & biblical scholar promoted exegesis or critical interpretation of the Bible. Radical for his age. Dealt with the doctrine of The Trinity. Referenced in Unger's Bible Dictionary that reports to have used the old view of Le Clerc, later propounded by Paul Haupt & developed by W. F. Albright.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Haupt, LL.D, 1858-1926, *Semites, Hebrews, Israelites, Jews* (1918) The Open Court: vol 1918: Iss. 12, Article 5. He was a Semitic scholar, pioneer of Assyriology in the US. Discovered the Sumerian dialect in 1880. Projected & edited the Polychrome Bible, a critical edition of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament & a new English translation with notes. One of his works was the Gilgamesh epic (Nimrodepos).

<sup>5</sup> Dr William Foxwell Albright, 1891-1971. *Yahweh & the Gods of Canaan: An Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths* (1968) Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns. He was an American archaeologist & biblical scholar, & founder of the Biblicology movement. His background was in German historical criticism of Biblical accounts.

a finite causative verb from the Northwest Semitic root yhw, *to be, to come into being*, so that the divine name would mean *He causes to be, or exist*, i.e., *He creates*. Amorite personal names after 2,000 BCE lend support to the Haupt-Albright view, demonstrating that the employment of the causative stem yahweh, *he creates*, was in vogue in the linguistic background of early Hebrew. Another recent etymology is that of Sigmund Mowinckel<sup>6</sup> and James Montgomery.<sup>7</sup> This suggests that Yahu (an abbreviated form of Yahweh current in personal names) is a compound formation ya (O!) and hu or huwa (he), *O He! The name Yahweh has been found to be unique to Israel and has not been verified as the name of any deity outside Israel.*

Bibliography: Julian Obermann,<sup>8</sup> *The Divine Name YHWH in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 68 (1949): 301-23; B. Alfrink,<sup>9</sup> *Theologische Zeitschrift* 5 (1949), pp. 72ff; B. Alfrink,<sup>10</sup> B. D. Eerdmans and G. J. Thierry, *Oudtestamentische Studien* 5 (1949): 1-62; W. Zimmerli,<sup>11</sup> *I Am Yahweh* (1982).

In the above, the suggestion is made to also refer to LORD to gather the true meaning of Yahweh, thus the following is edited from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary.<sup>12</sup>

## Lord

**LORD** - The rendering of several Hebrew and Greek words, which have different meanings:

I. Jehovah (yahweh; Hebrew YHWH, *self-existent*). This is used as a proper name of God and should have been retained in that form by the translators.

II. Lord (Hebrew 'Adon), an early word denoting ownership; hence, absolute control. It is not properly a divine title, instead used in the following manner:

A. The owner of slaves and rendered master, Genesis 24:14, "*Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'—let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.*"

B. For kings as the lords of their subjects, Isaiah 26:13, *O Lord our God, masters besides You have had dominion over us; but by You only we make mention of Your name.*

<sup>6</sup> Sigmund Mowinckel, 1884-1965. *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 6 vol (1962) Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing. *Psalmstudien* (1921-24). This work was one of the major works of biblical commentary of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Emphasized the cultic nature of the origin & development of the Psalms. His estate published a book in print out 1959, 1981, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Prof James Allen Montgomery, 1866-1949, *The Ras Shamra Mythological Texts* (1935) Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society. *Islamic Crosspollinations: Interactions in the Medieval Middle East* (2007) Cambridge: The E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust. He has published widely on Classical Arabic Islamic intellectual systems. A reader in Classical Arabic at University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Trinity Hall. Also: *Law & Education in Medieval Islam* (2004) Leuven: Peeters.

<sup>8</sup> Julian Joel Obermann, 1888-1956, *The Divine Name YHWH in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, *Journal of Biblical Literature* vol 68, pp. 301-23 (1949) J. Philip Hyatt, ed., London: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis.

**OBERMANN, JULIAN JOËL** Orientalist. Born in Warsaw, Obermann taught Semitic languages at the University of Hamburg from 1919 to 1922, achieving recognition with the publication of his work on the philosophy of Al-Ghazâlî in 1921. He subsequently became professor of Semitic philology at the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, where he taught from 1923 to 1931. From 1933 to 1935 Obermann was visiting professor of Semitic languages at Yale University; he became professor in 1935. He served as coeditor of the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1933-36). In 1944 Obermann became director of Judaic research and editor of the Yale Judaica Series, in which capacity he served until his retirement. In the course of his career, Obermann made contributions in Semitic philology and epigraphy, Old Testament and Ugaritic studies, Islamic culture, and Arabic philosophy. His works include: *Das Problem der Kausalit at bei den Arabern* (1916); *Der philosophische und religioese Subjektivismus Ghazalis* (1921); *The Arabic Original of Ibn Shahin's Book of Comfort* (1933); and *Ugaritic Mythology* (1948). He also edited H. Gressman's *Tower of Babel* (1928) and Gandz's translation of Maimonides' *Sanctification of the New Moon* (1956) after the death of the authors.

<sup>9</sup> Bernardus Johannes Alfrink, 1900-1987, *Theologische Zeitschrift* vol 5 (1949) Reprint: (1976) Baarn: Uitgeverij Ambo.

<sup>10</sup> Bernardus Johannes Alfrink, B.D. Eerdmans & G. J. Thierry, *Oudtestamentische Studien* vol 5 (1949) Leiden: E J Brill.

<sup>11</sup> Walther Zimmerli, 1907-1983, *I Am Yahweh* (1982) Westminster: John Knox Press.

<sup>12</sup> Merrill Frederick Unger, Op. Cit.



C. A husband as lord of the wife, Genesis 18:12 NIV, *So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?"*

D. It is applied to God as the owner and governor of the whole earth, Psalms 114:7, *Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.*

E. The Jews, out of a superstitious reverence for the name Jehovah, always pronounce Adonai where Jehovah is written. The similar form, with the suffix, is also used of men, as of Potiphar. Genesis 39:2, *The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*

III. Adonai (Hebrew 'adonay), emphatic, *the Lord*; many regard it as the plural of II above. It is used chiefly in the Pentateuch:

A. Always where God is submissively and reverently addressed, Exodus 4:10, *Then Moses said to the Lord, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."*

B. Also when speaking of God, 1 Kings 8:53, *"For You separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be Your inheritance, as You spoke by Your servant Moses, when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God."*

IV. Lord, Master (Greek kurios, *supreme*), he to whom a person or thing belongs, the master, the one having disposition of men or property:

A. The owner of the vineyard, Matthew 21:40, *"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"*

B. The Lord of the harvest, Matthew 9:38, *"Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."*

C. The master of the house, Mark 13:35, *"Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning."*

D. Lord of the Sabbath, Matthew 12:8, *"For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."* Jesus had the power to determine what was suitable to the Sabbath, and of releasing Himself and others from its obligation.

E. The term is also a title of honor sometimes rendered *sir* and is expressive of the respect and reverence by which:

1. Servants salute their master, Luke 13:8, *But he answered and said to him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it."*

2. Employed by a son in addressing his father, Matthew 21:30, *Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, "I go, sir," but he did not go.*

3. By citizens toward magistrates, Matthew 27:63, *Saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.'*"

4. By anyone wishing to honor a man of distinction, Mark 7:28, *And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."*

5. By the disciples in saluting Jesus, their teacher and master, Matthew 8:25, *Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"*

F. This title is given to God, the ruler of the universe, both are known as LORD (Greek - kurios), Matthew 1:22-23, *So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*

Matthew 21:9, *Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"*

G. The title is also applied to Jesus as the Messiah, since by His death He acquired a special ownership of mankind and after His resurrection was exalted by a partnership in the divine administration, Acts 10:36, *The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all.*

V. Baal (Hebrew ba'al, *master*), applied only to heathen deities, or to the man as husband, or to one especially skilled in a trade or profession. Exodus 22:8, *If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor's goods.*

VI. Other and less important words in the original are rendered Lord, master, and as an official title, e.g., *ceren*, a Philistine term found in Joshua 13:3, Judges 3:3, and 1 Samuel 5:8, where *the lords of the Philistines* are mentioned.

Bibliography: E. Lohmeyer,<sup>13</sup> *Kyrios Jesus* (1928); W. Bousset,<sup>14</sup> *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus* (1935).

**(THE) LORD; KJV,** (Sabin<sup>15</sup>) Jehovah (je-ho'va; Hebrew YHWH, LXX; usually Kurios). The name of God most frequently used in the Hebrew Scriptures but commonly represented, we cannot say rendered, in the KJV and NIV by LORD.

Pronunciation. The true pronunciation of this name, by which God was known to the Hebrews, has been entirely lost. The Jews themselves, scrupulously avoided every mention of it, and substituted in its stead one or other of the words with whose proper vowel points it may happen to be written, usually the name Adonai. They continued to write YHWH, but read Adonai. Where God is called *My Lord Jehovah* (Hebrew Adonai YHWH), Elohim was substituted to avoid the double Adonai. When the vowel points were added to the Hebrew text, the rule, in the case of words written but not read, was to attach to these words the vowels belonging to the words read in place of them. Thus they attached to YHWH the points of 'adonay; hence the form Yehowah and the name Yeh'v'h. The strong probability is that the name Jehovah was anciently pronounced Yahweh, like the Iabe (Yahweh) of the Samaritans. This custom, that had its origin in reverence, and has almost degenerated into a superstition, was founded upon an erroneous rendering of Leviticus 24:16, *And whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the Lord, he shall be put to death.* From which it was inferred that the mere utterance of the name constituted a capital offense. According to Jewish tradition, it was pronounced but once a year by the high priest on the Day of Atonement when he entered the Holy of Holies, but on this point there is some doubt.

For the LeClerc-Haupt-Albright<sup>16</sup> view that Yahweh was originally a causative finite verb. See Yahweh (<http://www.whoisjesus.com/yhwh-LORD.html>).

Import. The passage in Exodus 3:14 (KJV) seems to furnish designedly a clue to the meaning of the word. When Moses received his commission to be the deliverer of Israel, the Almighty, who appeared in the burning bush, communicated to him the name he should give as the credentials of his mission: "*God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM* (Hebrew 'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh): *and He said, Thus shalt thou say*

<sup>13</sup> Ernst Lohmeyer, 1890-1946, *Kyrios Jesus*, Eine Untersuchung zu Philipper 2,5-11, SHAW.PH (1928) Heidelberg: C. F. Winter.

<sup>14</sup> Wilhelm Bousset, 1865-1920, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus* (1935) Ancien(s) ou d'occasion, Vendeur Harvest Book Company LLC (2013) Fort Washington: Baylor University Press.

<sup>15</sup> Robert A. Sabin, 1932-2014, *Who Is Jesus?* (1984) <http://www.whoisjesus.com/yhwh-LORD.html>

<sup>16</sup> LeClerc-Haupt-Albright, op.cit.

*unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”*

In both names ‘ehyeh and YHWH, the root idea is that of underived existence. When it is said that God’s name is HE IS, simple being is not all that is affirmed. He is in a sense in which no other being is. He is, and the cause of His being is in Himself. He is because He is. But compare the etymology that Yahweh means *He causes to be*, and *He creates*. (P. Haupt and W. F. Albright’s<sup>17</sup> view.)

When Made Known. The notice in Exodus 6:3 (KJV), *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them*. The name JEHOVAH does not imply the patriarchs were completely ignorant of the existence or the use of the name. It simply means that previous to their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, they had no experiential knowledge of such redemption. Under Moses they were to experience such deliverance and have the redemptive power of God made real to them and the redemptive name of God granted to them. Previously, as shepherds in Palestine, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had known God as El Shaddai, *the Almighty*, Genesis 17:1 KJV, proving His power, but not in redemption as such.

Bibliography: W. Eichrodt,<sup>18</sup> *Theology of the Old Testament* (1975), 1:187-92; J. Kitto,<sup>19</sup> *Daily Bible Illustrations* (1981), 1:372-74.

There are other reference sources that provide additional information on Yahweh. The following is edited from Nelson’s Bible Dictionary.<sup>20</sup>

### Names of God

The titles or designations given to God throughout the Bible. In the ancient world, knowing another’s name was a special privilege that offered access to that person’s thought and life. God favored His people by revealing Himself by several names, which offered special insight into His love and righteousness.

**Jehovah/Yahweh.** One of the most important names for God in the Old Testament is Yahweh, or Jehovah, from the verb *to be*, meaning simply but profoundly, *I am who I am*, and *I will be who I will be*. The four letter Hebrew word YHWH was the name by which God revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush, Exodus 3:14 KJV (scripture inserted above). This bush was a vivid symbol of the inexhaustible dynamism of God who burns like a fire with love and righteousness, yet remains the same and never diminishes. Some English translations of the Bible translate the word as Jehovah, while others use Yahweh.

**God is the author of life and salvation. His *I am* expresses the fact that He is the infinite and original personal God who is behind everything and to whom everything must finally be traced. This name, *I am who I am*, signals the truth that nothing else defines who God is but God Himself. What He says and does is who He is. The inspired Scriptures are the infallible guide to understanding who God is by what He says about Himself and what He does. Yahweh is the all-powerful and sovereign God who alone defines Himself and establishes truth for His creatures and works for their salvation.**

Moses was called to proclaim deliverance to the people and was told by God, *“Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”* In the deliverance of the Hebrew people from slavery in

<sup>17</sup> Haupt, Albright, *Ibid*.

<sup>18</sup> Wather Eichrodt, 1890-1978, *Theology of the Old Testament*, vol 1 pp. 187-92 (1975) Philadelphia: Westminster Press. Translation of *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (1933-39) Leipzig: Hinrichs. German biblical scholar. Showed the importance to biblical studies of an understanding of the theology of the Old Testament.

<sup>19</sup> John Kitto, 1804-1854, *Daily Bible Illustrations*, 8 vol (1856) Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Sons. Original Readings for a Year on Subjects Relating to Sacred History, Biography, Geography, Antiquities, and Theology. Digitized 2008. Original from Harvard University.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Nelson, 1780-1861, *Nelson’s Bible Dictionary* (1986) Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Egypt, God revealed a deeper significance to His name. But He had already disclosed Himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as Yahweh. Each of them had called on the name of the Lord (Yahweh) as the God who protects and blesses. Yet Exodus 6:3 KJV (scripture inserted on previous page) shows that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not know the fuller meaning of Yahweh, that was to be revealed to Moses and the Hebrew people in the Exodus experience.

The divine name Yahweh is usually translated Lord in English versions of the Bible. It only became a practice in late Old Testament Judaism to refrain from pronouncing the sacred name YHWH, but to say instead *my Lord* (Adonai), a practice still used today in the synagogue. When the vowels of Adonai were attached to the consonants YHWH in the medieval period, the word Jehovah resulted. Today, many Christians use the word Yahweh, the more original pronunciation, not hesitating to name the divine name since Jesus taught believers to speak in a familiar way to God.

The following are other names in honor of the Lord in the Old Testament that stem from the basic name of Yahweh:

**Jehovah-jireh or Yahweh-Yireh.** This name is translated as *The-LORD-Will-Provide*, commemorating the provision of the ram in place of Isaac for Abraham's sacrifice. Genesis 22:14, *And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of The Lord it shall be provided."*

**Jehovah-nissi.** This name means *The-LORD-Is-My-Banner*, in honor of God's defeat of the Amalekites. Exodus 17:15-16, *And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner; for he said, "Because the Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."*

**Jehovah-shalom.** This phrase means *The-LORD-Is-Peace*, the name Gideon gave the altar which he built in Ophrah. Judges 6:24, *So Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it The-Lord-Is-Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.*



**Jehovah-shammah.** This phrase expresses the truth that *The-LORD-Is-There*, referring to the city which the prophet Ezekiel saw in his vision. Ezekiel 48:35, *"All the way around shall be eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE."*

**Jehovah-tsebaoth.** This name, translated *The-LORD-of-hosts*, was used in the days of David and the prophets, witnessing to God the Savior who is surrounded by His hosts of heavenly power. 1 Samuel 1:3, *This man went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. Also the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there.*

**Jehovah Elohim Yisrael.** This name means *LORD-God-of-Israel*, and it appears in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the Psalms. Joshua 7:13, *"Get up, sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow,' because thus says the Lord God of Israel: There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you."* Other names similar to this are **Netsach Yisrael**, *The Strength of Israel*. 1 Samuel 15:29, *"And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He is not a man, that He should relent."*

**Abiy Yisrael**, *The Mighty One of Israel*. Isaiah 1:24, *Therefore the Lord says, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, "Ah, I will rid Myself of My adversaries, and take vengeance on My enemies."*

**El.** Another important root name for God in the Old Testament is El. By itself it refers to a god in the most general sense. It was widely used in ancient eastern cultures whose languages are similar to Hebrew and therefore may refer either to the true God or to false gods. The highest Canaanite god was El whose son was Baal. In the Bible the word is often defined properly by a qualifier like Jehovah. Deuteronomy 5:9, *"I, the LORD (Jehovah) your God (Elohim), am a jealous God (El)."*



Genesis 21:33, *Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and there called on the name of the LORD (Yahweh), the Everlasting God (El Olam).* Jacob built an altar on a piece of land he purchased at Shechem and called it *El Elohe Israel* (God, the God of Israel), commemorating his wrestling with the angel at the place he called Peni-el (the face of God), and receiving his new name Israel (Yisra-el, God strives), Genesis 32:28-30, *And He said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.” Then Jacob asked, saying, “Tell me Your name, I pray.” And He said, “Why is it that you ask about My name?” And He blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: “For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”* El Shaddai (God Almighty), signifying God as a source of blessing, is the name with which God appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Exodus 6:3 (scripture inserted on page 31).

**Elohim.** Elohim is the plural form of El, but it is usually translated in the singular. Some scholars have held that the plural represents an intensified form for the supreme God; others believe it describes the supreme God and His heavenly court of created beings. Still others hold that the plural form refers to the triune God of Genesis. Genesis 1:1-3, *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.* It is He, God, who works through Word and Spirit in the creation of the world. All agree that the plural form Elohim does convey the sense of the one Supreme Being who is the only true God.

Several important names of God identify Him as Branch, King, Wisdom, Shepherd, and Servant:

**Branch of Righteousness.** Jeremiah 23:5-6, *“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”*

This verse from Jeremiah names the coming messianic figure, *the Branch of righteousness*, who will descend from David and be raised up to reign as King to execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. Christians see in this linkage a prophecy about God the Son taking on human flesh to serve as righteous King.

**King.** This descendant of David will have several divine qualities. He will be a Branch of Righteousness, a King, and His name will be called *The Lord Our Righteousness* (Jehovah Tsidkenu).

**Wisdom.** This person also appears in Proverbs 8 as Wisdom, the speaker who always says and does what is righteous, is equal to Jehovah, and works with Him in the creation of the universe. Paul describes Christ in these terms in Colossians. Colossians 1:13-19, *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell.*

**Shepherd.** God is also described in prophecy as the Shepherd who will feed His flock, gather the lambs in His arms, carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those with young. Jesus applied this name to Himself, making Himself equal to God; and Jesus Christ is so named by His followers.

**Servant.** The name of Servant also identifies this divine person and His saving ministry on behalf of His people. God’s Servant is described in terms that apply to Jesus. He is upheld and chosen by God; He delights in God; He receives God’s Spirit. Like Wisdom in Proverbs 8, He is holy, just, and righteous.

He will bring Jacob back to Him and will be a light to the nations since He is an offering for sin.

**Word of God.** The Word of God figures prominently in Scripture as another name of God. The Word is not as clearly a person in the Old Testament as in the New Testament where Jesus Christ is identified as the personal Word of God. But it is evident from Psalms 33:4 that the Word should be understood in a personal sense, for *the word of the Lord is right* indicating a personified Word. *By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made*, echoing the creation in Genesis. In the New Testament, Jesus is seen to be both Word and Law personified.

**Glory.** God is described as Glory (Shekinah<sup>21</sup>) in Exodus, Psalms, and Isaiah. In the New Testament Jesus shares the glory of God.

When the age of the New Covenant arrived with the birth of Jesus Christ, the names of the three persons who comprise the trinity are made more explicit. These names fulfill the deeper meanings of the Old Testament names for God.

In the New Testament God is known as Father and Abba. Jesus is known as Son, Son of God, Son of man, Messiah, Lord, Word, Wisdom, Bridegroom, Shepherd, Vine, Light, and *The Way*. The Holy Spirit is known as the Helper, Advocate, Counselor, and Comforter.

There is additional information that covers a lot of what has already been said pertaining to the various names given to God or a diety in general. There is an abundance of material to be found in Fausset's Bible Dictionary<sup>22</sup> and the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE).<sup>23</sup>

Now, common sense dictates that for truth to be found, there must be an analysis of what is presented to insure that the current information does indeed refer to earlier information, thus having a continuous line of presentation that is built upon the foundation. It would not matter if this thought were made toward science, mathematics or religion. They all must accept that analysis is needed to insure that the properties of the law continue from their foundation. Any form of religion, or physical science, that is not tolerant of this analysis must be hiding something.

There is one item man wants to play with on one hand, and ignore on the other, and that is the factor of time. Man plays with time, we gauge things by time, commit things by time and allocate units of time. Then we turn around and forget all about time when it concerns history. The history of religion is no different when it comes to mankind and time. When God became the God of Israel, there was only one God. When Christ walked the earth, there was only one Messiah. When Muhammad received the Qurán, there was only one Christian Church. When we look at the Qurán, from Muhammad's view, we must understand the point we are talking about in relationship to mankind's journey upon the stage of history. Muhammad received the Qurán in the 600's and the Christian Church was *The Church* until 1054 when the first division occurred. However, we must also include two other minor divisions at this point. Where do the Gnostic and Coptic branches fit on the trail of *The Church*? At any rate, in 1054 we see the split between the Orthodox and Catholic Church. We had these two branches until 1521 when Martin Luther<sup>24</sup> led the breakaway Protestant division from the Catholic church. Now, almost 500 years later, we have over 20,000 denominations represented in the World Council of Churches. There's no wonder the followers of Islam make some of the statements they do about Christians.

<sup>21</sup> *Shekinah*, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/shekinah>

<sup>22</sup> Andrew Robert Fausset, 1821-1910, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary* (1998), Electronic Database by BibleSoft. Public domain. <http://www.bible-history.com/faussets/>

<sup>23</sup> *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ISBE (1939) Edited by James Orr, et al, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. <http://www.internationalstandardbible.com>

<sup>24</sup> Martin Luther, 1483-1586, One of the most influential and controversial figures in the Reformation movement and in Christian history. Martin Luther began the Protestant Reformation and with many followers broke away from the Catholic Church. His actions fractured the Roman Catholic Church into new sects of Christianity and set in motion reform within the Church.

## Chapter 3

# Son of Man

To understand more of who Jesus is, in a Christian perspective and to add an appropriate identifier, we can do a limited search on the term, Son of Man. What information can we gather about this term? The first reference is edited from *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*.<sup>25</sup>

Son of Man: (Greek *huios tou anthropou*). This is a term, like the Son of God, that is now mainly associated with Christ Jesus and used in both the Old and New Testaments. Christ employed this expression to designate Himself some eighty times. It portrays Him as the Representative Man. It designates Him as the last Adam in counterdistinction to the first man, Adam, 1 Corinthians 15:45, *And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.* It sets Jesus as, the second man . . . from heaven, over against, the first man . . . from the earth. 1 Corinthians 15:47, *The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.* Therefore, the Son of Man is our Lord's racial name, as the Son of David is distinctly His Jewish name and the Son of God His divine name. This term is uniformly used of Christ in connection with His mission, Luke 19:9-10, *And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."* His death and resurrection. Matthew 12:40, *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* Matthew 20:18, *"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death."* Matthew 26:2, *"You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."* Finally, His second advent. Matthew 24:37-44, *"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."* Acts 1:9-11, *Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."* Son of Man transcends purely Jewish limitations and has application to the salvation of the entire race.

The term son of man occurs conspicuously in the book of Ezekiel, being used ninety-two times when God addresses the prophet. The thought of going beyond the confines of Judaism is also involved in the phrase when applied to Ezekiel. When Israel was in her captivity, oblivious of her special mission the prophet Jeremiah was told this about the house of Israel and the house of Judah: Jeremiah 11:9-10, *And the Lord said to me, "A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants*

<sup>25</sup> Merrill Frederick Unger, AB, PD, ThM, ThD, 1909-1980, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* (1988) Chicago: Moody Press.

of Jerusalem. They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers who refused to hear My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.” The prophet Ezekiel was with the children of Israel and spoke the following concerning Judah. Ezekiel 5:5-8, “*Thus says the Lord God: ‘This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that are all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.’ Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Because you have multiplied disobedience more than the nations that are all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that are all around you,’ therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Indeed I, even I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations.’*” The Lord reminded Israel by this term of address to Ezekiel that He would not forsake her but that nevertheless she was only a small portion of the race for whom He was concerned. As used of Ezekiel, the expression the son of man suggests what the prophet is to God, not what he is to himself. As the son of man the prophet is chosen, spiritually endowed, and delegated by God. These factors are also true of the Messiah as the Representative Man, the new Head of regenerated humanity. If you desire to understand more about the two houses identified above: the house of Israel and the house of Judah see my book, *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel*.<sup>26</sup>

Bibliography: G. S. Duncan,<sup>27</sup> *Jesus, Son of Man* (1947); O. Cullmann,<sup>28</sup> *The Christology of the New Testament* (1963), pp. 137-92; F. Hahn,<sup>29</sup> *The Titles of Jesus in Christology* (1969), pp. 15-66; G. H. Dalman,<sup>30</sup> *The Words of Christ* (1981), pp. 234-67.

The following was edited from Fausset’s Bible Dictionary.<sup>31</sup>

Jesus comes as man to reinstate man to his original glory, never to be dispossessed of it. He is now sitting on the right hand side of the throne of God as the Son of God. That is a throne His saints cannot share; therefore He shall assume another throne, made His in order that they may sit down on it with Him. Revelation 3:21, *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.* The kingdom shall be under the whole heaven, on earth. Daniel 7:18, 27, “*But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. . . . Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.*” He shall reign with them as the Son of man, Head of the new creation, and Restorer of man’s lost inheritance. Because as man He established His and the saints’ title to the kingdom at the cost of His own blood, as man He shall judge and reign. It is fitting that He who as the Son of Man was judged by the world should judge the world.

<sup>26</sup> Charles Edward Darnell, PhD, DD, 1945-Present, *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel* (2003/15) Campbellville: VisionQuest Publishing, Inc.

<sup>27</sup> George Simpson Duncan, 1884-?, *Jesus, Son of Man*, (1934/1947) London: Hodder & Stoughton General Division.

<sup>28</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (1963) Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

<sup>29</sup> Ferdinand Hahn, 1926-?, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology* (1969) Cambridge: Lutterworth Press.

<sup>30</sup> Gustaf Hermann Dalman, 1855-1941, *The Words of Christ* (1981) Grand Rapids: Kregel Publishers.

<sup>31</sup> Andrew Robert Fausset, 1821-1910, *Fausset’s Bible Dictionary* (1998) Electronic Database by BibleSoft. Public domain. <http://www.bible-history.com/faussets/>



## Son of Man

(ho huios tou anthropou):

The following is edited from information in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.<sup>32</sup>

Used in the New Testament as the Self-Designation of Jesus: This is the favorite self-designation of Jesus in the Gospels. In Matthew it occurs over 30 times, in Mark 15 times, in Luke 25 times, and in John a dozen times. It is always in the mouth of Jesus Himself that it occurs, except once, when the bystanders ask what He means by the title. John 12:34, *The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up?' Who is this Son of Man?"* Outside the Gospels, it occurs only once in Acts, in Stephen's speech. Acts 7:56, *And said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"* And twice in the Book of Revelation. Revelation 1:13, *And in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.* Revelation 14:14, *Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.*

### Source of the Title: Son of Man

The term Son of Man appears in Daniel chapter 7 as a New Testament allusion. One of the apocalyptic visions common to Daniel begins in Daniel 7:3. A brief summary of this vision follows. Four beasts are seen coming out of the sea: the first a lion with eagle's wings; the second a bear; the third a four-headed leopard; and the fourth a terrible monster with ten heads. These beasts rule over the earth, but at last the kingdom is taken away from them and given to a fifth ruler, who is described as a conclusion in verses 13-14. Daniel 7:13-14, *"I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed."*

Compare these words from Daniel with the words of Jesus spoken to the high priest during His trial. Matthew 26:64, *Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."* In the words of Jesus we can clearly see the echo of the Old Testament words from Daniel. Equally distinct are the words of Jesus recorded in: Matthew 24:30, *"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."*

Literature. See the books on *New Testament Theology* by Weiss,<sup>33</sup> Beyschlag,<sup>34</sup> Holtzmann,<sup>35</sup> Feine,<sup>36</sup> Schlatter,<sup>37</sup> Weinel,<sup>38</sup> Stevens,<sup>39</sup> Sheldon,<sup>40</sup> and on the *Teaching of Jesus* by Wendt,<sup>41</sup> Bruce,<sup>42</sup> Dalman,<sup>43</sup> Abbott,<sup>44</sup> *The Son of Man*, 1910; very full bibliography in Stalker,<sup>45</sup> *The Teaching of Jesus concerning Himself*.

<sup>32</sup> *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)*, (1939) Edited by James Orr, et.al., Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. <http://www.internationalstandardbible.com>

<sup>33</sup> Bernhard Weiss, 1827-1918, *Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (1892) Berkeley: University of California Libraries.

<sup>34</sup> Willibald Beyschlag, 1823-1900, *New Testament Theology*, vol 1 & 2 (1899) Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

(Footnotes continue on bottom of next page!)

<sup>35</sup> Heinrich Julius Holtzmann, 1832-1910, *Lehrbuch der Neutestamentlichen Theologie* (1896/1911) In zwei Binden. Zweite neu bearbeitete Auflage, Herausgegeben von A. Julicher und W. Bauer, Tübingen: Mohr.

<sup>36</sup> Paul Feine, 1859-1933, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (1911) Zweite, stark umgearbeitete Auflage. Leipzig: Hinrichs.

<sup>37</sup> Adolf Schlatter, 1852-1938, *The Theology of the Apostles: The Development of New Testament Theology* (1999) Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

<sup>38</sup> Heinrich Weinel, 1874-1936, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments: Die Religion Jesu und des Unchristentums* (1911) Grundriss der Theologischen Wissenschaften, Abteil, Tübingen: Mohr.

<sup>39</sup> George Barker Stevens, PhD, DD, 1854-1906, *The Theology of the New Testament* (1901/2009) BiblioLife <http://bibliopublishing.com/>

<sup>40</sup> Henry Clay Sheldon, ?-1928, *New Testament Theology* (1911) New York: The Maxmillan Company.

<sup>41</sup> Hans Hinrich Wendt, DD, 1853-1928, *Die Lehre Jesu*, (1886) *The Teaching of Jesus*, Eng. trans. (1892) Gottingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.

<sup>42</sup> Prof Alexander Balmain Bruce, DD, 1831-1899, *The Parabolic Teaching of Christ: A Systematic and Critical Study of the Parables of our Lord* 8 vol (1882/1889) London.

<sup>43</sup> Gustaf Hermann Dalman, 1855-1941, *Jesus-Jeschua* (1922) Leipzig. English translation, *Jesus-Jeshua*, Studies in the Aramaic Gospels (1929) London.

<sup>44</sup> Edwin Abbott Abbott, 1838-1926, *The Son of Man* (1910) Cambridge: University Press.

<sup>45</sup> James Stalker, MA, DD, 1848-1927, *The Teaching of Jesus Concerning Himself According to the Synoptic Gospels* (1889) London: Hodder & Stoughton.

## Chapter 4

# JESUS CHRIST

(je'-zus krist) (Iesous Christos):

When I began writing my book, *People of the Book Are You Listening: A View of the Holy Quran*<sup>46</sup> I didn't believe it would be necessary to give much information about Jesus Himself, however I do not write for my personal enjoyment, but rather for the glory of God. I ran across a summary of the life of Jesus and it seemed most appropriate to rewrite that information. Before I begin I must make a statement. Yes! I used the information contained in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia<sup>47</sup> as the basis for my counter discussion toward the Quran. I do believe that Muslims received truth in the Quran. However, they do not read the information written in their holy book anymore than many Christians or Jews read the information in their holy book. The material I found was impressive and I felt every Christian should have a summary view of the life of Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the World. No! I did not copy everything verbatim. In fact after the editing and incorporation of scripture it would be difficult to recognize that the two articles are from the same basic work. That material is quite lengthy in its detail and will take up most of this book. For the purpose of reference this chapter is laid out in outline form with several parts and divisions. If you need a little help in finding a particular point in the life of Jesus look at the Table of Contents for the outline of this chapter.

One final statement pertaining to this section of the book. The terms Apostle and disciple must have a qualifier statement. For this book an Apostle is one of an authoritative New Testament group sent out to preach the gospel and made up especially of Christ's twelve original disciples and Paul. A disciple is one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrine of another. Therefore the Apostles are disciples but disciples are not Apostles.

**Jesus Christ:** The Way; the promised Messiah and Savior of the world; the Lord and Head of the Body of believers.

## General Information Statements

### I. The Names

1. **Jesus:** Iesous is the Greek equivalent (Strong's<sup>48</sup> NT 2424) of the Hebrew Joshua (Yehoshua) (Strong's OT 3091), meaning Yahweh is salvation. Therefore in the Septuagint and Apocrypha the name Jesus is used for Joshua, the son of Nun, and also in Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8 (KJV) representing the Old Testament Joshua, the son of Nun. Acts 7:44-45 KJV, *Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David.* Hebrews 4:8 KJV, *For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.*

Even with this understanding there is a mistake in Strong's for the entry at Acts 7:45 listing this Jesus as, 1. the Christ, instead of 2., the son of Nun. Jesus, the Christ, did not lead the Hebrew children into the Promised Land, that was Joshua, the son of Nun. The Revised Standard Version (RSV) corrects these two passages and the name is Joshua.

<sup>46</sup> Charles E. Darnell, op. cit., *People of the Book Are You Listening: A View of the Holy Quran* (2001/15) Campbellville: VisionQuest Publishing, Inc.

<sup>47</sup> *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, op. cit.

<sup>48</sup> James Strong, LL.D., S.T.D., 1822-1894, *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (1984) Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers. Note: Strong's abbreviations: OT - Old Testament; NT - New Testament and the NT numbers are italic in font style.

Jesus is the name to be given to the son of Mary as commanded by the angel. Matthew 1:21, *“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”* It is the personal name of the Lord in the Gospels and the Acts, but generally in the Epistles it appears in combination with Christ.

2. **Christ:** Christos is the Greek equivalent (Strong’s<sup>49</sup> NT 5547) of the Hebrew Messiah (Strong’s OT 4899). There are two KJV passages that use the term Messiah (Strong’s NT 3323). John 1:41 KJV, *He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.* John 4:25 KJV, *The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.* It designates Jesus as the fulfiller of the Messianic hopes of the Old Testament and of the Jewish people. It will be shown that Jesus Himself made this claim. After the resurrection it became the current title for Jesus in the apostolic church. Most frequently in the Epistles He is called Jesus Christ, or sometimes Christ Jesus. Paul, in many places in his writings uses Christ as a proper name. Romans 1:16, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.* Frequently the term is associated with Lord or the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 11:17, *“If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?”*

## II. Order of Treatment

In studying the earthly history of Jesus and His place in the faith of the apostolic church, it will be convenient to pursue the following order:

Part I. First, an introduction to the whole study you will encounter certain questions relating to the sources of our knowledge of Jesus, to the preparation for and circumstances of His historical appearance. Your careful attention is encouraged.

Part II. Next, as preliminary to the proper narrative of the life of Jesus, you are asked to consider certain problems arising out of the presentation of that life in the Gospels. Modern thought determines the attitude in which the narratives are approached. Such are the problems of the miracles, the Messiahship, the sinless character and supernatural claims of Jesus.

Part III. The way is then open for treatment of the actual events of Christ’s life and ministry as they were recorded. These fall into many stages, from His nativity, and baptism, until His death, resurrection, and ascension.

Part IV. A final division will deal with Jesus as the exalted Lord in the manner that He is presented in the teachings of the Epistles and the remaining writings of the New Testament.

## Part I: Introduction

### A. The Sources:

1. In General: The principal, and practically the only source for our knowledge of Jesus Christ is the four Canonical Gospels, with a distinction being made in these between the first three (Synoptic) Gospels, and the Gospel of John. Nothing adds to the information the Gospels already supply if you consider the few notices of Christ in the work of non-Christian authors, references in the other books of the New Testament, and later Christian literature. The so-called apocryphal Gospels are worthless as authorities. (*This Author’s NOTE: With the passing of time and the ability to further study other*

<sup>49</sup> James Strong, Ibid.

mentioned Gospels there seems to be more and more critics who question if there is truly value to the additional Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Judas and even Mary Magdalene.) The few additional sayings of Christ found in outside writings are of doubtful genuineness.

2. Denial of Existence of Jesus: In the early twentieth century there were writers whose excessive skepticism marked their work in denying the very existence of Jesus Christ: Kalthoff,<sup>50</sup> *Das Christus-Problem*, and *Die Entstehung des Christentums*; Jensen,<sup>51</sup> *Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltliteratur, I*; Jensen is reviewed in *The Resurrection of Jesus*, chapter ix; Drews,<sup>52</sup> *Die Christusmythe*; compare with Kalthoff, Schweitzer,<sup>53</sup> *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. The extravagance of such skepticism is in itself sufficient rebuttal. However, most of this thought was German in its basic belief. These men advocated the abandonment of Judaism and Christianity, both of which they regarded as based on ancient beliefs from antiquity, and shaped by religious dualism. They urged a renewal of faith based on Monism and German idealism, thus German Nationalism.

3. Extra Christian Notices: Of notices outside the Christian circles the following may be referred.

a. Josephus.<sup>54</sup> There is the famous passage in Josephus, commencing, “Now there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man.” It is not unlikely that Josephus had some reference to Jesus, but most agree that the passage in question, if not entirely false, has been the subject of Christian opinion (on the literature and different views, see Schurer,<sup>55</sup> *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, in support of the Christian opinion see Edersheim<sup>56</sup> on Josephus, in *Dictionary of Christian Biography*<sup>57</sup>).

b. Tacitus.<sup>58</sup> The Roman historian, Tacitus, in a well-known passage relating to the persecution of Nero, tells how the Christians, already a great multitude (ingens multitudo), derived their name “from one Christus, who was executed in the reign of Tiberius by the procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate.”

c. Suetonius<sup>59</sup> also, in his account of Claudius, speaks of the Jews being expelled from Rome for raising disturbances with the followers of the one known as Christus, plainly a mistake for

<sup>50</sup> Albert Kalthoff, 1850-1906, *The Rise of Christianity* (1907) London: Watts. Orig: *Die Entstehung des Christentums* (1904) Neue Beiträge zum Christusproblem. Albert Kalthoff, *Das Christus-Problem: Grundlinien zu einer Sozial-Theologie* (1903) Leipzig: Eugen Diderichs.

<sup>51</sup> Peter Jensen, 1861-1936, *Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltliteratur vol 1, 2* (1906/1928) Straatsburg: Marburg. Trans. R. Campbell Thompson, *The Epic of Gilgamish* (1930) Oxford.

<sup>52</sup> Christian Heinrich Arthur Drews, 1965-1935, *Die Christusmythe* (1909) trans, Cecil Delisle Burns, London. *The Christ Myth* (2010) BiblioLife.

<sup>53</sup> Albert Schweitzer, ThD, PhD, MD, 1875-1965, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus – A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede* (1906/1910) Great Britain: A & C Black, Ltd.

<sup>54</sup> Titus Flavius Josephus, 37CE-100CE, born Joseph ben Matityahu (Hebrew: Yosef ben Matityahu), was a first-century Roman-Jewish scholar, historian and hagiographer, who was born in Jerusalem, then part of Roman Judea, to a father of priestly descent and a mother who claimed royal ancestry. Josephus recorded Jewish history, with special emphasis on the first century CE and the First Jewish-Roman War, including the Siege of Masada. His most important works were *The Jewish War and Antiquities of the Jews*. The Jewish War recounts the Jewish revolt against Roman occupation. *Antiquities of the Jews* recounts the history of the world from a Jewish perspective for an ostensibly Roman audience. These works provide valuable insight into first century Judaism and the background of Early Christianity. Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (1957/1992) Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers.

<sup>55</sup> Emil Schurer, 1844-1910, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Div II, vol II, 143 (1994) Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers.

<sup>56</sup> Alfred Eidersheim, 1825-1889, contributor, *Dictionary of Christian Biography* (1999) Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers.

<sup>57</sup> *Dictionary of Christian Biography* (1999) Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers.

<sup>58</sup> Cornelius Tacitus, 56CE-117CE, *The Annals* XV chapter 44, written by Roman historian and senator Tacitus is a history of the Roman Empire from the reign of Tiberius to that of Nero, the years AD 14–68. The Annals are an important source to modern understanding of the history of the Roman Empire during the first century. The Annals is Tacitus final work, and modern historians generally consider it his greatest writing. Historians have considered it “Tacitus’s crowning achievement” that represents the “pinnacle of Roman historical writing.” Complete Works of Tacitus. (reprint 1942) Alfred John Church, William Jackson Brodribb, Sara Bryant, edited for Perseus, New York: Random House, Inc.

<sup>59</sup> Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, 69CE-122CE, *De Vita Caesarum*, translating as *The Life of the Caesars*, probably written in Hadrian’s time, is a collective biography of the Roman Empire’s first leaders, Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus and Domitian. The book was dedicated to a friend Gaius Septicius Clarus, a prefect of the Praetorian Guard in 119. The work tells the tale of each Caesar’s life according to a set formula: the descriptions of appearance, omens, family history, quotes, and then a history are given in a consistent order for each Caesar. Suetonius was a Roman historian born about 69 CE and belonging to the equestrian order who wrote during the early Imperial era of the Roman Empire.

Christos, the Greek spelling of Christ. The incident is doubtless that referred to in Acts 18:2, *And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.*

4. The Gospels: The four Gospels, then, with their rich content, remain as our primary sources for the knowledge of the earthly life of Jesus.

a. The Synoptic Gospels: It may be taken for granted as the result of the best criticism that the first three Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all fall well within the apostolic age. The favorite theory, at present (apparently the early 1990's), of the relationship of these Gospels is, that Mark is an independent Gospel, resting on the teaching of Peter. Matthew and Luke have as sources the Gospel of Mark and a collection of discourses, probably attributable to the Apostle Matthew (now commonly called Q); and Luke has a third, well-authenticated source peculiar to himself. Luke 1:1-4, *Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.*

The present writer of this work takes exception to the chronological order of the writing of the Gospels within this outline and inserts the following:

There seems to be a consensus between the Thompson Chain-Reference Bible (NIV),<sup>60</sup> the Ryrie Study Bible (KJV),<sup>61</sup> Nelson's Study Bible (NKJV)<sup>62</sup> and the New English Translation (NET)<sup>63</sup> that the order of presentation of the Synoptic Gospels is also the order of their respective writing. Matthew, the tax collector, was an Apostle of Jesus and penned his gospel between 50-60 CE. Mark, John Mark, was a student of Peter's preaching and teaching and wrote his gospel about 64-65 CE. Luke was a traveling companion of Paul and wrote the two volume set of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles sometime in the 70's CE.

The writer of the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia<sup>64</sup> article under consideration states he is disposed to allow more independence to the evangelists in the embodying of a tradition common to all. In any case, the sources named are of unexceptionable authority, and furnish a strong pledge for the reliability of the narratives. The supreme guaranty of their trustworthiness, however, is found in the narratives themselves. Who in that (or any) age could imagine a figure so unique and perfect as that of Jesus, or invent the incomparable sayings and parables that proceeded from His lips? Much of Christ's teaching is as high as heaven and still remains above the minds of men.

b. The Fourth Gospel, John. The Fourth Gospel stands apart from the Synoptics in dealing mainly with another set of incidents (the Jerusalem ministry), and discourses of a more private and intimate kind than those belonging to the Galilean teaching. Its aim, too, is doctrinal, to show that Jesus is the Son of God, and its style and ideology are very different from those of the Synoptic Gospels. (*It seems that there is great conflict among scholars as to who Jesus is. Here we see the title the Son of God and in the Qurán, and its Commentary, we see the title the son of Mary. Yet in other material previously viewed we see that Jesus called Himself the Son of Man.) Its contents touch their narratives in only a few points (as in John 6:4-21). Where they do, the resemblance is manifest. It is obvious that the*

<sup>60</sup> Dr Frank Charles Thompson, 1858-1940, *Thompson Chain Reference Bible* (NIV) a Christian study Bible (1983) Indianapolis: B.B. Kirkbride Bible Company.

<sup>61</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, A.B., ThM, ThD, PhD, LittD, *Ryrie Study Bible* (KJV), new ed (2008) Chicago: Moody Publishers.

<sup>62</sup> Thomas Nelson, 1780-1861, *Nelson's Study Bible, New King James Version* (1988) Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>63</sup> *New English Translation* (NET) Bible Studies Gateway (1996/2009) Biblical Studies Press, LLC.

<sup>64</sup> *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, op. cit.

reminiscences that the Gospel contains have been long brooded over by the Apostle, and that a certain interpretative element blends with his narration of incidents and discourses. This should not cause us to doubt the genuineness of John's Gospel (for further reading review: Sanday,<sup>65</sup> *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*; Drummond,<sup>66</sup> *An Inquiry Into the Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*). The Gospel is accepted here as a genuine record of the sayings and doings of Jesus that it narrates. John makes clear his intent to write his Gospel in John 20:30-31, *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

#### B. The Preparation:

1. Both Gentile and Jew: In the Gospels and throughout the New Testament Jesus appears as the goal of Old Testament revelation, and the point to which all providential developments tended. He came, Paul says, in the fullness of the time. Galatians 4:4, *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law*. It has often been shown how, politically, intellectually, morally, everything in the Graeco-Roman world was ready for such a universal teaching as Jesus brought into that setting. The preparation in Judea is similar to God's revelations toward, and dealings with, His chosen people in the patriarchal, Mosaic, monarchical and prophetic periods, and in the developments of the Jewish mind in the centuries immediately before Christ.

2. Old Testament Preparation: Old Testament preparation may be noted in the ideas of the Messianic king as a ruler of David's house, whose reign would be righteous, perpetual, and universal. He would be a Righteous Sufferer, whose sufferings are declared to have an expiatory and redeeming character and whose Messianic kingdom would break the bounds of nationalism, and extend through the whole earth and embrace all peoples. The kingdom, at the same time, is conceived under a more spiritual aspect. Its chief blessings are forgiveness and righteousness.

3. Post Exile Preparation: The age succeeding the return from Babylonian exile witnessed a manifold preparation for the advent of Christ. Here may be observed the decentralization of the Jewish religious ideals through the rise of synagogue worship and the widespread dispersion of the race. The contact with Hellenic culture, and especially the marked sharpening of Messianic expectations. Some of these were of a crude apocalyptic character, that of the early Pharisees and Sadducees. Some were political and revolutionary, as were the Zealots. Still others were of a purer and more spiritual kind, as were the Essenes. To these purer elements Jesus attached Himself in His preaching of the kingdom and of Himself as its Lord. Even in the Gentile world, it is told, there was an expectation of a great One who about this time would come from Judea (Tacitus,<sup>67</sup> *History*).

#### C. The Outward Situation.

1. The Land: The lands of Palestine were the most fitting locale for the culminating revelation of God's grace in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It was the land to be the abode of the people chosen to receive and preserve the revelations that prepared the way for that final manifestation. (*Isn't this statement supportive of the Hebrew nation as God's chosen people?*) Palestine as a land was once central and secluded, at the junction of the three great continents of the Old World: Asia, Africa and Europe. It was situated on the highway of nations in war and commerce, and touched mighty powers on every hand: Egypt, Syria, Assyria, and kingdoms of Asia Minor. It was located at the junction of even more ancient empires: Hittite and Babylonian, and now in contact with Greece and Rome. It was singularly enclosed by

<sup>65</sup> William Sanday, DD, 1843-1920, *The Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel* (1872) London: Macmillan Company. *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel* (2012) Lenox: HardPress Publishing, paperback.

<sup>66</sup> Prof James Drummond, 1835-1918, *An Inquiry Into the Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, (1903) London: Williams & Norgate.

<sup>67</sup> Cornelius Tacitus, op. cit., *History* v 13; Suet, *Vespas* 4.

mountain, desert, Jordan gorge, and the Great Sea to protect it from ready entrance of foreign influences. Palestine has a place of its own in the history of revelation, that only a Divine wisdom could have given it. (Review Stanley,<sup>68</sup> *Sinai and Palestine: In Connection with Their History*; G. A. Smith,<sup>69</sup> *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the Holy Land*; Lange,<sup>70</sup> *The Life of the Lord Jesus Christ*).

## 2. Its Divisions:

a. Palestine: In the Roman period, it was divided into four well defined provinces or districts.

1.) Judea, with Jerusalem as its center, in the South, the stronghold of Jewish conservatism.

2.) Samaria, in the middle, peopled from Assyrian times by mixed settlers. 2 Kings 17:24-34, *Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they did not fear the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them. So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations whom you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the rituals of the God of the land; therefore He has sent lions among them, and indeed, they are killing them because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land."*

*Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Send there one of the priests whom you brought from there; let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the rituals of the God of the land." Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the Lord.*

*However every nation continued to make gods of its own, and put them in the shrines on the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities where they dwelt. The men of Babylon made Succoth Benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the Lord, and from every class they appointed for themselves priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines of the high places. They feared the Lord, yet served their own gods—according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away. To this day they continue practicing the former rituals; they do not fear the Lord, nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances, or the law and commandment which the Lord had commanded the children of Jacob, whom He named Israel.*

These people were heathen in origin, yet at the time of Jesus professing the Jewish religion, and claiming Jewish descent. John 4:12, *"Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"* They possessed a copy of the law (Samaria Pentateuch), and a temple of their own at Gerizim (the original temple, built by Manasseh, circa 409 BCE, was destroyed by John Hyrcanus,<sup>71</sup> 109 BCE).

3.) Galilee: Galilee of the Gentiles. Matthew 4:15, *"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles."* In the Northwest, the principal location of Christ's ministry, freer and more cosmopolitan in spirit, through a large infusion of Gentile population, and contact with traders of varied nationalities.

<sup>68</sup> Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, 1815-1881, *Sinai and Palestine: In Connection with Their History*, part II, ch ii (1856) London: J. Murray.

<sup>69</sup> George Adam Smith, 1856-1942, *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, bk 1, ch I, ii, (1915) London: Hodder & Stoughton.

<sup>70</sup> Johann Peter Lange, 1802-1884, *The Life of the Lord Jesus Christ* 4 vols (1958) Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, orig. Das Leben Jesu, 3 vols, (1844-1847).

<sup>71</sup> John Hyrcanus, 175BCE-104BCE, a Hasmonean Maccabean, high priest and king of Judah who succeeded his father's reign. He was the son of Simon Maccabaeus. Details of John Hyrcanus' reign are given in *Wars*, 1:54 ff by Josephus.



4.) Perea: In the Northeast, beyond Jordan, was Perea. Divided up into Perea proper, Batanea, Gaulonitis, Iturea, Trachonitis, and Decapolis. Matthew 4:25, *Great multitudes followed Him, from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.* Luke 3:1, *Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene.*

5.) Language: The feeling of bitterness between Jews and Samaritans was intense. John 4:9, *Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.* The language of the people throughout Palestine was Aramaic, but a knowledge of the Greek tongue was widely used, especially in the North, where daily interaction with Greek speaking peoples was common (the New Testament writings are in Greek). Jesus doubtless used the native dialect in His ordinary teaching, but it is highly probable that He also knew Greek, and was acquainted with Old Testament Scriptures written in Hebrew. Luke 4:16-17, *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: Jesus, most likely, used the language most appropriate for the situation in all of His teachings.*

### 3. Political Situation:

a. The Miserable Story: The ever changing situation of the Jewish people in the century succeeding the great persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes<sup>72</sup> and the Maccabean revolt was a horrible story. This was during the 400 year hiatus that Judea didn't have a prophet and they felt God had deserted them. Antiochus Epiphanes was a Greek tyrant of the 2nd century BCE. He was a vicious enemy of the Jewish people, outlawing Judaism and desecrating the sacred temple. The other side of the story is that of Judas Maccabeus.<sup>73</sup> He was a Jewish guerrilla leader who defended his country from invasion by the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes and prevented the imposition of Hellenism upon Judea. This contributed to the preservation of the Rabbinical system of the Jewish religion. This story is composed of faction, intrigue, wars, murders, massacres, of growing degeneracy of rulers and nation, of repeated sackings of Jerusalem and terrible slaughters. This ended when Herod, the Idumaeen, misnamed the Great, ascended the throne by favor of the Romans in 37 BCE.

b. Rome's Power: Rome's power was first invited by Judas Maccabaeus and was finally established by Pompey's capture of Jerusalem in 63 BCE. Herod's way to the throne was tracked by crime and bloodshed, and murder of those most closely related to him with every step of his advance. His taste was for splendid buildings, palace, temple, fortresses, cities, such as Sebaste, and Caesarea. The lavish magnificence of his royal estate and administration, could not conceal the hideousness of his crafty, unscrupulous selfishness, his cold-blooded cruelty, his tyrannous oppression of his subjects. "Better be Herod's hog (hus) than his son (huios)," was the comment of Augustus, when he heard of the dying king's unnatural doings.

4. Changes in Territory: At the time of Christ's birth, the whole of Palestine was united under Herod's rule, but on Herod's death, after a long reign of 34 years, his dominion was divided. Judea and Samaria fell to his son Archelaus, with the title of ethnarch. Matthew 2:22, *But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.* Galilee and Perea were given to

<sup>72</sup> Antiochus IV Epiphanes, c. 215 BCE-164 BCE, was a Greek king of the Seleucid Empire from 175 BCE until his death in 164 BCE. Seleucid king during the rebellion of the Jewish Maccabees.

<sup>73</sup> Judas Maccabeus, ?-164BCE, was a Jewish priest and a son of the priest Mattathias. He led the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire (167-160 BCE).

Herod Antipas, another son, with the title of tetrarch. Luke 3:1, *Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene.* Herod Philip, a third son, received Iturea, Trachonitis, and other parts of the northern trans Jordan territory, likewise as tetrarch. A few years later, the tyranny of Archelaus provoked an appeal of his subjects to Augustus, and Archelaus was summoned to Rome and banished to Gaul in 6 CE. Thereafter Judea with Samaria was governed by a Roman procurator under the oversight of the prefect of Syria.

5. The Religious Sects: In the religious situation the chief fact of interest is the place occupied and prominent part played by the religious sects, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes and others. We incorporate the Essenes even though they are unmentioned in the Gospels, they had an important influence on the early history of the church. Here we will only allude to the rise and characteristics of these sects.

a. The Scribes: From the days of Ezra zealous attention had been given to the study of the law, and an order of men had arisen. These men, the scribes, were to guard, develop and expound the law. The so-called tradition of the elders, became the ideal of righteousness through their labors, scrupulous observance of the law, the innumerable regulations intended to preserve the law, and the application to conduct the law in detail. Matthew 15:1-2, *Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."* Many of the sects first appear in the Maccabean age. The Maccabean conflict reveals the existence of a party known as the Assidaeans, or pious ones, who were staunch observers of the law and opposed the lax Greek customs of the times. These pious ones may be the forerunners of the scribes and Pharisees. In the beginning they gave brave support to Judas Maccabaeus,<sup>74</sup> and doubtless they embraced the best elements of the nation.

b. The Pharisees: From the pious ones developed the party of legalists known in the Gospels as the Pharisees, on whom Christ's sternest rebukes fell for their self-righteousness, ostentation, pride and lack of sympathy and charity. Luke 18:9-14, *Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."* They gloried in an excessive demonstration in the observance of the externals of the law, even in the most trivial matter. To them the multitude that knew not the law were accursed. John 7:49, *"But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."* The great body of the scribes and rabbis belonged to this party, and its powerful influence was eagerly sought by contending factions in the state.

c. The Sadducees: Alongside of the Pharisees were the Sadducees. A political and aristocratic clique rather than a religious sect, into whose possession the honors of the high-priesthood and other influential offices hereditarily passed. We first hear about the Sadducees under the name John Hyrcanus,<sup>75</sup> 135-106 BCE. The Sadducees received only the law of Moses, interpreted it in a literal, secularistic spirit, rejected the Pharisaic traditions and believed in neither resurrection, angel, or spirit. Acts 23:8, *For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.*

<sup>74</sup> Judas Maccabeus, Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> John Hyrcanus, op. cit.

Usually in rivalry with the Pharisees, they are found combining with these to destroy Jesus. Matthew 26:3-5, *Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”*

d. The Essenes: While not mentioned in the Bible, they are mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Essenes differed from both the Pharisees and Sadducees. They lived in fraternities apart from the general community, primarily in the desert of Engedi, on the Northwest shore of the Dead Sea, though some were found also in villages and towns. They rejected animal sacrifices, sending only gifts of incense to the temple. They practiced celibacy, community of goods, the wearing of white garments and certain customs, like greeting the sunrise with prayers, suggestive of oriental influence. They forbade slavery, war, oaths, were given to occult studies, and had secret doctrines and books. As remarked, they do not appear in the Gospels, but on account of certain resemblances, some have sought to establish a connection between them and John the Baptist and Jesus. In reality, however, nothing could be more opposed than Essenism to the essential ideas and spirit of Christ's teaching.

e. Other Sects: From Biblical text we can identify at least two other groups:

1.) Zealots: The Zealots were originally a political movement in 1st century Judaism which sought to incite the people of Judea to rebel against the Roman Empire and expel all Romans from the Holy Land by force of arms. Josephus<sup>76</sup> in his book *Antiquities of the Jews* states that there were three main Jewish sects at this time, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. The Zealots were a fourth sect, founded by Judas of Galilee (also called Judas of Gamala) in the year 6 CE against Quirinius<sup>77</sup> tax reform. This was shortly after the Roman Empire declared what had most recently been the tetrarchy of Herod Archelaus to be a Roman province. They agree in all other things with the Pharisaic notions. They have an inviolable attachment to liberty, and say that God is to be their only Ruler and Lord. It is this group to which Barabbas seems to have been attached. Luke 23:18-19, *And they all cried out at once, saying, “Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas”—who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder.*

2.) The Nazarenes. Probably the least known of the various sects when viewed in an Old Testament perspective and the most known sect when viewed in a Christian perspective. The least known would most likely be made up of very few who adhered to the old vows of the Nazirites. Numbers 6:2-3, 13, 18, 21, *“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the Lord, he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins.’ . . . Now this is the law of the Nazirite: When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. . . . Then at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the Nazirite must shave off the hair that he dedicated. He is to take the hair and put it in the fire that is under the sacrifice of the fellowship offering. . . . This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the Lord the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation.”* Some of these practices from Old Testament times were still observed in early first century life. The Nazarenes believed they should separate themselves from earthly things and instead join themselves to the Lord and

<sup>76</sup> Titus Flavius Josephus, op. cit., *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20 vol (93 CE). Translator: William Whiston (2009) EBook #2848.

<sup>77</sup> Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, 51BCE-21CE, a Roman aristocrat. After the banishment of the ethnarch Herod Archelaus from the tetrarchy of Judea in 6 CE Quirinius was appointed legate governor of Syria, to which the province of Judea had been added for the purpose of a census. He is mentioned in the Gospel of Luke.

vow to follow Jesus' teachings. After the conversion of Paul he was later brought before Felix and accused of being a Nazarene, at that time meaning a follower of Jesus. Acts 24:5, *For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.*

D. The Chronology. The leading chronological questions connected with the life of Jesus are discussed in detail elsewhere. Here it is sufficient to indicate the general scheme of dating adopted in the present article, and some of the grounds on which it is preferred. The chief questions relate to the dates of the birth and baptism of Jesus, the duration of the ministry and the date of the crucifixion.

1. Date of the Birth of Jesus: Though challenged by some (Caspari,<sup>78</sup> Bosanquet,<sup>79</sup> Conder<sup>80</sup> put it as late as 1 BCE) the usual date for the death of Herod the Great, March, 4 BCE may be assumed as correct (for grounds of this dating, see Schurer<sup>81</sup>). The birth of Jesus was before, and apparently not very long before, this event. Matthew 2:1, *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem.* It may therefore be placed with probability in the latter part of the previous year 5 BCE. However, even that date of 5 BCE may be wrong by at least two years.

Consider the following: In the Luke version the only ones to arrive soon after the birth are shepherds from the fields. Luke 2:8-18, *Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."*

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*

*So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.*

On the other hand, there is the record in Matthew that gives a different statement. In Matthew we have the wise men coming to see the babe and stopping to question Herod concerning where to find the Christ Child. Matthew 2:1-2, *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."* Later, Herod realized the wise men were not returning to him and therefore he had all the children in Bethlehem under age two killed. Matthew 2:16 KJV, *Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.*

<sup>78</sup> Chretien Edouard Caspari, 1840-1918, *A chronological and geographical introduction to the life of Christ* (1876) Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. From the original German work, with additional notes, by Maurice J. Evans. *Chronologisch-Geographische Einleitung in das Leben Jesu Christi* (1869) Hamburg: Rauhen House.

<sup>79</sup> Bernard Bosanquet, D.C.L., LL.D., 1848-1923, *What is Religion?* (1920) London: Macmillan & Company, Limited.

<sup>80</sup> Darrell W. Conder, *Mystery Babylon & the Lost Ten Tribes in the End Time* (1996) Salt Lake City: Commonwealth Publishing.

<sup>81</sup> Emil Schurer, op. cit., *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Div I, vol I, 464-467 (1994) Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers.

Most theologians adamantly indicate that there is no certainty as to the month or day of the birth of Jesus. The Christmas date, December 25, was introduced in the West in the 4th century (the eastern date was January 6), and was then possibly borrowed from a pagan festival. This is a true statement; however, most Christians do not even know this. It is known also in the Arab world and grounds for statements reflecting upon the accuracy of the New Testament in regards to the teachings of Jesus.

The 4th Century, covered the years from 301 to 400, or approximately 268-367 years after the crucifixion of Jesus. Surely you know and understand that there would be no one alive who would know the actual date of Jesus' birth this long after it happened. So how did we get December 25th as the date of His birth? It is not from Biblical text and not from the Council of Nicaea! It is through the Council of Nicaea in 325 that Constantine had the Priest, both Catholic and Orthodox to establish a set day for the death of Jesus, but nothing was considered concerning His birth, which apparently they accepted as already set. These findings and conclusions concerning Jesus' death have been passed down ever since. Are they correct in their findings? I, for one, do not believe so and will take this opportunity to show you by using the text of the Bible when Jesus' birth and death took place. December, in the winter season, seems unlikely, as unsuitable for the pasturing of flocks. Luke 2:8, *Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night*. Even though stated this objection is perhaps not decisive (Andrews,<sup>82</sup> Conder<sup>83</sup>). **A more probable date is a couple of months earlier!** The synchronism with Quirinius,<sup>84</sup> governor of Syria, is considered in connection with the nativity. Luke 2:2, *This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria*.

The earlier datings of 6, 7, or even 8 BCE, suggested by Ramsay,<sup>85</sup> Mackinlay<sup>86</sup> and others, on grounds of the assumed Roman census, astronomical phenomena, and other events appear to leave too long an interval before the death of Herod, and conflict with other data, such as Luke 3:1, *Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene*. Even with all this being said, there is nothing indicating a particular date for the birth of Christ. I believe that anyone who will take the time to employ a little math over a commonly known period of time, human gestation, can come to the birth date for Christ. Consider the following:

The two important dates for those who believe in the Son of God should be the day He was born and the day He arose from the grave, yet the traditions of mankind have clouded the truth of both events. There is no wonder Christ warned the disciples, and us, that we are to be deceived by no man. No man means your grandfather, your mother, your pastor, your Sunday School teacher, the TV story of these events or some commercial for a product that masks these events as something causing you to run out and spend money. I must tell you that most sources used for Christmas themes are not intentionally lying but merely repeating what they have been taught. We have lost sight of what we are celebrating and we have lost sight of the written record to give us the keys to understanding. Have you read carefully God's Word to see what clues it gives us as to when the birth of Jesus occurred?

We know up front that many men who have studied to be ministers and teachers of the Bible have searched the book to find out when Christ was born. They lose sight of one thing, they want to use this calendar or that calendar or perhaps they have failed to take into consideration how many days changed when people went from one calendar system to another. They have become so engrossed with these

<sup>82</sup> Samuel James Andrews, 1817-1906, *The Life of Our Lord upon the Earth* (1867) New York: Charles Scribner.

<sup>83</sup> Darrell W. Conder, op. cit.

<sup>84</sup> Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, op. cit.

<sup>85</sup> William Mitchell Ramsay, 1851-1939, *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem? A Study on the Credibility of St. Luke* (1898) London: Hodder & Stoughton.

<sup>86</sup> Lt Col George Mackinlay, 1847-1928, *The Magi, how they recognized Christ's star*, (1907) London: Hodder & Stoughton.

changes that they lose sight of the simple truth. **Hebrew!** This is the only word needed to understand the whole thing. We do not have to understand the Roman calendar at the time of the birth. We do not have to question how many days were lost or gained when this system was changed to that system.

The only calendar we need is the one contained in the Bible and given by God to the Hebrew people through Moses. That calendar from the Bible, and no other, is the simple answer to identify which calendar was in effect when the Christ Child was born. Now let's look at verses in the Bible to find our true answers. First, notice in Luke 2:8 the following: *Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.* Any person who has ever studied about the Middle East at the time of the birth of Christ will tell you shepherds did not have sheep in the field during winter. During winter, the flocks are brought from the hill country and placed in pens around the house of the shepherd. So, by virtue of this one verse alone, we should know that Christ was not born in winter, but there are verses that could lead us to a better understanding of the time of year when Christ was born! To show you this we will begin our search in the book of Luke. I will tell you up front there are many verses we are going to use in this study in order to show you these things. Bear with me!

Luke 1:1-80, *Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, (you can put your name here and it will mean the same thing) that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.*

*There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.*

*So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.*

*Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*

*And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."*

*And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."*

*And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.*

*And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."*

*Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"*

*But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."*

*Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"*

*And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore also that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible."*

*Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

*Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."*

*And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever."*

*And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.*

*Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.*

*So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John."*

*But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name."*

*So they made signs to his father; what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.*

*Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.*

*Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham: To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life."*

*"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."*

*So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.*

The preceding verses gave us the means, tools, vehicle, and avenue to start the search to learn when the Christ Child was born. Are there really keys to unlock this secret in these verses? Well, follow along and you be the judge. Notice verse 5 because it contains our **first key**: *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.* We learn that Zacharias was a Hebrew priest of the tribe of Levi. It would also appear Elizabeth was of the tribe of Levi, *daughters of Aaron*. So here we have a Hebrew couple both of the tribe of Levi. Now, if they are both of the tribe of Levi and Zacharias is a priest, wouldn't you believe they would be following the structure of feasts God established through Moses? Wouldn't it make perfectly good sense that this priest would be serving under the calendar in relationship to the feasts of God, and not to some man-made calendar, such as of the Romans at this time? In fact we really have confirmation of exactly that in verse six: *And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.* Doesn't it say, *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless?* All right, I said there was a key in this verse. Look at the order to which Zacharias belonged. It's right there in the words *of the division of Abijah*. These words, believe it or not, establish the time of year Zacharias was serving at the temple. We can confirm this in verses 8 and 9, *So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood.* The temple of the Lord was at Jerusalem so this is the location of Zacharias at this time. We now have to establish the meaning of the term *division of Abijah*. To find this meaning we turn to 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles and find the following:



1 Chronicles 28:13, *also for the division of the priests and the Levites, for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the articles of service in the house of the LORD.* In this first verse, we see that there was a division of the priests and the Levites. 1 Chronicles 27:15 *The twelfth captain for the twelfth month was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel; in his division were twenty-four thousand.* It is very important to see in this second verse that there were twelve months used as in our calendar today. Remember we are using the Hebrew system and their calendar is set up according to the feasts set down by God. So now where do we find the division of Abijah? Turn back three chapters and read in 1 Chronicles 24:5-19 the following: *Thus they were divided by lot, one group as another, for there were officials of the sanctuary and officials of the house of God, from the sons of Eleazar and from the sons of Ithamar. And the scribe, Shemaiah the son of Nethanel, one of the Levites, wrote them down before the king, the leaders, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the fathers' houses of the priests and Levites, one father's house taken for Eleazar and one for Ithamar. Now the first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzез, the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezekel, the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. This was the schedule of their service for coming into the house of the LORD according to their ordinance by the hand of Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.*

We see that the division of Abijah is the eighth division and there are twenty-four divisions of priests to serve over the twelve months of the year. Now common sense will have to enter and it shouldn't take a rocket scientist to determine each division was one-half of a month or roughly two weeks in length of service. We also need to see how the Hebrew calendar was laid out. According to importance, what is the first month? This is not the easiest of tasks to do using Biblical text. There is no single place in the Bible that states each month by its Hebrew name, however there are several verses that identify the first month of their calendar. Here are some of those verses, notice how the answer is still hidden:

Exodus 12:2, *"This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."*

Exodus 12:18, *"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening."*

Exodus 40:2, *"On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting."*

Exodus 40:17, *And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was raised up.*

Leviticus 23:5, *"On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover."*

Numbers 9:1, *Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying:*

Numbers 9:5, *And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.*

Numbers 28:16, *"On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD."*

Numbers 33:3, *They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians.* We see in all of these verses the importance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Now watch when we add the following:

Exodus 13:4, *“On this day you are going out, in the month Abib.”*

Exodus 23:15, *“You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty).”*

Exodus 34:18, *“The Feast of Unleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the month of Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt.”*



Deuteronomy 16:1, *“Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night.”*

We see the month Abib is the first month of the Hebrew calendar and in this month are the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Now if we know what is now called this month, we have the information we need to see when Zacharias was serving at the temple. Many good Bibles give extra information in the appendix and the Thompson Chain-Reference Bible<sup>87</sup> is no different. In it we find the names of the months on the Hebrew calendar.

Month	Reference	Divisions
1. Abib, or Nisan, April	Exodus 13:4	1 and 2
2. Ziv, May	1 Kings 6:1	3 and 4
3. Sivan, June	Esther 8:9	5 and 6
4. Tammuz, July	Jeremiah 39:2; Zechariah 8:19	7 and 8
5. Ab, August	Numbers 33:38; Zechariah 7:3	9 and 10
6. Elul, September	Nehemiah 6:15	11 and 12
7. Ethanim, or Tisri, October	1 Kings 8:2	13 and 14
8. Bul, November	1 Kings 6:38	15 and 16
9. Chisleu, or Kislev, December	Ezra 10:9	17 and 18
10. Tebeth, January	Esther 2:16	19 and 20
11. Shebat, February	Zechariah 1:7	21 and 22
12. Adar, March	Esther 3:7	23 and 24


It is time for all rocket scientists to rally so we can figure this out. If the first month is Abib, or Nisan, and there are two divisions per month, the eighth division should come during the second half of July. So the end of the time Zacharias was serving at the temple would be the last of July or the first of August. The next question we have to ask is: How far did he travel to get home when his service was over? We get a portion of our answer a little further in the story from Luke. Look at verses 39 and 40 in our Luke reference: *Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.* Let’s turn one chapter and look at chapter 2 of Luke. Luke 2:4, *Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David.* For the sake of our discussion, let us say the city Mary went to and the city that Mary and Joseph went to are one

<sup>87</sup> Dr Frank Charles Thompson, op. cit.




and the same, or very close to each other. That being the case, Zacharias would have to travel about 15 miles to get home from the temple. We can say he was within one day's walk of getting home. We see in verses 23 and 24 he went home immediately after his service and Elizabeth became pregnant just after that, *And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying.* Notice it says *after those days*, meaning after the days of Zacharias' service at the temple, so once again, we can say Elizabeth became pregnant sometime around the first part of August.

Now we need our second key verse. Look at verses 26 and 27, *Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.* Notice the term *in the sixth month*, we are not speaking of the sixth month of the year, we are speaking of the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy. We continue with our story from Luke and we find the following verses confirming Mary has conceived and traveled to see Elizabeth. *“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.” . . .*



*Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!”* Finally, we see Mary returned home just before Elizabeth was to deliver John the Baptist in verse 56, *And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.* We are now ready to continue searching for what we can learn about the birth of Christ. We have already seen the first month of the Hebrew calendar equals our month of April and we have deduced the eighth division of service at the temple would be in the last half of July. Knowing these things, we can safely say Elizabeth became pregnant about the first week in August and verse 26 shows us John the Baptist would be six months older than Christ. So, if this is the case, nine months after August would be the first part of April. As this is a fact we can also add the following statements: Mary conceives the Christ Child in late January and the Christ Child will be born 6 months after John the Baptist, or in the month of October.



My question is: Why are learned men who have studied for years and have made a life long commitment to theology, been unable to see these things? Why does God enlighten me to understand these things? Furthermore, let's look at the significance there is in the two months these births take place. To begin, go back and review the verses we used to find the first month of the Hebrew calendar, Abib. April equates to Abib. Remember also April contains the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. I find it so awesome to see the simple truth God left for us. April is the first month, the month John the Baptist was born and the month the Christ will be crucified. To me, the simple truth is John the Baptist is representing the Feast of Unleavened Bread that we are to honor before God and **Christ is our Holy Passover.** It is the death of Christ, as the only acceptable sacrifice before God, that gives us eternal life. Even John introduced Christ in this manner: John 1:29, *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* This is the sacrificial Lamb of God to be sacrificed on that one fateful Passover about two thousand years ago.

But, what about October? What are the God ordained festival days that occur in the month of October? What are the festival days that should have meaning to everyone who says they follow His Son? Look in the book of Leviticus at the following: Leviticus 23:23-44, *Then the LORD spoke to Moses,*

saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.”

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people. And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath.”

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.”

“These are the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day; besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD.”

“Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.”

So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

In verse 24 we see the first day of the seventh month (October) is a Holy day and is the Feast of Trumpets. What better way to announce the coming of the Christ child than the blowing of trumpets to call attention to what is to come? Notice the next Holy day! In verse 27 we find the tenth of the month is the Day of Atonement. Now, consider by these calculations, **Christ is born during the second week of October, on the tenth to be exact!** Is there a more fitting day before the Lord for His Son to be born? Doesn't Christ represent our atonement for sin before God? Do you now understand that it would be appropriate for Christ to be born on this day? But wait! We are not finished with the feasts during this month. In verse 34 we see the Feast of Tabernacles is to begin on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

If you go back and review all you can find about the Feast of Tabernacles you will find a twofold reason for this feast. It represents a memorial for the time God dwelt with the Hebrews and also a memorial to the time when God had the Hebrews living in tents after He brought them out of Egypt. These two

memorials represent two milestones in the history of the Hebrew people. Now, if the Day of Atonement isn't the appropriate time for the birth of Christ, it would seem any time during the Feast of Tabernacles could be a good time to commemorate the relationship between God the Creator, and us, His creation. Either way, I see the simple truth that tells me October is the most appropriate time for the birth of Christ. **The day of the tenth would stand out, head and shoulders, above all other dates on the Hebrew calendar for Christ to be born!**

With respect to the birth of Christ, there are Old Testament prophecies that reveal who Christ actually is and what He must fulfill to answer all of the prophecies. Okay, in my theory, the tenth of October will be the actual birth date of Christ, and if so, we should be able to find verses in the Bible that gives us information about atonement, which could be represented in a very Special Man. Read the following:

Numbers 35:33, "*So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.*"

Deuteronomy 32:43, "*Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people.*"

Psalms 79:9, *Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; and deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, for Your name's sake!*

Proverbs 16:6, *In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; and by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.*

I indicated in the beginning of this work that I would show you the truth and let you decide what you are going to believe. Remember God created us as free will spirits who have the right to choose. Few will choose a path of righteousness, but most will choose a path toward destruction. Only you can decide what you will do with what I have shown you! **You will be that which your free will chooses you to be!** God did not create losers! He did not create sinners! He did create mankind as male and female! He did not create gays, lesbians or any other gender beyond the two stated in the last sentence!

I have tried to show you only one thing about deception and to guide you through the various passages of the Bible to come to a logical conclusion of when Christ was born. There are many deceptions now accepted as tradition in the church as a whole. The birth of Christ is only one point where I find great difference between what the Bible says and what man says.

At this point, I will use a couple more examples from the story of the birth of Christ to demonstrate what I mean. Look at angels for a moment. We are taught angels are God's messengers, and we, for the most part, look at them as being good. Look back at the reference verses pertaining to the story of Zacharias. Notice something in verses 20 and 64; (20) "*But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.*" (64) *Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.* The angel Gabriel was the one who caused Zacharias to be mute and this condition lasted until the child (John the Baptist) was born. Pretty powerful stuff coming from an angel, wasn't it? Think about it! An angel spoke a command and that command could cause you to become unable to speak for nine whole months. There are some who now want to worship angels because they are God's special messengers. Contrary to this, we should all remember that the angels are created beings, just as we are created beings.<sup>88</sup> God the Father was, and is, the one who created both and He did not create the one to be worshiped by the other. Creation is to give honor and praise to God only!

2. Date of Baptism: John the Baptist is said, by Luke, to have begun to preach and baptize in the fifteenth year of Tiberius. Luke 3:1, *Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene.* Jesus was about thirty years of age when He was baptized by John, and began His ministry. Luke 3:23, *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli.* If the 15th year of Tiberius is dated, as seems most likely, from his association with Augustus as colleague in the government, 12 CE (Tacitus,<sup>89</sup> Suetonius<sup>90</sup>), and if Jesus may be supposed to have been baptized about 6 months after John commenced his work, these data combine in bringing us to the year 27 CE, as the year of Our Lord's baptism, in agreement with our former conclusion as to the date of His birth in 5 BCE. To place the birth earlier is to make Jesus 32 or 33 years of age at His baptism, which is an acceptable period of time for the term about used above. In accord with this is the statement in John 2:20, *Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"* that the temple had been 46 years in building (it began in 20-19 BCE) at the time of Christ's first Passover; therefore in 27 CE (Schurer<sup>91</sup>).

3. Length of Ministry: The determination of the precise duration of Our Lord's ministry involves more doubtful elements. Setting aside schemes, as too arbitrary with some of the early Fathers, would compress the whole ministry into little over a single year (Browne,<sup>92</sup> Hort<sup>93</sup>). A view that involves the rejection of the mention of the Passover in John 6:4. *Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.* There remains the choice between a two year and a three year ministry. Both have able advocates (Turner<sup>94</sup> in article *Chronology*, and Sanday<sup>95</sup> in article *Jesus Christ*, in Hastings Dictionary of the Bible,<sup>96</sup> advocate the two year scheme; Farrar,<sup>97</sup> Ramsay,<sup>98</sup> D. Smith,<sup>99</sup> adhere to the three year scheme). An important point is the view taken of the unnamed feast in John 5:1, *After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* John has already named a Passover, Christ's first. John 2:13, *Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* Another Passover is named in John 6:4, *Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.* However, it appears that Jesus did not attend this Passover because text does not say such. The final Passover, when He was crucified, appears in all the Gospels. John's Gospel does not specifically state that Chapters 12 and 13 refer to the final Passover of Jesus before His crucifixion. If the feast of John 5:1 is also, as some think, a Passover, then John records four Passovers, and a three year ministry becomes necessary. It is claimed, however, that in this case the

<sup>88</sup> Charles E. Darnell, op. cit., *The Spirit World*.

<sup>89</sup> Cornelius Tacitus, op. cit., *The Annals* i.3.

<sup>90</sup> Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, op. cit., *De Vita Caesarum*, on Augustus, 97.

<sup>91</sup> Emil Schurer, op. cit., Div I, vol I, 410. *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*.

<sup>92</sup> Major Alexander Henry Browne, et al, 1845-1896, *Catalogue of the works of antiquity and art collected by the late William Henry Forman Esq., Pippbrook House, Dorking, Surrey, and removed in 1890 to Callaly Castle, Northumberland* (1892) London: A. Bradley, page images at HathiTrust.

<sup>93</sup> Fenton John Anthony Hort, DD, 1828-1892, *Judaistic Christianity: A Course of Lectures* (1894) London: Macmillan Company.

Hort a member of the Cambridge Apostles credited with writing the oath of secrecy taken by new members, 1851. The New Testament in the Original Greek is a Greek-language version of the New Testament published in 1881. It is also known as the Westcott and Hort text, its editors Brooke Foss Westcott (1825–1901) and Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828–1892). It is a critical text, compiled from some of the oldest New Testament fragments and texts that had been discovered at the time. The two editors worked together for 28 years.

<sup>94</sup> Cuthbert Hamilton Turner, 1860-1930, *Chronology of the New Testament*, contributor Hastings Dictionary of the Bible.

<sup>95</sup> Dr William Sanday, op. cit., *Jesus Christ article*, contributor Hastings Dictionary of the Bible.

<sup>96</sup> James Hastings, 1852-1922, *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible* (1898) Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark and New York: Charles Scribner.

<sup>97</sup> Frederic W. Farrar, DD, F.R.S., 1831-1903, *The Life of Christ* (1874) Marlborough College: The Lodge.

[http://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted\\_hildebrandt/ntesources/books/farrar-lifeofchrist/farrar-lifeofchrist.htm](http://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted_hildebrandt/ntesources/books/farrar-lifeofchrist/farrar-lifeofchrist.htm)

<sup>98</sup> William Mitchell Ramsay, op. cit.

<sup>99</sup> David Smith, 1866-1932, *The Days of His Flesh: The Earthly Life of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (1900/1920) New York: George H. Doran.

feast we have under investigation would almost certainly have been named. It still does not follow, even if a minor feast, say Purim, is intended, that we are confined to a two year ministry. Mr. Turner<sup>100</sup> certainly goes beyond his evidence in affirming that “while two years must, not more than two years can, be allowed for the interval from John 2:13, 23 to John 11:55.” The two year scheme involves, as will be seen as one considers the details, a serious overcrowding and arbitrary transposition of incidents, which speak to the need for a longer time period. All this is well and good for the discussions of these learned men, however, they do not answer the question: How long was Jesus’ earthly ministry?

a.) Rebuttal: We again run into the issue of time. These men discuss and formulate opinions between a two year or a three year period for Jesus’s earthly ministry. These discussions, and their respected writings, take place between 1875-1940 (see Bibliography for birth and death dates for these men). A more modern Evangelical viewpoint from the Internet defines Jesus’ public ministry as 3 and a half years<sup>101</sup> and use Daniel 9:24-27 to support this position. Daniel 9:24-27, “*Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.*” There are three terms underlined that we need to define.

1.) Messiah: Notice must be given to the use of the word. This does not say the Messiah nor even a Messiah. Various commentaries (Wycliffe,<sup>102</sup> IVP<sup>103</sup>) and Bible footnotes (NET,<sup>104</sup> NKJV<sup>105</sup>) indicate the first occurrence could be someone such as Cyrus and the second usage as Jesus, the term actually is *an anointed one*. The reason for the second usage as being Jesus is because He was *cut off* (killed), *but not for Himself* (He died for all).

2.) After: Our second word to view is: after. Notice must be given to when the second use of Messiah is made. It does not say that these periods of time run together. The commentary and Bible references above indicate that there is a definite break point in the narrative and that the fulfilling of the Messiah being cut off is to be later than the time of Daniel.

3.) The people of the prince who is to come. Jesus’ earthly ministry was during the Roman era and we should all remember that it was Romans that destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in about 72CE. That would be the people (Romans) of the prince (Antichrist) who is to come. This vision of Daniel’s now shifts over to the Tribulation period. For further information on the Tribulation, Antichrist and the 2nd Advent of Jesus see my book, *Days to Come*.<sup>106</sup> The Tribulation is an after event, with reference to the passage in Daniel, and reflects the covenant the Antichrist makes with present day Israel for seven

<sup>100</sup> Cuthbert Hamilton Turner, op. cit., *The Oldest Manuscript of the Vulgate Gospels* (1931) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>101</sup> *Jesus’ Public Ministry*, Internet, <http://www.gotquestions.org/length-jesus-ministry.html>; <http://www.compellingtruth.org/length-jesus-ministry.html>; <http://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/15756/are-there-old-testament-references-to-the-length-of-jesus-earthly-ministry>

<sup>102</sup> *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, edited by Charles F. Pfeiffer, et. al. (1962) Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>103</sup> *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, edited by John H. Walton, et. al. (2000) Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>104</sup> *New English Translation* (NET), op. cit.

<sup>105</sup> Thomas Nelson, *The Nelson Study Bible* (NKJV), op. cit.

<sup>106</sup> Charles E. Darnell, op. cit. *Days to Come* (1996/2015) Campbellsville: VisionQuest Publishing, Inc.

years but breaks the treaty at the 3 and a half year point and violates the Temple with the abomination of desolation.

b.) Jesus' Three Year Ministry: Through my studies I have been taught that Jesus' earthly ministry was for a three year period and I believe that Biblical text will prove this out. Remember that the beginning of this section was a discussion by learned men over what period of time was Jesus' earthly ministry. The point for one consideration was the unnamed feast in John 5:1, *After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* Please recall that Jesus is the Son of God and performing the will of God as He receives instructions from Father to Son. This being a fact Jesus would not violate the will of God by not going to one of the stated three feast a man must appear at the Temple each year. In the following I will show you the feast that God has laid out for mankind to observe. For now, it would be impossible for Jesus to miss being at the Temple during a Passover feast, as stated in the previous discussion under review. Here are the three Passovers that John recorded Jesus attended: John 2:13, *Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* John 6:4, *Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.* John 11:55, *And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves.*

c.) The Feast of the Jews: There is another problem that is not addressed. Jesus is living under the time of the Old Covenant, or, the period of the Law and not under the New Covenant. The New Covenant teaches facts recorded about the time Jesus personally lived on earth, the facts of His life. The New Covenant does not become effective until after His defeat of death and resurrection. Therefore, the feast days as established by God, via Moses, are those to be obeyed. There are three feast days every year that a man is to be present at the Temple. Let us take into consideration the feast days that God established as something meaningful to both God and Christ. Christ was born on one such feast day, the Day of Atonement. It will be shown in the next subtitle that He died on another feast day, Passover. These are important days to God, the Father, and enacted by Christ, the Son. Christians should all understand these feast days.

1.) **Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread:** Leviticus 23:5-8, *“On the fourteenth day of the first month (14th of April) at twilight is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day (15th) you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days. The seventh day (21st) shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.”*

2.) **Feast of Weeks (Pentecost):** Leviticus 23:16-21, *Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath (June 6); then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord. You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the Lord. And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the Lord. Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering. The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest. And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.*



3.) Feast of Trumpets: Leviticus 23:23-25, *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month (October 1st), you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.'"*



4.) Day of Atonement: Leviticus 23:26-32, *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Also the tenth day of this seventh month (October 10th) shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God. For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people. And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath."*

5.) Feast of Tabernacles: Leviticus 23:33-36, *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month (October 15th) shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the Lord. On the first day (15th) there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day (22nd) you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.'"*

6.) For all the appointed feasts: Leviticus 23:37-38, *"These are the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day; besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD."*

How did we get so far from the truth? If these are the Holy days that God the Father set up, why is it we no longer celebrate them before God? Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-20, *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."*

That seems to this writer to be in clear straight forward language. I interpret this to mean that **we are to obey the ordinances established by God until the appearing of the New Earth and the New Jerusalem!** Some may say that it is the New Testament act of the Lord's Supper that has replaced the ordained feasts. That wouldn't do justice to God the Father or to His Son. Every verse pertaining to the feasts identified in Leviticus tell us that *it shall be a statute forever in your generations!* What part of that didn't you understand? Was it statute? That means it was a law! Was it forever? Yes! That means it shall be forever! Is it in your generations, past, present, and future? That means the continued presence of mankind upon this planet!



Let's investigate what misled mankind from the instructions given by God. I can show you one of the cop-out answers that has been used to convince mankind the original church changed this and modern man did not. Look at the book of Acts in the 15th chapter. In this chapter there is great discussion over the new Gentile believers need to be circumcised as required by Hebrew Law. After a lengthy discussion James, the brother of Jesus and leader of the church at Jerusalem, stood up and told the others that they should not place an extra burden upon the new believer by following everything of the law when they themselves could not. Here is the text: Acts 15:5-21, *But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."*

*Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they."*

*Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles. And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 'After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name,' " says the LORD who does all these things. "Known to God from eternity are all His works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."*

There is a second reference in the book of Acts that the modern day church likes to use to illustrate why the day of worship was changed from the Sabbath to Sunday. This second reference is in Acts 20:7-12, *Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together. And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, "Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him." Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted. Then we went ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take Paul on board; for so he had given orders, intending himself to go on foot.*

I have been told by other Biblical scholars that this indicates that the church was meeting on the first day of the week within 40 years of Jesus' crucifixion and that on this occasion of the Lord's Day they not only met, they also took communion. All I can say is nonsense! First off, any person with the ability to read should be able to see in the second half of the 7th verse that Paul and his party were in a hurry to get to Jerusalem. They did not have time to wait until the next Sabbath to speak to the people. Therefore the

reason for meeting on this occasion on the first day of the week. Paul actually arrived on the Sabbath and did not begin to speak to these people until after the current Sabbath was over (i.e., Sundown or the time for the evening meal where they would break bread, meaning to eat). Therefore, they could eat after sundown which would be on the first day of the week as was the custom of the Jews to address the changing of the days in this manner. Notice the verse that reads that Paul spoke until midnight. This meant that the Sabbath was over and the first day of the week had begun thus he could speak to the people until midnight on the first day of the week and none had violated the Sabbath.

The second portion of the scholarly statement is that they took communion. Wrong! Other scholars use the expression *when the disciples came together to break bread* as their basis for supporting that the communion was served. I really don't think so! If I go through text and seek out two phrases it will show that the breaking of bread indicates eating and the taking of the cup means communion. These verses here do not say anything about the taking of the cup. Read verse 11, this verse plainly states that Paul went upstairs, broke bread and ate. There is neither a reason for changing the day of worship from the Sabbath nor the taking of communion in these verses. The whole statement made by scholarly men is strictly their attempt to justify something they do not want to observe, or at the very least to understand.

The answer I can give you for all this is Satan! Remember back in Luke, chapter 4, verse 13 that Satan was waiting for an opportune time. His opportune time blended mankind, power, church and lies together to form religion. There is no verse in the entire Bible that identifies an observance of the ordinances given by God, indicating they are a religion. I know — show you! There are only five verses in the Bible that even uses the word religion. None of these verses are in the Old Testament, the place where the ordinances of God were set up and also the point that the basis for the New Covenant took shape. Here are the five verses:

Acts 25:19, *“But had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.”* Pertaining to the Jewish religion that had been set up by the Rabbinical system.

Acts 26:5, *“They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.”* Again, about the Jewish religion under the Rabbinical system.

Colossians 2:23, *These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.* The underline says it all.

James 1:26, *If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.* A generalized statement spoken by James.

James 1:27, *Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.* Wait, what is this? Isn't this a statement showing the true Way of Christ? We are to help one another, especially those who are less fortunate, and to discipline ourselves from the blemishes of the flesh.

On page 40, just before the presentation of the feast days I said there were three days each year a man was to present himself at the Temple. This can be found in Exodus 23:14-17, *“Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field. Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord God.”*

4. Date of Christ's Death: On the hypothesis now accepted, the crucifixion of Jesus took place at the Passover of 30 AD. On the two years' scheme it would fall a year earlier. To this writer it remains apparent that mankind still to this date does not understand the structure of God's instruction to His chosen people. To go through the birth of Christ we had to view God's appointed feast days. To view the feast days we found it necessary to understand that God said a feast day was from evening to evening. Exodus 12:18, *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.* Leviticus 23:5, *On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover.* Leviticus 23:32, *It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath.*" Therefore, Passover began with the Passover meal at evening, and that is what Christ and the Apostles did on the night He was betrayed. It was through the night and the next day that the trials and crucifixion took place and Jesus' death and burial was prior to evening on the 15th of April. It is at that point that I differ with other presentations pertaining to the day of the week this event took place. Theologians will tell you the event took place on Friday and the resurrection occurred on Sunday. I do not agree with these learned men! What happened to the statements of Jesus Himself? This event happened to Jesus, was known by Jesus and He certainly knew the will of His Father in Heaven. So why is it that men of religion desire to change the facts and claim statements that are untrue and not recorded by text. Here is what the text says:

The following is a study to encourage thought! It is not meant to cause doubt or for you to change your ideas about Good Friday or the day now called Easter Sunday. However, as Americans we normally do not follow other nations' holidays, and yet, we are dealing with the Hebrew holidays: Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. These holidays take place in conjunction with the crucifixion of Christ. Tradition has now entered and surrounds the term *sabbath* as used in the crucifixion account, without taking into consideration Hebrew customs. Using the Old Testament, the history and manner for following Hebrew customs on these holidays should be available for us to study. In doing this, there would also be information whereby there can be a full three days that Jesus was in the tomb.

Here's the Biblical text to support Christ's own statement in Matthew 12:40. The first thing to look at is there must be a full three days accounted for within text. The following four references show that the mention of three days Christ must be in the tomb can be found in more than one place.

Matthew 12:40 KJV *"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*

Matthew 16:21 KJV *From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

Matthew 27:62-63 KJV *Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'after three days I will rise again.'"*

Mark 8:31 KJV *And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.*

Biblical text you can understand is actually fulfilled by Biblical account and I can show you the text in plain black and white statements taken from the Bible itself! I find it so terribly strange men have now placed their religion over and above Christ's own words and have taken the truth away from the statement. Look very carefully at Matthew 12:40! If you have a red-letter edition of the Bible, you will see these words are

spoken by Christ. Now, let's ask a very serious question. Do you think the Son of God knew what was going to happen to Him? Do you think He knew the truth and was going to speak the truth for mankind to understand? Then why, when He says He must spend three days and three nights in the tomb, does mankind seem to think they know more than God, or His Son, and they tell us Friday to Sunday makes three days and three nights? I have been told, and told again, that in the Jewish tradition they use intuitive reckoning to fulfill time and that any part of a day constitutes a full day. I don't believe it and I continue to maintain, and to think otherwise: anything less calls Jesus a liar. Sorry, but not by my lips will I call Jesus a liar! If Jesus said He must spend three days and three nights in the tomb, as Jonah spent three days and three nights in the great fish, that must be completed as stated, and by no other means! All I can say is someone surely failed in math class and the rest, who say they follow the Son, just want to go along for the ride, because they are not saying anything either. In my opinion, there seems to be great confusion over the use of the term Sabbath that is used for the resurrection of Christ. Let's first look at the account leading to Christ's crucifixion.

Mark 15:42 KJV *And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath.*

John 19:14 KJV *And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, "Behold your King!"*

John 19:31 KJV *The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (**for that sabbath day was a high day,**) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

Notice in these three verses the use of the term preparation and also in verse 31, this was a high Sabbath day. In reading Matthew, Mark, Luke and John there is no mention of the weekly sabbath as being a high day or that there is a preparation day before the weekly sabbath, therefore this must be a different Sabbath day, and if so, must be supportable by Biblical text. Consider what is customary in our time. We do not call every day a holiday. A holiday is a special day. Look again at verse 31 above, at the use of the term **high day**, in this case meaning that this Sabbath is different from the normal sabbath occurring every week, thus, a special holiday Sabbath! Let's look at text that supports different days, other than the weekly sabbath, that are called Sabbath days.

Numbers 28:16-18 KJV *And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:*

Leviticus 23:3-8 KJV *Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings. These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.*

In verse three of Leviticus 23, the day of rest is called a sabbath, this is the weekly sabbath. Please understand the terms sabbath and holy convocation are synonymous, or mean the same thing. Notice in verse five the fourteenth day of the first month. Now go back to Numbers 28:18, and if Sabbath were inserted instead of Holy Convocation, the meaning would remain the same.

Leviticus 23:24 KJV *“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, in the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.”*

Leviticus 23:27 KJV *“Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.”*

Leviticus 23:32 KJV *“It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.”*

Leviticus 23:32 is one of the keys that will help define the day Christ was crucified. Notice the day, or Sabbath, **goes from even unto even**, that would be from twilight (dusk) until twilight the next day, or in present day terms from 6:00 PM until 6:00 PM the next day.

Leviticus 23:34-37 KJV *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, “The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day.”*

You should now understand that a high day would be a feast day, a Holy Convocation or a Sabbath day. In Numbers 28:16 and Leviticus 23:5 there is the term fourteenth day of the first month. Let’s show what day this is in a different manner. The text above identifies the fourteenth as the LORD’s Passover. Where does this come from and how do we identify the Hebrew month? This actually goes back to the same search we went through to find the first month, so we could identify when Christ was born.

Exodus 12:1-6 KJV *And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house: and if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.”*



Notice the time the lamb was killed . . . in the evening. The following verse will identify the specific Hebrew month we are talking about.

Esther 3:7 KJV *In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, . . .*

Most any good concordance will transpose Nisan into the month we call April. In the account from Exodus we have a lamb that is to be sacrificed. Look at what John the Baptist says about Jesus in the following verse.

John 1:29 KJV *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”*

Here we have the true sacrifice God sent to correct the error caused by Adam. We also know the sacrifice had to take place on the preparation day, or fourteenth of Nisan, before the first Sabbath of the



Feast of Unleavened Bread, and a Hebrew day went from evening until evening. Therefore, it would seem to me the crucifixion and burial of Christ had to take place on Wednesday prior to twilight. You would then have Wednesday night (**night 1**), Thursday day (**day 1**) (also please note this first night and day would make up the High Holy Sabbath of the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread), Thursday night (**night 2**), Friday day (**day 2**), Friday night (**night 3**) and Saturday day (**day 3**) (now, make note the Friday night and Saturday (the night/day components of the third day) would make up the weekly Sabbath—the second Sabbath during this week) which would make up three days and three nights before the beginning of the first day of the week which would be Saturday at evening (twilight or about 6:00 PM). Then the following verse would be correct to complete the Biblical account.


Matthew 28:1-6 KJV *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.*

*And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.*

*And the angel answered and said unto the women, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."*

We read in Leviticus 23:32 the day started at evening and went until the next evening. The actual resurrection of Christ occurred sometime between three in the afternoon (three full days from the time that Jesus died) and twilight on Saturday (end of the Sabbath and beginning of the first day) and **not at the coming of dawn on Sunday!** The reason the stone was rolled away was not to let Christ out but to let the others into the tomb. Christ was already resurrected by the time the two Marys arrived at dawn. *Remember it is not the death of Christ that gives the free gift from God, it is His resurrection that provides this gift.* Where did tradition enter to change the meaning? Historically, we tend to forget common man did not have the Holy Bible until 1611 when the King James version (KJV) was printed. Up to that date the Bible remained, for the most part, in the hands of the church and the nobility. It is so very important that you understand who this historical church is at that time in 1611. I am not here to upset anyone over the name of a denomination, history verifies this. Go and look for yourself to see who the church really was at that time.

The influence from the nobility upon the church at that time in history, could establish any number of ideas that would become tradition. There was no check made by common man to determine whether what was said, instructed or told to the common man was true, or even scriptural. One such tradition is Easter. It seems we have also forgotten the term **Easter** does not mean **Passover**. It is derived from the word *Astarte*, the goddess of fertility. This is where the easter bunny, baby chicks and eggs come into the enactment of this holiday, and all the other pagan traditions now associated with the crucifixion of Christ.



If you understand the structure of the Hebrew holidays given to Moses, there will never be a **Crucifixion Day** prior to, or after, the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, and yet, we celebrate Easter whenever it appears on the calendar. Please go and look on your calendar to see the day on which you celebrated the death of your Lord in any given year. You might even find it more confusing if you look to see when the calendar says Passover is celebrated. I do not know why the Bible says Passover is on April 14<sup>th</sup> and yet the present day calendar shows it on another date. Well, that isn't actually correct either. Remember Jesus was the only acceptable sacrifice as the Lamb of God. The Jews also want to play with a calendar and they use some old statements that cause the day of Passover to change from the 14<sup>th</sup> of April. All I can say is the influence of men has caused this date to be changed to meet with some hidden agenda.

## Part II. The Problems of the Life of Jesus

### A. The Miracles.

1. The Modern Attitude: Everyone is aware that the presence of a miracle in the Gospels is one of the chief grounds for the rejection of its history by the representatives of the modern school. It is not questioned that it is a supernatural person whose life is illustrated in the Gospels. There is no real difference between the Synoptics and John in this respect. "Even the oldest Gospel," writes Bousset,<sup>107</sup> "is written from the standpoint of faith, as already shown by Mark; Jesus is not only the Messiah of the Jewish people, but the miraculous eternal Son of God, whose glory shone in the world." But the same writer, interpreting the modern spirit, declares that no account embracing supernatural events can be accepted as historical. "The main characteristic of this modern mode of thinking," he says, "rests upon the determination to try to explain everything that takes place in the world by natural causes, or, to express it in another form. It rests on the determined assertion of universal laws to which all phenomena, natural and spiritual, are subject."

2. Supernatural in the Gospels: With such an assumption, it is clear that the Gospels are condemned before they are read. Not only is Jesus a supernatural person, but He is presented as supernatural in character, in works, and in claims. He performs miracles, He has a supernatural birth, and a supernatural resurrection. All this is swept away! It may be allowed that He had remarkable gifts of healing, but these are in the class of faith cures, and not truly supernatural. When one seeks the justification for this self-confident dogmatism, it is difficult to discover it, except on the ground of a pantheistic or monistic theory of the universe that excludes the personal God of Christianity. If God is the Author and Sustainer of the natural system, which He rules for moral ends, it is impossible to see why, for high ends of revelation and redemption, a supernatural economy should not be engrafted on the natural, achieving ends that could not otherwise be attained. This does not of course touch the question of evidence for any particular miracle, that must be judged from its connection with the person of the worker, and the character of the apostolic witnesses. The well meant effort to explain all miracles through the action of unknown natural laws is what Dr. Sanday<sup>108</sup> calls making both ends meet (*Life of Christ in Recent Research*, 302). It breaks down in the presence of such miracles as the instantaneous cleansing of the leper, restoration of sight to the blind, the raising of the dead and other acts that plainly imply an exercise of creative power. Transcendence of the ordinary powers of nature is to be expected in such a life as Christ's.

### B. The Messiahship.

1. Reserve of Jesus and Modern Criticism: A difficulty has been found in the fact that in all the Gospels Jesus knew Himself to be the Messiah at least from the time of His baptism. Yet He did not unreservedly announce Himself, even to His Apostles, as such until after Peter's great confession at Caesarea Philippi. Matthew 16:16, *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* On this seeming secrecy the bold hypothesis has been built that Jesus in reality never made the claim to Messiahship. The passages that imply the contrary in Mark are unhistorical (Wrede<sup>109</sup>). Compare this and other theories to Schweitzer;<sup>110</sup> Sanday.<sup>111</sup> This is such an extreme opinion that it is rejected by most, but more modern critics vie with each other in the freedom with which they treat the testimony of the evangelists on this subject. Baldensperger,<sup>112</sup> supposed that Jesus did not attain full certainty on His

<sup>107</sup> Wilhelm Bousset, op. cit.

<sup>108</sup> Dr William Sanday, op. cit., *Life of Christ in Recent Research*, (1907) Whitefish: Kessinger Legacy Reprints.

<sup>109</sup> Georg Friedrich Eduard William Wrede, 1859-1956, *The Messianic Secret, Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (1905). Cambridge: James Clark & Company Ltd.

<sup>110</sup> Albert Schweitzer, op. cit.

<sup>111</sup> Dr William Sanday, op. cit.

<sup>112</sup> Guillaume Baldensperger, 1856-1936, *Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu im Lichte der Messianischen Hoffnungen seiner Zeit. (The Self-consciousness of Jesus in the Light of the Messianic Hopes of His Time.)* (1888, 2nd ed, 1892, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed ) Giessen: J. Ricker.



Messiahship until near the time of Peter's confession, and arbitrarily transposed the earlier sections in which the title Son of Man occurred until after that event. Bousset<sup>113</sup> thought that Jesus adopted the Messianic role as the only one open to Him, but bore it as a burden. Schweitzer<sup>114</sup> connected it with apocalyptic ideas of a wildly fantastic character.

2. A Growing Revelation: There is, however, no need for supposing that Peter's confession marks the first dawn of this knowledge in the minds of the Apostles. Rather it was the exalted expression of a faith already present, that had long been maturing. Jesus was fully conscious of His vocation from the beginning: The baptism and temptation; the use of the title Son of Man; the tone of authority in His teaching; His miracles; and many special incidents clearly illustrate this as do also the discourses in John. His reserve in the use of the title sprang, not from any doubt in His own mind as to His right to it, but from His desire to avoid false associations until the true nature of His Messiahship should be revealed. The Messiahship was in the process of self-revelation throughout to those who had eyes to see it. John 6:66-71, *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"*

*But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

*Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.* What it involved will be seen later. Question, aside from all the discussion: Could it be that Jesus' Messiahship was not revealed because He did things according to the Father's will and His time to declare this had not yet come? It's a simple idea stated in the Bible, why not accept it?

#### C. Kingdom and Apocalypse:

1. The Kingdom: Present or Future? Connected with the Messiahship is the idea of the Kingdom of God or of heaven, which some in modern times would interpret in a purely Second Coming of Jesus sense, in the light of Jewish apocalyptic conceptions (Weiss;<sup>115</sup> Schweitzer<sup>116</sup>). The kingdom is not a thing of the present, but wholly a thing of the future, to be introduced by convulsions of nature: as the acts of God; and the Second Coming of the Son of Man. The language of the Lord's Prayer, Thy kingdom come, is quoted in support of this contention, but the next petition should guard against so violent an inference. Thy will be done, Jesus teaches His disciples to pray, as in heaven, so on earth. Matthew 6:10, *Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* The kingdom is the reign of God in human hearts and lives in this world as well as in the next. It would not be wrong to define it as consisting essentially in the supremacy of God's will in human hearts and human affairs, and in every department of these affairs. As Jesus describes the kingdom, it has, in the plain meaning of His words, a present being on earth, though its perfection is in eternity. The parables in Matthew 13 and elsewhere exhibit it as founded by the sowing of the word of truth (sower); as a mingling of good and evil elements (tares); as growing from small beginnings to large proportions (mustard seed); as gradually leavening humanity (leaven); as of priceless value (treasure, pearls); as terminating in a judgment (tares, dragnet); as perfected in the world to come. Matthew 13:43, *Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!* It was a kingdom spiritual in nature. Luke 17:20-21, *Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!'*

<sup>113</sup> Wilhelm Bousset, op. cit.

<sup>114</sup> Albert Schweitzer, op. cit.

<sup>115</sup> Johannes Weiss, 1863-1914, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (1971) Translated & edited by Richard H. Hiers and David Larimore Holland, Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

<sup>116</sup> Albert Schweitzer, op. cit.

*For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.*” The kingdom is universal in range. Matthew 8:11, *And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.* Developed from a principle of life within. Mark 4:26-29, *And He said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”* Issued in victory over all opposition. Matthew 21:43-44, *“Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.”*

2. Apocalyptic Beliefs: It is difficult to authoritatively dictate the extent to which Jesus was acquainted with current apocalyptic beliefs, or allowed these to color the imagery of parts of His teachings. These beliefs certainly did not furnish the substance of His teaching, and it may be doubted whether they more than superficially affected even its form. Jewish apocalyptic knew nothing of a death and resurrection of the Messiah and of His return in glory to bring in an everlasting kingdom. What Jesus taught on these subjects sprang from His own Messianic consciousness, with the certainty He had knowledge of His triumph over death and His exaltation to the right hand of God. Jesus’ thoughts of the future triumph of His kingdom were grounded in Old Testament prophecy, not in late Jewish apocalypse. From the vivid imagery of the prophets He borrowed most of the clothing of these thoughts. Isaiah 53:3,7-9,12 predicts not only the rejection and death of the Servant of Yahweh, but the prolongation of His days and His victorious reign (verses 10-12). Daniel is the source of the title, Son of Man, and of the imagery of coming on the clouds of heaven. Daniel 7:13, *“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.”* The ideas of resurrection have their basis in the Old Testament. His teaching had nothing in common with the extravagant, unspiritual forms these concepts were thrown into the Jewish apocalyptic books. The new apocalyptic school represented by Schweitzer<sup>117</sup> reduces the history of Jesus to folly, fanaticism and hopeless disillusionment. It is thoughts such as this that only adds fuel to the claims of Islam pertaining to Jews and Christians, that they do not follow the law and the various translations of the Bible have destroyed the original intent and will of God.

D. The Character and Claims. The Gospels present us Jesus with the image of a flawless character. In the words of the writer to the Hebrews: Hebrews 7:26, *For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens.* The modern criticism is driven by an inflexible necessity to deprive Jesus of His sinless perfection, and to attribute to Him the error, frailty, and moral infirmity that belongs to ordinary mortals. In Schweitzer’s<sup>118</sup> portraiture, Jesus is an apocalyptic enthusiastic, ruled by illusory ideals, deceiving Himself and others as to who He was, and as to the impending end of the world. Those who show a more adequate appreciation of Christ’s spiritual greatness are still prevented by their humanitarian estimate of His person and their denial of the supernatural in history from recognizing the possibility of His sinlessness. It may confidently be said that there is hardly a single writer of the modern school who grants Christ moral perfection. To do so would be to admit a miracle in humanity, and we have heard that a miracle is excluded by the necessity of the highest rational of humanity. (*Once again we see that mankind wants to be in control, in front, the leader, and not the follower.*) This, however, is precisely the point that the modern so-called historical-critical mode of presentation most obviously breaks down. The ideal of perfect holiness in the Gospels has

<sup>117</sup> Albert Schweitzer, Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Albert Schweitzer, Ibid.

fascinated the conscience of Christendom for 20 centuries, and attests itself anew to every candid reader. It is not thus lightly to be gotten rid of, or explained away as the invention of a church gathered out (without the help of the ideal) promiscuously from Jews and Gentiles. Christ created the church: It was not the church, least of all such a church, that created Christ!

1. Rebuttal: Reading this section of Part II expresses the thoughts of many scholars from Germany in the late 1800's and early 1900's. That's not a very modern presentation being presented. Here are my conclusions: To give worth to the entire article there has to be both sides of the same coin. You have to present the positive as well as the negative. Think about that, even God does this throughout His Word. The Bible is the history of God's chosen people and not of the entire world, as some may think. As a loving God He must, out of necessity, show His love as a benevolent God and on the other hand a loving Father who will discipline because of His love. Jesus as the Son of God, must by divine guidance, perform the will of the Father and not act according to the dictates of mankind that they have created for themselves in the form of religion. God never asked for a religion to be formed, that was the inspiration of man's thinking through the influence of Satan. Now, specifically, notice the names through most of the negative objections pertaining to the life, teachings and Messianic claims of Jesus. The names and titles of many of the reference works are German. Ah, Germany, maybe we should view some facts pertaining to present day Germany. First, Germany has declared through two World Wars that they are a superior Arian nation. Secondly, present day Germany represents the remnant of the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrian Empire was the empire that cast Israel, the Ten Tribe northern nation, out of Palestine and replaced them with people(s) (Samaritans) from many different countries (see my book, *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel*<sup>119</sup>). Thirdly, Germany, as pertaining to their religion, is strongly Roman Catholic with a strong injection of German pride (Nationalism). These two factors present to me the idea that these men are only writing about that which they have been taught. There are heavy overtones of Jesus being human and not divine and the worship of Mary as a perpetual virgin is just as meaningful to them.

2. Sinlessness Assured. The sinlessness of Jesus is a point of reasoning in the Gospels. Against a sinful world He stands as a Savior who is Himself without sin. His is the one life in humanity in which is presented a perfect knowledge and unbroken fellowship with God the Father, undeviating obedience to His will, unswerving devotion under the severest strain of temptation and suffering to the highest ideal of goodness. The ethical ideal was never raised to so absolute a height as it is in the teaching of Jesus. The miracle is, that high as it is in its unsullied purity, the character of Jesus corresponds with it, and realizes it. Word and life for once in history perfectly agree. Jesus, with the keenest sensitiveness to sin in thought and feeling as in deed, is conscious of no sin in Himself, confesses no sin, disclaims the presence of it, speaks and acts continually on the assumption that He is without it. Those who knew Him best declared Him to be without sin. John 1:1-5, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.* 1 Peter 2:22, *“Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth.”* The Gospels must be torn in pieces before this image of a perfect holiness can be erased from them.

3. What this Implies: How is this phenomenon of a sinless personality in Jesus to be explained? It is itself a miracle, and can only be made credible by a creative miracle in Christ's origin. It may be argued that a Virgin Birth does not of itself secure sinlessness, but it will hardly be disputed that at least a sinless personality implies a miracle in its production. It is precisely because of this that the modern spirit feels

<sup>119</sup> Charles Edward Darnell, op. cit., *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel* (2015) fully revised; *Beyond Holy Ground* (2003) original. Campbells-ville: VisionQuest Publishing, Inc.

bound to reject it. In the Gospels it is not the Virgin Birth by itself that is invoked to explain Christ's sinlessness, but the supernatural conception by the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:35, *And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."* It is because of this conception that the birth is a virgin one. No explanation of the supernatural element in Christ's Person is more rational or credible.

4. Sinlessness and the Messianic Claim: Jesus was conscious of Himself as without sin from the first. As the converse of this, He knew Himself as standing in an unbroken family fellowship with God the Father. Therefore, He must have, early on in His life, become conscious of His special vocation, and learned to distinguish Himself from others as one called to bless and save them. Here is the true germ of His Messianic consciousness, from which everything subsequently is unfolded. He stood in a rapport with the Father that opened His spirit to a full, clear revelation of the Father's will regarding Himself. His mission was, the kingdom He came to found. His sufferings as the means of salvation for the world, and the glory that awaited Him when His earthly work was done was all in clear focus. In the light of this revelation He read the Old Testament Scriptures and saw His course made plain there. When the hour had come He went to John for baptism, and His brief, eventful ministry began, that would end on the cross. This is the reading of events that introduces consistency and purpose into the life of Jesus, and it is this we mean to follow in the outline now to be given.

### **Part III. Course of the Earthly Life of Jesus**



Divisions of the History: We will now endeavor to trace the wonderful story of the life of the world's Redeemer as it falls naturally into several divisions:

This is not a Complete Life: To avoid misconception, it is important to remember, that, rich as the narratives of the Gospels are, materials do not exist for a complete biography or Life of Jesus. There is a gap, broken only by a single incident from His infancy until His 30th year. There are cycles of events out of myriads left unrecorded. John 21:25, There are sayings, parables, longer discourses, connected with particular occasions, and there are general summaries of periods of activity comprised in a few verses. The Apostles, also, present their materials each from their own standpoint. Matthew from the theocratic, Mark from that of Christ's practical activity, Luke from the universalistic and human-sympathetic, and John from the Divine. In reproducing the history, respect must be paid to this focusing from distinct points of view. We must, out of necessity, also remember that the life of Jesus was a young life cut short in the 33rd year. Yet, at the same time, viewed in the Divine, 33 years is but the blink of the eye when compared with eternity.

A. From the Nativity to Jesus' Baptism and Temptation:

1. The Nativity.

a. Hidden Piety in Judaism: Old Testament prophecy expired with the promise on its lips. Malachi 3:1, *"Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,"* says the Lord of hosts. In the years immediately before Christ's birth the air was saturated with the sense of impending great events. The fortunes of the Jewish people were at their lowest ebb. Pharisaic formalism, Sadducean unbelief, fanatical Zealotry, Herodian self gratifier, (called a brown noser), and Roman oppression, seemed to have crushed out the last sparks of spiritual religion. Yet in numerous quiet circles in Judea, and even in remote Galilee, little godly bands still nourished their souls on the promises, looking for the consolation of Israel and the redemption of Jerusalem. Luke





2:25, 38, *And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. . . . And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.* Glimpses of these feelings were stored away in Zacharias and Elisabeth, in Simeon, in Anna, and in Joseph and Mary. Matthew 1:18-25, *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”*

*So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.* It was in their hearts in these circles that the stirrings of the prophetic spirit began to make themselves felt anew, preparing for the Advent.

2. Birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1): In the last days of Herod, perhaps in the year 6 BCE, the aged priest Zacharias, of the division of Abijah was ministering in the temple at the altar of incense at the hour of evening prayer. Scholars have reckoned, if on somewhat precarious grounds, that the ministry of the order to which Zacharias belonged fell in this year in the month of April or in early October. I do not agree with these scholars for several reasons. First, they are trying to prove a birth of Christ that would be close to December 25 and they know the course of Abijah was the key to unlocking that mystery. Secondly, these scholars are still trying to use a dating system that either matches the Julian or the Jewish calendar. They did not take logic into account to determine the first month of the year. My full explanation is given in Part I for the birth of Christ. Now a wonderful thing happened while Zacharias was on duty at the temple. Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth, noted for their blameless piety, were childless until this time. On this evening an angel announced to Zacharias that a son should be born to them, in whom should be realized the prediction of Malachi of one coming in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way of the Lord. His name was to be called John. Zacharias hesitated to believe, and was stricken with dumbness until the promise should be fulfilled. It happened as the angel had foretold, and at the circumcision and naming of his son his tongue was again loosed. Zacharias, filled with the Spirit, poured forth his soul in a hymn of praise, the *Benedictus*<sup>120</sup>. Luke 1:67-80 NIV, *Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham: to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”*





<sup>120</sup> *Benedictus*, Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benedictus\\_\(Song\\_of\\_Zechariah\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benedictus_(Song_of_Zechariah))



3. The Annunciation and Its Results. Meanwhile stranger things were happening in the little village of Nazareth, in Galilee. Mary, a young maiden of purest character resided there. She was betrothed to a carpenter of the village, called Joseph, who, although in so humble a station, was of the lineage of David. Mary, was likewise of Davidic descent. Without going into lengthy proof to show the genealogy of Mary I ask you, the reader, to remember that Jesus had to be born of Davidic descent and it could not be through Joseph, it had to be through Mary herself. The fables relating to the parentage and youth of Mary in the Apocryphal Gospels may safely be discarded. Three months before the birth of John the Baptist, the same angel (Gabriel) visited Mary, greeting her as highly favored of God, and announcing to her that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, she should become the mother of the Savior. The words blessed art thou among women, in the King James Version, (Luke 1:28 KJV, *And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.*) are omitted by the Revised Version, though found below in Elisabeth's salutation. These words do not give support toward Mariolatry (excessive veneration of the virgin Mary). They are simply stating the fact that Mary was more honored than any other woman of the race in being chosen to be the mother of the Lord.

a. The Amazing Message. The announcement itself was of the most amazing import. Mary herself was staggered at the thought that, as a virgin, she should become a mother. Luke 1:34, *Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"* Still more surprising were the statements made as to the Son she was to bear: Conceived of the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:35, *The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."* He would be great, and would be called the Son of the Highest. Luke 1:32, *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.* And the Son of God. Luke 1:35, *The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."* There would be given to Him the throne of His father David. Luke 1:32, *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.* His reign would be eternal. Luke 1:33, *"And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."* He would be holy from the womb. Luke 1:35, *The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."* His name was to be called Jesus. Luke 1:31, *And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.* His name denoted Him as Savior. The holiness of Jesus is here put in connection with His miraculous conception. In no case in the history of mankind has natural generation issued in a being who is sinless, not to say superhuman. The fact that Jesus was supernaturally begotten does not exclude the higher and eternal Sonship according to the Divine nature: He was the Son of God! John 1:18, *No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.* The incarnation of such a Divine Being as Paul and John depict, itself implies a miracle in human origin. Mary first accepted what was told her in meek humility concerning the whole message declared to her. Luke 1:38, *Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."* *And the angel departed from her.*

b. The Visit to Elisabeth. With the announcement to herself there was given to Mary an indication of what had befallen her kinswoman Elisabeth. Mary's first act, on recovering from her astonishment, was to go in haste to the home of Elisabeth in the hill country of Judea. Very naturally she did not rashly forestall God's action in speaking to Joseph of what had occurred, but waited in quietness and faith until God should reveal in His own way what He had done. The meeting of the two holy women was the occasion of a new outburst of prophetic inspiration. Elisabeth, moved by the Spirit, greeted Mary in



exalted language as the mother of the Lord. This was a confirmation to Mary of the message she had received. Mary, on her part, broke forth in rhythmical utterance, My soul doth magnify the Lord. Her hymn, the sublime *Magnificat*,<sup>121</sup> is to be compared with Hannah's, which furnishes the model of it. Here is Mary's song: Luke 1:46-55, *And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever."* Mary stayed with Elisabeth about three months, then returned to her own house.

c. Joseph's Perplexity. Arriving home a new trial awaited her. Mary's condition of motherhood could not be concealed for very long. When Joseph first became aware of it, the shock to a man so just was terrible in its severity. Matthew 1:19, *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.* The disappearance of Joseph from the later gospel history suggests that he was a good deal older than his betrothed. It is possible that, while strict, upright and conscientious, his disposition was not as strong on the side of sympathy as so delicate a case required. It is going too far to say with Lange,<sup>122</sup> "He encountered the modest, but unshakably firm Virgin with decided doubt." But so long as he had no support beyond Mary's word, his mind was in a state of agonized perplexity. His first thought was to give Mary a private bill of divorce to avoid scandal. Happily, his doubts were soon set at rest by Divine information, and he hesitated no longer to take Mary to be his wife. Matthew 1:24, *Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife.* Luke's Gospel, confines itself to the story of Mary, and says nothing of this episode. Matthew's narrative, bears evidence of having come from Joseph himself, and supplies the lack by showing how Joseph came to have the confidence in Mary that enabled him to take her to wife, and become sponsor for her child. The trial, doubtless, while it lasted, was not less severe for Mary than for Joseph, a prelude of that sword which was to pierce through (her) own soul. Luke 2:35, . . . *"(yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."* There is no reason to believe that Joseph and Mary did not subsequently live in the usual relations of wedlock, and that children were not born to them. Contrary to this belief there are two records that Jesus had half brothers and half sisters. Matthew 13:55-56, *"Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"* Mark 6:3, *"Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him.*

4. The Birth at Bethlehem: Matthew gives no indication of where the events narrated in his first chapter took place. He first mentions Nazareth on the occasion of the return of the holy family from Egypt Matthew 2:23, *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."* Matthew transports us to Bethlehem as the city of Christ's birth in Matthew 2:1. It is left to Luke to give an account of the circumstances that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, thus fulfilling prophecy, at this critical hour, and to record the lowly manner of Christ's birth there. Micah 5:2, *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the*

<sup>121</sup> *Magnificat*, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnificat>

<sup>122</sup> Johann Peter Lange, op. cit.

*thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.” Matthew 2:5-6, So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.’”*

a. The Census of Quirinius.<sup>123</sup> The emperor Augustus had given orders for a general census throughout the empire, and this is stated to have been given effect to in Judea when Quirinius was governor of Syria. It is known that Quirinius did conduct a census in Judea in 6 CE. The difficulty was largely removed when it was ascertained, as it has been to the satisfaction of most scholars, that Quirinius was twice governor of Syria: first, after Herod’s death, 4-1 BCE, and again in 6-11 CE. The probability is that the census was begun under Varus,<sup>124</sup> the immediate predecessor of Quirinius, or even earlier under Saturninus,<sup>125</sup> but was delayed in its application to Judea. Judea was then under Herod’s jurisdiction, and the census was completed by Quirinius, with whose name it is officially connected. That the census was made by each one going to his own city is explained by the fact that the census was not made according to the Roman method, but, as befitted a dependent kingdom, in accordance with Jewish usages.

b. Jesus Born. We must all reconcile the fact that the Birth of the Christ child would be according to the will of God and the purposes of men were an add on with little meaning. If the census was made according to Jewish usages it seems that everyone was to be counted. By Divine guidance Mary and Joseph came to Bethlehem, and there, in the ancestral city of David, in circumstances of the lowliest conceivable, brought forth her marvelous child. In unadorned language, very different from the embellishments of the apocryphal story, Luke narrates how, when the travelers arrived, no room was found for them in the inn. Since the wearied pair did not find room in the inn, there is every probability that the birth took place, not, as some suppose, in the courtyard of the inn, but, as the oldest tradition asserts, in a cave in the neighborhood, used for similar purposes of lodgment and housing of cattle. High authorities look favorably on the cave of the nativity that is still shown, with its inscription, *Hic de virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est*, as marking the sacred spot. In such incredibly unlikely surroundings the only begotten Son of the Father was ushered into the world He came to redeem. Over the course of Jesus’ teachings He uses expressions such as, the meek shall inherit the earth and other such expressions of humility. Matthew 5:5, *“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”* This presents a problem for many to accept Jesus as Savior! Here is the birth of a King, the King of kings and Lord of lords brought forth more so in the form of a servant and not a king. Only by God’s grace do we have the voluntary humiliation that Jesus will endure for reconciling mankind back to God and the removal of mankind’s sin nature.

5. The Incidents of the Infancy: Jesus was born, in a lowly condition, the Father however did not leave Him totally without witness to His Sonship. There were rifts in the clouds through which incidents of the hidden glory streamed. The scenes in the narratives of the Infancy exhibit a strange combination of the glorious and the lowly.

a. The Visit of the Shepherds. The first disclosure was made to shepherds watching their flocks by night in the fields near Bethlehem. The angel world is not far removed from us. The angels preannounced the birth of Christ and when He actually was born into the world, angels of God made the night vocal with their songs. First, an angel appearing in the midst of the Divine glory, the *Shekinah*,<sup>126</sup> announced to the sorely alarmed shepherds the birth of a Savior who was Christ the Lord at Bethlehem.

<sup>123</sup> Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, op. cit.

<sup>124</sup> T. Quintilius Varus, 46BCE-9CE, both Tacitus (*The Histories*, V, IX) lists Varus as governor of Syria and predecessor of Quirinius; Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities*, XVII, 277, 280 [ix, 1]; XVI, 344) listed Saturninus and Varus as successive presidents of Syria.

<sup>125</sup> C. Sentius Saturninus, Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities*, V, IX) states that C. Sentius Saturninus was predecessor of Varus as governor of Syria. Tacitus (*The Histories*, XVII, 221 [ix, 3]) also refers to Varus as being governor of Syria.

<sup>126</sup> *Shekinah*, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shekinah>





Afterward a whole chorus of the heavenly host broke in with the refrain, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men*. Guided as to how to recognize the babe, the shepherds went at once and found it to be as they had been told. Then they hastened to spread abroad the tidings, the first believers, the first worshipers, the first preachers. Mary cherished the sayings in the stillness of her heart.

b. The Circumcision and Presentation at the Temple. Jewish law required that on the 8th day the male child should be circumcised, and on the same day He received His name. Jesus, though entirely pure, underwent the rite that denoted the putting off of fleshly sin, and became bound, as a true Israelite, to render obedience to every Divine commandment. The name Yoshua Bin Yusuf (Yoshua son of Joseph or in the Greek: Jesus) was then given Him. The ceremony of purification came on the 40th day when Mary made her presentation at the temple in Jerusalem. Mary's offering was the humbler offering of the poor, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. Luke 2:23-24, *(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."* Under the law the firstborn son had to be redeemed with 5 shekels of silver (2 ounces of silver). Numbers 18:15-16, *Everything that first opens the womb of all flesh, which they bring to the Lord, whether man or beast, shall be yours; nevertheless the firstborn of man you shall surely redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem when one month old, according to your valuation, for five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.* This observance was an additional token that Christ, personally sinless, did not shrink from full identification with the human race in the responsibilities of its sinful condition. However, the ceremony was lifted to a more Divine level before it was completed, and a new attestation was given of the dignity of the child of Mary, by the action and inspired utterances of the holy Simeon and the aged prophetess Anna. It had been revealed to Simeon that he should not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ. Led by the Spirit into the temple at the very time when Jesus was being presented, he recognized in Him the One and taking Him in his arms, he proclaimed the *Nunc Dimittis*:<sup>127</sup> Luke 2: 29-32, *"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."* He told also how this child was set for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and how, through Him, a sword should pierce through Mary's own soul. Entering at the same hour, the prophetess Anna, now in extreme old age, confirmed his words, and spoke of Him to all who, like herself, looked for the redemption of Jerusalem.

c. Visit of the Magi. It seems to have been after the presentation at the temple that the visit of the Magi took place, as recorded by Matthew. The Magi, a learned class belonging originally to Chaldaea or Persia, had, in the course of time, greatly degenerated, but those who now came to seek Christ from the distant East were of a nobler order. They appeared in Jerusalem inquiring of King Herod. Matthew 2:2, *"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."* As observers of the nightly sky, any significant appearance in the heavens would at once attract their attention. Many connect this star with a remarkable conjunction, or series of conjunctions, of planets in 7-6 BCE, in which case it is possible that two years may have elapsed from their observation of the sign to their actual arrival in Jerusalem.

When Jesus was about to be born, some wise men in the East saw a peculiar star in the heavens, that indicated to them the nearness of Jesus' birth. At once they departed for Jerusalem, and naturally expecting the King of the Jews to be born in a palace they went to the home of King Herod. When they did not find the Child there, they were directed to Bethlehem. The Star they had seen in the Eastern Country

<sup>127</sup> *Nunc Dimittis*, Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nunc\\_dimittis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nunc_dimittis)





reappeared when they started for Bethlehem and went before them until it stood over where the young Child lay. Matthew 2:9, *When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.* What was that star that then disappeared? Some claim it was a special star that appeared for the purpose, while others claim it was the conjunction of three stars or planets. Still others say it was a comet or meteor, but none of these explanations fulfill the conditions.

First, the star must have presented some peculiar appearance to attract the attention of the wise men. Secondly, it must have been a moving star, for when they left Jerusalem it reappeared and went before them as a guide to Bethlehem, and stood over the house (presumably not far above it), where the infant Jesus was, to point out the exact location. Then it disappeared!

The only satisfactory explanation of the peculiar movement of the star is that it was an angel who assumed the form of a star. We know angels were busy visiting the earth in those days. The angel Gabriel announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias. Gabriel announced to Mary that she would be the mother of Christ. Angels announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds in the fields. Why not an angel then, to direct the wise men? What more appropriate form could the angel assume than that of a star?

The inquiry of the Magi at once awakened Herod's alarm. He summoned the Magi after having ascertained from the scribes that the Christ should be born at Bethlehem. He questioned them as to when exactly the star appeared, then sent them to Bethlehem to search out the young child, hypocritically pretending that he also wished to worship Him. Herod had faith enough to believe the Scriptures, yet was foolish enough to think that he could thwart God's purpose. Guided by the star that appeared once again, the wise men came to Bethlehem, offered their gifts, and afterward, warned by God, returned by another road without reporting to Herod. It is a striking picture, Herod the king, and Christ the King. Christ as a power even in His cradle, inspiring terror, attracting homage! The faith of these sages, unrepulsed by the lowly surroundings of the child they had discovered, worshiped, and lay their gold, frankincense and myrrh at His feet. This was in splendid anticipation of the victories Christ was yet to win among the wisest as well as the humblest of our race. Herod, finding himself befooled by the Magi, avenged himself by ordering a massacre of all the male children of two years old and under in Bethlehem and its neighborhood. Some will tell me that I don't know what I'm talking about: Herod didn't kill all the children. Here are the verses from the KJV, NET, NIV and NKJV and there is a two to two split on what really happened. It is up to you to choose the outcome. Matthew 2:16 KJV, *Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.* Matthew 2:16 NET, *When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he became enraged. He sent men to kill all the children in Bethlehem and throughout the surrounding region from the age of two and under, according to the time he had learned from the wise men.* Matthew 2:16 NIV, *When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.* Matthew 2:16 NKJV, *Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.* This slaughter, is entirely in keeping with the cruelty of Herod's disposition and the fulfilling of prophecy. Matthew 2:17-18, *Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."* Jeremiah 31:15, *Thus says the Lord: "A voice was heard in*



*Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.*” These verses would indicate to me that all the children were killed. Meanwhile, Joseph and Mary had been withdrawn from this scene of danger.

6. Flight to Egypt and Return to Nazareth: The safety of Mary and her threatened child was provided for by a Divine warning to retire for a time to Egypt. Matthew 2:13-14, *Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt.* The sojourn was not a long one. Herod’s death brought permission to return. Since Archelaus, Herod’s son (the worst of them), reigned in Judea in his father’s stead (not as king, but ethnarch), Joseph was directed to withdraw to Galilee. Thus it came about that he and Mary, with the babe, found themselves again in Nazareth, where Matthew again takes up the story. Matthew sees in the return from Egypt a fulfilling of the experiences of Israel. Hosea 11:1, *“When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.”*

7. Questions and Objections: The objections to the credibility of the narratives of the virgin birth have already partly been ruled out.

a. The Virgin Birth. The narratives in Matthew and Luke are attested by all manuscripts and versions as genuine parts of their respective Gospels, and as coming to us in their integrity. The narrative of Luke is generally recognized as resting on an Aramaic basis, and from its diction and the primitive character of its conceptions, belongs to the earliest age. In Luke’s narrative everything is presented from the standpoint of Mary, in Matthew it is Joseph who is in the forefront. This suggests that the virgin mother is the source of information in the one case, and Joseph himself in the other. The narratives are complementary, not contradictory. This presentation of narrative and the respective source causes the genealogies given in both gospels to be correct. Matthew records the genealogy of Joseph and Luke records the genealogy of Mary as both pertain to the birth of Christ. That Mark and John do not contain narratives of the virgin birth cannot be questioned, when it is remembered that Mark’s Gospel begins intentionally with the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. The Gospel of John aims at setting forth the Divine descent, not the circumstances of the earthly nativity. John 1:14, *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* Everything of the Divine intent is already implied in this statement. Neither can it be objected to that Paul does not in his letters or public preaching focus on so essentially private a fact as the miraculous conception, at a time, when Mary probably still lived. With the exception of the narrowest sect of the Jewish Ebionites (very early Jewish Christian disciples) and some of the gnostic sects, the virgin birth was universally accepted in the early church.

b. The Genealogies. Difficulty is felt with the genealogies in Matthew and Luke (one descending, the other ascending), that both profess to trace the descent of Jesus from David and Abraham (from Adam in the Luke account), yet go entirely apart in the pedigree after David. A favorite view is that Matthew exhibits the legal, Luke the natural descent of Jesus. There is plausibility in the supposition that though, in form, a genealogy of Joseph, Luke’s is really the genealogy of Mary. It was not customary, it is true, to make out pedigrees of females, but the case here was clearly exceptional. There are three words in the Luke account that should cause every person to think about the conclusion. Those three words are: *as was supposed* KJV or *so it was thought* in the NIV. Luke 3:23, *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli.* The corresponding verse in Matthew indicates that Joseph is the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born. Matthew 1:16 NIV, *And Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.* We must point out two other items from these two verses. Notice in the Matthew



verse that it does not say that Joseph was Jesus' father, only that he was the husband of Mary. Now, look at both passages: in Luke the father named for Joseph is Heli and in Matthew the father named for Joseph is Jacob. There is no man that can have two natural fathers as these two verses would indicate. The truth of the matter is that Mary must be a descendant of King David for prophecy to be correct. This is true if you carry the lines back to king David. Solomon and Nathan are brothers, king David and Bethsheba are their parents. 1 Chronicles 3:5 NIV, *And these were the children born to him there: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon. These four were by Bathsheba daughter of Ammiel*. Prophecy is correct, Matthew is correct for the lineage of Joseph and Luke is correct for the lineage of Mary. It is mankind who refuses to view the information of the Bible to come to the correct answers.

#### 8. The Years of Silence and the Twelfth Year.

a. The Human Development: The Canonical Gospels are silent as to the history of Jesus from the return to Nazareth until His baptism by John. With the exception of one fragment of incident, that of the visit to Jerusalem and the Temple in His 12th year. The inspired records leave this long period that the Apocryphal Gospels crowd with silly fables to be regarded as being what it was: a period of quiet development of mind and body; of outward uneventfulness; of silent garnering of experience in the midst of the Nazareth surroundings. Luke 2:40, 52, *And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men*. The incarnation was a true acceptance of humanity, with all its sinless limitations of growth and development. Not a hint is offered of that omniscience or omnipotence which theology has frequently imputed to Jesus even as child and boy. His schooling was probably that of the ordinary village child. He could read. Luke 4:17, *And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: He could write*. John 8:6-8, *This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."* And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. He learned the trade of Joseph and worked as a carpenter. Mark 6:3, *"Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him*. His gentleness and grace of character endeared Him to all who knew Him. Luke 2:52, *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men*. No stain of sin clouded His vision of divine things. History shows that His mind was nourished on the Scriptures. As He pondered psalms and prophets, His soul remained unvisited by fear, growing to convictions, that He was the One in whom their predictions were destined to be realized.


b. Jesus at the Temple: Every year, as was the custom of the Jews, Joseph and Mary went in groups, with their friends and neighbors, to Jerusalem for the Passover. When Jesus was 12 years old, for the first time, He was permitted to accompany them. It would be to Him a strange and thrilling experience. Everything He saw, the hallowed sites, the motley crowd, the service of the temple, His moral consciousness would receive the shocks from contact with abounding scandals, and intensify His feeling of His own unique relation to God the Father. Every relationship was for the time suspended and merged to His thought in this higher one. It was His Father's city whose streets He trod; His Father's house He visited for prayer; His Father's ordinance the crowds were assembled to observe; and His Father's name, they were dishonoring by their formalism and hypocrisy!

It is this exalted mood of the boy Jesus that explains the scene that follows, the only one rescued from oblivion in this interval of growth and preparation. Jesus remained behind when the time came for the busy caravan to return to Nazareth. In the large company His absence was not missed at first, but when at




the evening halting place it became known that He was not with them, Mary and Joseph returned in deep distress to Jerusalem. Three days elapsed before they found Him in the place where naturally they should have looked first, His Father's house. There, in one of the halls or chambers where the rabbis taught, they discovered Him seated in the midst, at the feet of the men of learning. He heard their discourse, asked questions, as pupils were permitted to do, and gave answers that awakened astonishment by their penetration and wisdom. Luke 4:47, *And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.* Those who heard Him may well have thought that before them was one of the great rabbis of the future! Mary, much surprised, asked: Luke 2:48, . . . *"Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."* Jesus replied! Luke 2:49-50, *And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"* *But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.* Here was the revelation of a self-consciousness that Mary might have been prepared for in Jesus, but perhaps, in the common normal day-to-day routine of life, an answer Mary was not expecting. Therefore the uncertainty of understanding stated in verse 50 just above. Luke 2:51-52, *Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.* Verse 51 insures us that Jesus was obedient to His parents and returned with them to Nazareth. Yet, Mary did not forget the words spoken by Jesus in this incident.

#### 9. The Forerunner and the Baptism.





a. The Preaching of John the Baptist: Time passed, and when Jesus was nearing His 30th year, Judea was agitated by the message of a stern preacher of righteousness who had appeared in the wilderness by the Jordan. This stern preacher, John the Baptist, proclaimed the imminent approach of the kingdom of heaven, summoning Judea to repentance, and baptizing those who confessed their sins. Tiberius had succeeded Augustus on the imperial throne: Judea, with Samaria, was now a Roman province, under the procurator Pontius Pilate; the rest of Palestine was divided between the tetrarchs Herod (Galilee) and Philip (the eastern parts). John the Baptist thus appeared at the time when the land had lost the last vestige of self-government, was politically divided, and in great ecclesiastical confusion. Nurtured in the desert, John the Baptist's very appearance was a protest against the luxury and self-seeking of the age. He had been a Nazarite from his birth. He fed on the simplest products of nature, locusts and wild honey. His coarse garb of camel's hair and leather girdle was a return to the dress of Elijah. 2 Kings 1:8, *So they answered him, "A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist."* *And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."* It was in the spirit and power of Elijah that John the Baptist appeared. Luke 1:17, *"He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*



b. The Coming Christ: John the Baptist's preaching of the kingdom was unlike that of any of the revolutionaries of his age. It was a kingdom that could be entered only through moral preparation. It availed nothing for the Jew. The Jew was simply a son of Abraham. The Messiah was at hand. He (John the Baptist) was but a voice in the wilderness sent to prepare the way for He that was Greater than himself. The work of the Christ would be one of judgment and of mercy. He would lay the axe at the root of the tree, would winnow the chaff from the wheat, yet would baptize with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist baptized with water those who professed acceptance of his message, with its condition of repentance. Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist at the Jordan or in its neighborhood.


c. Jesus is Baptized: John the Baptist's startling words made a profound impression. All classes from every part of the land, including Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism. Matthew 3:7, *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"* John was not deceived. He saw how little



change of heart underlay it all. The Regenerator had not yet come. But one day there appeared before him One whom he intuitively recognized as different from all the rest, indeed the Christ whose coming it was his to herald. John, up to this time, does not seem to have personally known Jesus. John 1:31, *“I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.”* He must, however, have heard of Him. Besides, he received a sign by which the Messiah should be recognized. John 1:33, *I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’* Now when Jesus presented Himself, divinely pure in aspect, asking baptism at his hands, the conviction was instantaneously flashed on his mind, that this was the Holy One. But how should he, a sinful man, baptize this Holy One? Matthew 3:14, *And John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?”*

The question is one that forces itself upon us. How should Jesus seek or receive a baptism of repentance? Jesus Himself provides the answer. Matthew 3:15, *But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him.* The Head was content to enter by the same gateway as the members to His specific vocation in the service of the kingdom. In submitting to the baptism, He formally identified Himself with the expectation of the kingdom and with its ethical demands. He separated Himself from the evil of His nation, doubtless with confession of its sins, and devoted Himself to His life task in bringing in the Messianic salvation. The significance of the rite was marking His consecration to, and entrance upon, His Messianic career was seen in what follows. As He ascended from the water, while still praying, the heavens were opened, the Spirit of God descended like a dove upon Him, and a voice from heaven declared: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Luke 3:21-22, *When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”* Matthew 3:16-17, *When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* It is needless to inquire whether anyone besides John the Baptist and Jesus received this vision or heard these words. The vision was primarily intended for them, not for others. To Christ’s consecration of Himself to His calling, there was now added the spiritual equipment necessary for the doing of His work. He went forward with the seal of the Father’s acknowledgment upon Him.

#### 10. The Temptation.



a. Temptation Follows Baptism: On the narrative of the baptism in the first three Gospels there follows at once the account of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. The psychological nature of the incident is generally acknowledged. The baptism of Jesus was a crisis in His experience. He had been equipped by the Spirit for His work. The heavens had been opened to Him, and His mind was agitated by new thoughts and emotions. He was conscious of the possession of new powers. There was need for a period of retirement: of still reflection; of coming to a complete understanding with Himself as to the meaning of the task to which He stood committed; the methods He should employ; the attitude He should take toward popular hopes and expectations. He wished to be alone. The Spirit of God led Him where His own spirit also impelled. Matthew 4:1, *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.* Mark 1:12, *Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.* Luke 4:1, *Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.* It is with a touch of similar motive that the Buddhist legend makes Buddha to be tempted

by the evil spirit Mara after he has attained enlightenment.

b. Nature of the Temptation: The scene of the temptation was the wilderness of Judea. Jesus was there 40 days, during which, it is told, He neither ate nor drank. Mark adds, He was with the wild beasts. The period was probably one of intense self-concentration. During the whole of it He endured temptations of Satan, but the special assaults came at the end of this time. Luke 4:2, *Being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.* We assume here a real tempter and real temptations. This, however, does not settle the form of the temptations. Scholars suggest the struggles were probably inward. Stating: It can hardly be supposed that Jesus was literally transported by the devil to a pinnacle of the temple, then to a high mountain, then, presumably, back again to the wilderness. Mankind should take the time to look at the situation. Jesus, while tempted kept His sinless nature and was tempted in all things. Hebrews 4:15, *As Christ Jesus kept His sinless nature, we are told He was tempted in all things through which mankind goes. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.* We also know that He has supernatural powers. Now, here is what we should understand by these temptations. Satan was an angel and also has some supernatural powers. Satan could indeed transport Jesus to any location in the Universe. The point of the temptations are to show mankind, that means us, you and I, that we will also be tempted and must discipline ourselves to avoid taking the easy way out by accepting the temptation. Through our faith in Jesus as the Christ we are to follow in His example and to stand up to our everyday temptations and not sin by disobedience. Observe the methods of temptation in the following narratives of this subparagraph.

c. Stages of the Temptation: The stages of the temptation were three. Each a trial of the spirit of obedience in its own way.

1.) The First Temptation was to Distrust. Jesus, after His long fast, was hungry. He had become conscious also of supernatural powers. The point where the temptation laid hold was His sense of hunger, the most overpowering of appetites. Satan's suggestion was: If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. The design was to excite distrustful and rebellious thoughts, and intended to lead Jesus to use the powers entrusted to Him in an unlawful way, for private and selfish ends. The temptation was promptly met by a quotation from scripture: Man shall not live by bread alone. We must remember that at this date in time Jesus did not have a Bible from which to take scripture. Jesus only had the scrolls of the prophets and we need to see that the words He used were in old scripture. Deuteronomy 8:3, *So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.* If Jesus was in this position, it was His Father who had brought Him there for purposes of trial. Observe what Paul said about being content: Philippians 4:11-13 NIV, *I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* Man has a higher life than can be sustained on bread; a life, found in depending on God's word, and obeying it at whatever cost.

2.) The Second Temptation (in Luke the third) was Presumption. Satan takes Jesus to a pinnacle of the temple. From this dizzy elevation He is invited to cast Himself down, relying on the divine promise. Psalms 91:11-12, *For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.* In this way an easy demonstration of His Messiahship would be given to the crowds below. The temptation was

to overstep those bounds of humility and dependence imposed on Him as Son. Instead He was to play with signs and wonders in His work as Messiah. But again the tempter is foiled by the word: Deuteronomy 6:16, *Do not test the Lord your God as you did at Massah.*

3.) The Third Temptation (Luke's second) was to Worldly Sovereignty. God had removed Lucifer from his position as the guardian of the throne of God and cast him to earth as Satan. He became the prince of the air by some small concession granted to him. Job 1:7, *And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."* Ephesians 2:1-3 NIV, *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.* From some lofty elevation, no place on a geographical map, the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them are flashed before Christ's mind, and all are offered to Him on condition of one little act of homage to the tempter. It was the temptation to choose the easier path by some slight brownnosing to falsehood, and Jesus definitely repelled it by His response saying: Deuteronomy 6:13, *You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.* Jesus had chosen His path. The Father's way toward the cross would be His decision.

a.) Typical Character. The stages of the temptation typify the whole round of Satanic assault on man through body, mind, and spirit, and the whole round of Messianic temptation. Luke 4:13, *Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.* 1 John 2:16, *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.* Jesus was constantly being tempted:

(1) to spare Himself;

(2) to gratify the Jewish signseekers;

(3) to gain power by sacrifice of the right. In principle the victory was gained over all at the commencement. His way was henceforth clear.

## B. The Early Judean Ministry

### 1. The Testimonies of John the Baptist.

a. The Synoptic Gospels and John the Apostle: The Synoptic Gospels pass immediately from the temptation of Jesus to the ministry in Galilee and the imprisonment of John the Baptist. Matthew 4:12, *Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.* Mark 1:14-15, *Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."* Luke 4:14, *Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.* The Fourth Gospel of John the Apostle furnishes the account of the earlier ministry of Jesus in Judea while John the Baptist was still at liberty.

b. Threefold Witness of John the Baptist: John the Baptist had announced Christ's coming; had baptized Him when He appeared; it was now his privilege to testify to Him as having come, and to introduce to Jesus His first disciples.

#### 1.) First Testimony, Jesus and Popular Messianic Expectation:

John the Baptist's work had assumed proportions that made it impossible for the ecclesiastical authorities to ignore it any longer. A committee consisting of priests and Levites was accordingly sent to John, where he was baptizing at Bethabara beyond Jordan, to put to him categorical questions about his mission. Who was he? And by what authority did he baptize? Was he the Christ? or Elijah? or the expected prophet? To these questions John gave distinct and straightforward replies. He was not the Christ, not Elijah, not the



prophet. His answers grow more brief every time, I am not the Christ; I am not; No! Who was he then? His answer was emphatic. He was but a voice, a preparer of the way of the Lord. Isaiah 40:3, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."* In their midst already stood One, not necessarily in the crowd at that moment, with whose greatness his was not to be compared. John the Baptist utterly eliminates himself before Christ. John 1:26-27, *John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."*

2.) Second Testimony, Christ and the Sin of the World: The day after the interview with the Jerusalem deputies, John saw Jesus coming to him, probably fresh from the temptation, and bore a second and wonderful testimony to His Messiahship. Identifying Jesus with the subject of his former testimonies, and stating the ground of his knowledge in the sign God had given him, he said: John 1:29, *The next day John (the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* The words are rich in suggestion regarding the character of Jesus, and the nature, universality and effectiveness of His work. 1 John 3:5 NIV, *But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.* The Lamb may point specifically to the description of the suffering servant of Yahweh. Isaiah 53:11, *He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.*

3.) Third Testimony, Christ and the Duty of the Disciple: The third testimony was borne, again on the next day, when John the Baptist was standing with two of his disciples, Andrew and John (the Apostle). Pointing to Jesus, John the Baptist repeated his former words: Behold, the Lamb of God. While the words are the same, the design was different. In the first, behold the idea is the recognition of Christ, however, there is a call to duty, a hint to follow Jesus in the second. On this hint the disciples immediately acted. It is next to be seen how this earliest following of Jesus grew.

## 2. The First Disciples.

a. Spiritual Awakening: The narrative of John the Apostle shows that Jesus gathered His disciples, less by a series of distinct calls, than by a process of spiritual awakening. Men were led to Him, then accepted by Him. This process of selection left Jesus at the close of the second day with five real and true followers. The history contradicts the idea that it was first toward the close of His ministry that Jesus became known to His disciples as the Messiah. In all the Gospels John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the Christ and the first disciples accepted and confessed Him as the Christ. John 1:41, *He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).*

1.) Andrew and John, Discipleship as the Fruit of Spiritual Conversation: The first of the group were Andrew and John the Apostle. These two followed Jesus in response to their Master's testimony. It was, however, the few hours' of discussion they had with Jesus where He was staying that actually caused them to decided to follow Him. John 1:38-39, *Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).* To Christ's question, "What do you seek?" their answer was practically, Thyself. The mention of the time, the 10th hour, or about 10 AM, is one of the small traits that mark John the Apostle. He is here looking back on the date of his own spiritual birth.

2.) Simon Peter, Discipleship a Result of Personal Testimony: John and Andrew had no sooner found Christ for themselves than they hastened to tell others of their discovery. Andrew at once sought out Simon, his brother, and brought him to Jesus. Christ's unerring eye read at once the quality of

the man whom Andrew introduced to Him. John 1:42, *And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).* Matthew 16:18, *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.* This statement made in Matthew 16:18 is not the original bestowal of this name to Simon, instead the confirmation of it. The name is the equivalent of Peter (Petros), and was given to Simon, not with any official connotation, but because of the strength and clearness of his convictions. His general steadfastness is not disproved by His one unhappy failure.

3.) Philip, The Result of a Friend's Testimony: The fourth disciple, Philip, was called by Jesus Himself. John 1:43, *The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."* Friendship may have had its influence on Philip because, like the foregoing, he also was from Bethsaida of Galilee. John 1:44, *Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.* These first four men who followed Christ were from the same fishing village on the Sea of Galilee. They had to know one another just by proximity.

4.) Nathanael, Discipleship as a Result of Soul Searching Power: Philip sought Nathanael. The name Nathanael is only found in the Gospel of John and in the other Gospels he is Bartholomew the Apostle. When found by Philip was told he had found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets had written. John 1:45, *Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."* Nathanael doubted, on the grounds that the Messiah was not likely to have His origin in an obscure place like Nazareth. John 1:46, *And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"* Philip's wise answer was, *"Come and see."* When Nathanael came, the Lord met him with a word that quickly rid him of his hesitations. First, Jesus attested His seeker's sincerity. John 1:47, *Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"* When Nathanael expressed surprise, Jesus revealed to him His knowledge of a recent secret act of meditation or devotion. John 1:48, *Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."* The sign was sufficient to convince Nathanael that he was in the presence of a superhuman, a fact or idea already shared with him by Philip. This man was the Messiah, therefore, the Christ, the Son of God, the King of Israel. John 1:49, *Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"* Jesus met his faith with further self-disclosure. Nathanael had believed on comparatively slight evidence. He would see greater things: heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. John 1:51, *And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."* The allusion is to Jacob's vision, a Scripture that had possibly been the theme of Nathanael's meditation in his privacy. Jesus puts Himself in the place of that mystic ladder as the medium of reopened communication between heaven and earth.

b. Son of Man and Son of God: The name Son of Man, a favorite designation of Jesus for Himself, appears here for the first time in the Gospels. It is disputed whether it was a current Messianic title, but at least it had this force on the lips of Jesus Himself, denoting Him as the possessor of a true humanity, and as standing in a representative relation to mankind universally. The higher title, Son of God, given to Jesus by Nathanael, could not, of course, as yet carry with it the transcendental associations of John's Prologue, but it evidently conveyed an idea of superhuman dignity and unique relation to God, such as the better class of minds would seem to have attributed to the Messiah.

3. The First Events. Time, that factor that man plays with to record things, and to break things into days, months and years. It is a blink of an eye to God and of itself is irrelevant. We have arrived at the

early events in the Messianic mission of Jesus. But what do we really know? We have no record of Christ's life between the ages of 12 and 30. Yet, we know He was tempted by everything mankind can face. Let's back up for a moment. I must make an admission and tell you I shall stand by a vision brought to me. We just recently covered material concerning the temptation of Jesus after His baptism. The first stage of temptation is distrust. The second is presumption and the third worldly viewpoints.

Here is my admission: I believe that Jesus was married and this marriage at Cana was His wedding. This was a story I didn't understand, and knocked on the door asking God to show me the answers. The Holy Spirit brought me a series of visions to illustrate the few words that are said in 10 verses of scripture. I will not allow Satan to come by and tell me that it could not have happened! That what I was shown could not be true. That is the first step in temptation to distrust. Second step is the presumption that I just dreamed this up and presume it to be from God. On the other hand I also have the worldly view from everyone telling me there is no verse in the Bible stating Jesus was married. That's true! However, at the same time there is no verse stating that Jesus wasn't married.

Time is another issue. If Jesus was baptized, spent 40 days in the wilderness and maybe 5 days at Bethsaida speaking to John the Baptist and gathering His first 5 apostles we are talking about 45- 50 days at the most. How and when did He meet someone to marry and how did they plan a wedding? I can't answer that straight out. I have to do it by faith and the statements made by the inspired people who wrote what the Holy Spirit led them to write.

Statements such as: God cannot lie! Jesus came in the volume of the book! Everything about Jesus was not recorded! Jesus was tempted by all things known to man! Jesus did not sin! I have to stand on what I received and place it here in print. Pray, ask God to show you the truth and read this with an open mind. If what is written here is wrong, it is I who must pay the price and not you! However, if what I record here is true, it is a revelation to you and you will be much better off in your understanding of God, of life and even of your mate if you are married. Praise God!

Let us consider one more viewpoint before we continue our study. Have you ever considered art to assist you in your learning of truth? Do you consider DaVinci's painting of *The Last Supper* to have any inspired value to understand Jesus' last meal with His disciples? Have you considered any of the classic masters of the Renaissance to be inspired by God to produce the illustrations we see in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican or in the countless museums around the world? If you answered yes to these two questions, I have one more to ask. Do you consider the statement given in Biblical text (**A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses**. Deut 19:15) to be a true statement for guidance? I must ask you what your answer is to this question. If you answered yes, I really must ask you to pray and ask God to open your mind to see a new viewpoint. Of course! The other answer may be no and there is no reason for you to read further. Your mind is already made up and additional information is not going to assist in changing your mind.

God must have understood that the wedding at Cana would be a controversial account for mankind to understand and accept. Therefore He did not give us two or three witnesses to establish His truth, He gave us seven witnesses! Here are those seven witnesses: (see note at end of the Bibliography, p 234)

- 1) Marriage at Cana by Giotto di Bondone painted in 1306
- 2) Marriage at Cana by Gerard David painted in 1500
- 3) Marriage at Cana by Jacopo Tintoretto painted 1561
- 4) The Wedding Feast at Cana by Paolo Veronese painted 1563
- 5) Marriage at Cana by Giorgio Vasari painted 1566
- 6) Marriage at Cana by Maerten de Vos painted 1596
- 7) The Wedding at Cana by Giovanni Paolo Panini painted 1725

There are several items that can be said and brought forth within these seven paintings. First, let us establish our three witnesses and use the paintings of Giotto di Bondone (1) above; Gerard David (2) above; and Paolo Veronese (4) above. Why these three? Simply because they clearly identify the bridegroom!



Marriage at Cana by Giotto di Bondone painted in 1306

Here is what I see in these paintings. In Giotto's painting you have three people with an aura around their head. I would say you are viewing Jesus, Joseph in the corner and Mary on the right side. The bride is the one in red seated next to Mary.



Marriage at Cana by Gerard David painted 1500

In David's painting I see two people with an aura around their head. Jesus is on the left at the head of the table and Mary is standing in what appears as holding her hands together as presenting a plea to do something about the wine situation. Once again the bride is in red at the center of the far side of the table. Notice something! Of all those seated at the table, all are women except Jesus (the bridegroom).



The Wedding Feast at Cana by Paolo Veronese painted 1563

In Veronese's painting the illustration is very simple. Jesus (the bridegroom) and His wife to be are seated at the center of the table and they are the only two with an aura around their head.

Here is another established fact. In all seven paintings the wedding feast is not being hosted at a poor man's house. This is a grand feast being hosted by a person of status who has many servants to perform and present such a feast. One other minor detail, did you notice the range of dates these seven paintings were completed? They were painted between 1306 and 1725. That's about 420 years that our forefathers were inspired to depict the wedding feast at Cana in the manner they are painted. Think about that! Now let us see what text we find in the Bible to support this viewpoint.

a. The First Miracle: How can anyone come up with an idea that Jesus was married? There's certainly nothing recorded in the Bible that directly says Jesus was married. Of course, the opposite statement is also true *there is no verse that directly states Jesus wasn't married*. How can I come to that conclusion? Well, let's ask another question. How did John record the Revelation and how did the churches in Asia understand what was meant? There are many who now claim the Revelation is not meant to be understood and declare there is too much mystery in the prophecy? I really must think differently or read a different Bible. I've come to understand that **if** you know the Old Testament, then you can see the mysteries revealed in the Revelation. All you have to do is substitute old, understood accounts in the Old Testament into the Revelation of Jesus as given to John. Why this thought? I've tried to get you to understand there was no need to record the historical, that isn't the purpose of the Bible. Normally, if you will search, there is a clue to follow, you can find a reference that will clarify the mystery presented in the Bible. So where can we even get a vague idea that it might be possible for Jesus to be married? Look in the book of John at the first miracle:

John 2:1 *On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.*

John 2:2 *Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.*

John 2:3 *And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."*

John 2:4 *Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."*

John 2:5 *His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."*

John 2:6 *Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.*

John 2:7 *Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.*

John 2:8 *And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.*

John 2:9 *When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.*

John 2:10 *And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"*

Let's go through this one verse at a time and see what clues are given. I could easily say this wedding took place on Tuesday. Doesn't it say, *on the third day*? If Sunday is the first day of the week, Monday would be the second day, and Tuesday would be the third day. However, that would be taking things completely out of context and it makes a false statement. If you read the account of John pertaining to Jesus, you have the record of His baptism on a certain day. The next verse starts the numbering of days and I believe this is after Jesus spent the forty days in the wilderness and was tempted by the devil. On the first day of this record, there is the decision by John, Andrew and Simon (Peter) to follow Jesus. On the second day, Philip and Nathanael (Bartholomew) also follow and on the third day was this wedding in Cana. Now, where did Jesus' family live? Wasn't it in Galilee? But in what village? How about the village of **Cana**? Notice the rest of the first verse. It says *the mother of Jesus was there*. Quickly read the second verse, but let's not get into a discussion of verse two specifically at this time. Notice it does not invite Mary to the wedding, but it says *she is there*. Let's look at any modern day celebration we recall and explain the reason someone would attend when they were not invited. The only way I can consider this could work is if you are the host or hostess giving the celebration. You will be there, though you do not invite yourself. Well! Isn't that true?

Look at the wording in verse two. *Jesus and his disciples are invited*. Go back to Luke where we observed the naming of the twelve apostles and read the previous verse in Luke 6:13 NIV, *When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated as apostles*. It seems to me there were certainly more than just the five apostles named in chapter 1 of the Gospel of John at this wedding. What better way to get the friends and followers of the groom to attend than to state in the invitation that the groom and followers are invited. Isn't that what it says, in different words, that Jesus and his disciples were invited. I recall a pastor friend of mine who read this, he had great problems with what I'm proposing here. His question was, "Why would there be a need to invite Jesus if this was His wedding?" Well, that does make sense, doesn't it? However, consider this: I am not proposing this to destroy your ideas, nor faith. I'm addressing these issues to get you to read, to think, and to understand God's word better. Look again at the culture of which we are speaking. There was no television in Jesus' day, you couldn't send to Office Max or Staples and have 300 copies of invitations run off on the copy machine, nor could you go to the post office and ask for special love stamps for the envelopes. Look at the social media of the time and we have Facebook, Twitter and email moving at the speed of light. Make one miscalculation on Facebook and you could end up with hundreds of unexpected people to show up at a party. Again, at that time, if you invited the head of the group, and also included his followers, you invited all by word of mouth. Look at a wedding announcement placed in a church bulletin. Doesn't that one invitation invite every member of the church? You didn't have to send all those extra invitations to accomplish the objective, did you? Neither did this! The one invitation, stated as it was, invited all the

disciples. I think there is one major point continually overlooked. Take the entire New Testament and explain which book was not written by someone who was a Jew first, Christian later. What did they know from the old ways, the Old Covenant, that we have overlooked, set aside or didn't even know in the first place? Let's continue.

Verse three holds a major clue. Look at the wording that reads, *the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."* I think the wording is not to indicate the host of the party has no wine. I think the wording is that the multitude of disciples do not have any wine. But, even more importantly, why would Mary bring such information to Jesus? Surely, Mary is not being a busybody and letting her Son know the host has put together a poor party and she is criticizing the host. I again, just don't think so. She is the hostess and she is letting Jesus know that there is a problem and something needs to be done.

Verse four almost stings with male chauvinism. Jesus says, *"Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."* God really does have a sense of humor. Here is God in the flesh attending His wedding, and while His mother is telling Him one thing, He is telling her something completely different. It seems Mary is worried about the earthly realm and Jesus is worried about the spiritual realm. Mary wants a problem solved, while Jesus, on the other hand, doesn't see the problem as His mother does and replies that the things of His ministry are not yet ready to begin. So how is this resolved? Read the next two verses.

Mary does not reply to Jesus, instead she replies to the servants, *"Whatever He says to you, do it."* Let's get things straight! There are three important points to be made in this verse. Mary is giving the orders, this is her house, and she's in charge. If that isn't true, think about this: You are having a party, one of your guests suddenly starts giving orders to your servants, your servants are looking around like they are confused, and you're getting ticked off. Right? Did you read anything indicating this happened? No! Therefore, Mary is at home. Joseph and Mary had servants, and they lived in a larger home. It seems this must be. How else would you hold a party for all the disciples and why would you need servants? Something else has to be said. This is a parent speaking to her Son. She is well aware of what He can or can't do, and has presented Him with a problem. Mary expects a solution! We have to read verse seven for our final input pertaining to this verse.

How many waterpots are there in verse six? How much liquid volume did they hold? Simple math will tell you there is between one hundred twenty to one hundred eighty gallons of liquid storage area. I really want to ask a question. When was the last time you were at a party where the consumption of wine was between 120-180 gallons (remember this party had been going on for some time so there was even more wine than this that was consumed)? Again, I'm going to state that Joseph and Mary lived in a large house. Consider that these waterpots were there for the storage of water for household use, or as stated *"..., according to the manner of purification of the Jews, ..."* These six waterpots were probably a day's, maybe two day's, supply of water for this purpose. There was a well nearby. I know you just stopped reading and started wondering where did I get that bit of news? Simple, it comes from the next verse.

Verse seven tells two important things. First, it completes the solution to the problem presented in verse five. It shows in this verse respect for the parent is a part of Jesus' life. Mother had presented a problem and Son was to find a solution. Secondly, look at what Jesus said to the servants, *"Fill the waterpots with water."* They filled them to the brim. How would you accomplish this if they didn't have a nearby well? I'd even say it was their own well and not the village well. I say this because of the nature of mankind. If they had gone to the village well to get 120-180 gallons of water, someone would have been complaining and raising all kinds of fuss. Since there were no fights, the well was probably their own, and no one would care what was done with their own water. Let's use another illustration. If men had a cross

piece over their shoulders and they had a five gallon bucket on each side, that would be ten gallons of water per man to carry. It would still take 12 to 18 men to do this in one trip and each would be carrying over eighty pounds in weight (the weight of ten gallons of water would equal roughly eighty pounds). How far would you expect them to carry the water? Remember these are servants and they have been given orders to fill those six waterpots. They are expected to do this quickly so the party may continue. It can't be two or three hours for these men to go to the village to get the water. Simple conclusion, they had their own well.

Verse eight gives another reference to the importance of a voice command. Jesus said to them, *“Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.”* The servant took it to the master of the feast. Proverbs tells us life and death rests within the power of the tongue. Jesus cursed a fig tree and it withered and died. Here Jesus makes the simple voice command to the servants and the result has already happened. The water changed to wine when he said *now*.

Verse nine gives us another major clue to this mystery. There isn't a verse in the Bible identifying when Joseph died. I'd be willing to say because of this verse, Joseph was very much alive for this moment. To those who have traveled to the Middle East and have seen a village wedding, you know these things go on for days, up to about a week. The host for the wedding party is either one of three people: the father of the groom, the uncle (only on the father's side) of the groom, or the groom. The reason the uncle and groom are shown is because the father has died. The uncle is shown and will take this responsibility if this is his brother's son and the son does not have enough money to have the party. The primary two people who will host this party are the father of the groom, or the groom. Now since Jesus was invited, he did not host the party. You got it, the master of the feast is Joseph. Now look at the last portion of the verse that says, *“the master of the feast called the bridegroom.”* Remember, the only one who could tell the master of the feast who produced the wine was the servant who served the wine as commanded by Jesus to do so in verse 8. Yet, the Master of the Feast went to the bridegroom. Verse ten gives the last important clue. The master of the feast is telling this to the bridegroom, *“Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!”* Two questions. Who produced the wine? To whom is the master of the feast talking? Jesus made the wine and the master of the feast is talking to the bridegroom. Now, it would seem the master of the feast is talking to someone other than Jesus, however, let's remember who would be hosting a ceremony such as this. Wouldn't this wording also fit if it was the father talking to the son who was sharing the hosting duties of the party? Wouldn't the sentence saying, *“You have kept the good wine until now!”* still be correct? Here's my conclusion. This is Jesus' wedding and the name of the bride is Mary Magdalene. I know you want to know how I got this name as the wife. Go to the following verses to see the identification of various women named Mary: Matthew 27:56; Matthew 27:61; Matthew 28:1; Mark 15:40; Mark 15:47; Mark 16:1 and Luke 24:10. Now add these verses:

John 19:25, *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.*

John 20:1, *Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.*

John 20:11, *But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb.*

John 20:16, *Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher).*

John 20:18, *Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.*



I want you to observe one thing. In every verse, except John 19:25, Mary Magdalene's name is placed before Mary, Jesus' mother, by all four Gospel writers. Now why would this be done? Ask any man if he will give the name of his wife before he gives the name of his mother in an introduction, unless the circumstances make it necessary to name the mother first, as in John 19:25. What makes John 19:25 different? You have to put John 19:25-27 together. These are the verses that put the care of Mary (the mother) into the responsibility of the Apostle John. Therefore, you would direct the statement with the mother being identified first and the others following. Now, you ask if all this is true, what happened to Mary Magdalene after the crucifixion and why isn't she mentioned again? No need to, her part had been played and we continue. Okay, look at this slightly differently. How many times is Mary, Jesus' mother, identified after the crucifixion in the New Testament? If you accept my analysis, the answer is twice: Acts 1:14 and Romans 16:6. If you accept the answer of many others it is only once: Acts 1:14. The point is, as far as the Bible was concerned, the part had been played by both women. It was not necessary to mention them again. Never the less, it doesn't change history, nor does it wipe them from the face of the earth. Things just went on as they were intended.

Now you have Jesus' mother and his wife with him on his travels. You have Jesus' mother and wife in Jerusalem for Passover. You have Jesus' mother and wife at the tomb. You have Jesus' wife telling the apostles the tomb is empty.

Does this really change any belief about Jesus? NO! If anything, this shows in the following verse, to me, the love God the father has for his creation.

John 21:25, *And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.*

Hebrews 4:15, *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

John 2:11-12, *This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.* We see the results of this sign in two ways: the glory of Jesus, and the faith of the disciples. *After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.* There are several things we need to ask about this verse. It says Jesus, His mother, His brothers and His disciples went to Capernaum. Where did they stay? Who paid the bills for this group? If we combine what we know, we can say there are at least 14 people in this group. The party would include (1) Jesus, (2) Mary Magdalene (3) Mary, (4 thru 7) are Jesus' brothers: James, Joseph, Jude, and Simon, (8 and 9) are Jesus' sisters. We know these sisters are not mentioned here and you're going to tell me the rest of the family is gone, and therefore, the sisters are left at home by themselves. I don't think so! (10) Peter, (11) Andrew, (12) John (13) Philip, and (14) Nathanael.

This list above gives a total of 14 people as the minimum number in the group. In addition, I could add Joseph to this list. Remember there is no verse telling us when Joseph died, and that would bring this group count to 15. I say minimum because of something we have skipped. So for the moment let us go back to a statement made in verses 2 and 3 of the second chapter. For illustration these verses are from the KJV: *And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, they have no wine.* Look at verse 3a. Who is the *they* of this verse. If we go backward, it would seem that the *they* are the disciples of Jesus.

If we only have five disciples and skip forward to verse 6, I have a question. Why would five men (the only five so far named) need to have 120 to 180 gallons of wine, the amount indicated by the size of the water pots in verse 6? The more serious question is how many people actually went to Capernaum? I

could easily say all twelve Apostles were there. I could even go so far as to say many followers of Jesus were there. The questions could then become: Where did you find rooms for fifty to one hundred people to stay in Capernaum? Who paid for the several days stay of this group? Once again, we do not have every detail pertaining to the life of Jesus recorded in the Bible. We believe by **faith!**

Let us go back to the original 14 identified above and answer a question. Customs in the Middle East are such that whoever invites the others is paying the bills. By the order of the arrangement of people in verse 12, one could safely say there are at least eight people from one family in this group. I would be willing to say it was Jesus and/or his family who paid for this trip to Capernaum.

Now, doesn't that go against the traditions that we have heard concerning Jesus? Haven't we been told repeatedly Jesus was from a poor family and He, Himself, was a poor man? Wouldn't the invitation to the marriage at Cana and the trip to Capernaum indicate Jesus and his family had means and were among the elite in the Galilee region? We seem to forget the lineage Matthew records for Christ in his gospel. That lineage indicates Joseph is of the royal lineage of Israel, or the throne of King David. Ask yourself this: Would the royal line of Israel convey poor people?

I indicated above that the marriage in Cana was around the beginning of April. The answer to prove this is in verse 13 and, yet, it seems to be hidden from view. Look at what is recorded, *When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* Verse 12 shows Jesus is in Capernaum for a few days and verse 13 tells us the next event to take place. Old Testament teachings concerning the Hebrew festivals tell you Passover is the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April. We read in Luke 2:41 *Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover every year.* While we see Jesus with his parents, there is no reason to say the rest of the family is not in Jerusalem. This verse from Luke gives additional support to the statement above concerning the means of Jesus' family. Now could they afford to travel to Jerusalem every year if they were as poor as tradition would lead us to believe? There is another question hidden in this statement. Aren't we taught God will meet our needs? If we all lived in a communal state, we could possibly say everyone had the same needs. However, we do not live in such a condition, and neither did Jesus. It is a true fact that people have different needs. The indications of text itself shows Jesus' family had means and there is nothing to indicate God did not meet the needs of this family. To say otherwise is complete foolishness. In John, we have Jesus as an adult going to Jerusalem in the first year of His public ministry. Next we will see what happens in the rest of chapter two.

b. The First Passover, and Cleansing of the Temple: A like incident is related by the Synoptics at the close of Christ's ministry, and it is a question whether the act was actually repeated, or whether the other evangelists, who do not narrate the events of the early ministry, simply record it out of its chronological order. In any case, the act was a fitting inauguration of Jesus' work. A regular market was held in the outer court of the temple. Here the animals needed for sacrifice could be purchased, foreign money exchanged, and the doves obtained, that were the offerings of the poor. It was a busy, noisy and unholy scene, and the zeal of Jesus burned within Him, as He witnessed it as He had doubtless often done so before. Arming Himself with a whip of cords, less as a weapon of offence, than as a symbol of authority, He descended with resistless energy upon the wrangling throng, drove out the dealers and the cattle, overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and commanded the doves to be taken away. Let them not profane His Father's house. John 2:14-16, *And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"* No one seems to have opposed. All felt that a prophet was among them, and could not resist the overpowering authority with which He spake and acted. By and by, when

their courage revived, they asked Him for a sign in evidence of His right to do such things. Jesus gave them no sign such as they demanded, but uttered a cryptic statement, and left them to reflect on it: John 2:19, *Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* The authenticity of the saying is sufficiently vouched for by the perverted use made of it at Christ's trial. Matthew 26:60-61, *But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'"* It is a statement based on the foresight that Christ had that the conflict now commencing was to end in His rejection and death. "The true way to destroy the Temple, in the eyes of Jesus, was to slay the Messiah. . . . If it is in the person of the Messiah that the Temple is laid in ruins, it is in His person it shall be raised again" (Godet<sup>128</sup>). The disciples, after the resurrection, saw the meaning of the statement. John 2:22, *Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.*

c. The Visit of Nicodemus: As a sequel to these stirring events Jesus had a nocturnal visitor in the person of Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, a teacher of Israel. John 3:2, *This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."* His coming by night shows that he had been really impressed by Christ's words and works, however there was a fear of being seen by another member of the Sanhedrin. The interesting thing is that he did come! One recognizes in him a man of candor and uprightness of spirit, yet without adequate apprehensions of Christ Himself, and of the nature of Christ's kingdom. Jesus he was prepared to acknowledge as a Divinely commissioned teacher, one whose mission was accredited by authority. He was interested in the kingdom, but, as a morally living man, had no doubt of his fitness to enter into it. Jesus had but to teach and he would understand. Yet, Jesus' answer to Nicodemus was not reassuring to him. John 3:3, *Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

1.) The New Birth. Jesus in His reply laid His finger at once on the defective point in His visitor's relation to Himself and to His kingdom: *"Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* John 3:5, *Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."* Nicodemus was staggered at this demand for a spiritual new birth. His response to the first answer of Jesus (verse 3 above) caused him to make the statement in verse 4 and Jesus' reply is in verse 5. John 3:4, *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?"* There is reason to believe that proselytes were baptized on being received into the Jewish church, and their baptism was called a new birth. Nicodemus would therefore be familiar with the expression, but could not see that it had any applicability to him. Jesus teaches him, on the other hand, that he also needs a new birth, and this, not through water only, but through the Spirit. The change was mysterious, yet plainly manifest in its effects. John 3:7-8, *"Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."* If Nicodemus did not understand these earthly things, the evidence of which lay all around him, how should he understand heavenly things, the things pertaining to salvation?

2.) Heavenly Things. These heavenly things Jesus now proceeds to unfold to Nicodemus: John 3:14, *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."* The lifting up is a prophecy of the cross. The brazen serpent is the symbol of sin conquered and destroyed by the death of Christ. What follows in John 3:16-21 is probably the evangelist's expansion of

<sup>128</sup> Frederic Louis Godet, 1812-1900, *Commentary on the Gospel of John: with an Historical and Critical Introduction* (1886) New York: Funk & Wagnalls

this theme, God's love is the source of salvation. John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* God's purpose is not the world's condemnation, but its salvation. John 3:17-18, *"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* Achieved through the self-judgment of sin. John 3:19-21, *"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."*

d. Jesus and John the Baptist: Retiring from Jerusalem, Jesus commenced a ministry in Judea. John 3:22, *After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized.* It lasted apparently about 6 months. The earlier Gospels pass over it. This is accounted for by the fact that the ministry in Judea was still preparatory. Jesus had publicly asserted His Messianic authority. A little space is now allowed to test the result. Meanwhile Jesus descends again to the work of prophetic preparation. His ministry at this stage is hardly distinguishable from that of John the Baptist. He summons to the baptism of repentance. His disciples, not Jesus, administer the rite. John 4:2 NIV, *Although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.* Hence there was a sort of rivalry that sprang up between His baptism and that of the forerunner. John the Baptist was baptizing at the time at Aenon, on the western side of the Jordan, Jesus was somewhere in the neighborhood. Soon the greater teacher began to dominate the lesser. John 3:26, *And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!"* John's reply showed how pure his mind was from the narrow, grudging spirit that characterized his followers. To him it was no grievance, but the fulfilment of his joy, that men should be flocking to Jesus. He was not the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom. They themselves had heard him testify, I am not the Christ. It lay in the nature of things that Jesus must increase, he must decrease. John 3:27-30, *John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but, I have been sent before Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease."* Explanatory words follow. John 3:31-36, *"He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."*

#### 4. Journey to Galilee, the Woman of Samaria.

a. Withdrawal to Galilee: Toward the close of this Judean ministry John the Baptist appears to have been cast into prison for his faithfulness in reproofing Herod Antipas for taking his brother Philip's wife. Matthew 14:3-5, *For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.* It seems most natural to connect the departure to Galilee in John 4:3 with that narrated in Matthew 3:13, though some think the imprisonment of John the Baptist did not take place until

later. The motive John the Apostle gives was the hostility of the Pharisees, but it was the imprisonment of John the Baptist that led Jesus to commence an independent ministry at the time He did. The direct road to Galilee lay through Samaria, hence the memorable encounter with the woman at the well.

b. The Living Water: Jesus, being wearied, paused to rest Himself at Jacob's well, near a town called Sychar, now Askar. It was about the sixth hour, or 6 o'clock in the evening. It suits the evening hour that the woman of Samaria came out to draw water. Jesus opened the conversation by asking the woman for a drink from her pitcher. The proverbial hatred between Jews and Samaritans filled the woman with surprise that Jesus should thus address Himself to her. Still greater was her surprise when, as the conversation proceeded, Jesus announced Himself as the giver of a water which, if a person drank, he should never thirst again. John 4:13-14, *Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."* Only gradually did His meaning penetrate her mind. John 4:15, *The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."* The request of Jesus that she should call her husband led to the discovery that Jesus knew all the secrets of her life. She was talking with a prophet. John 4:19, *The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."* As in the case of Nathanael, the soul searching power of Christ's words of truth convinced her of His divine nature.

c. The True Worship: The conversation next turned a discussion of the right place of worship. The Samaritans had a temple of their own on Mount Gerizim. The Jews, on the other hand, held to the exclusive validity of the temple at Jerusalem. Which was the correct place for worship? Jesus in His reply, while pronouncing the Jews as the custodians of God's salvation, makes it clear that distinction of places is no longer a matter of any practical importance. A change was imminent that would substitute universal worship in lieu of worship at special times and places. John 4:20-24, *Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* Jesus explains the great principle of the new dispensation that God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth. Finally, when she spoke of the Messiah, Jesus made Himself definitely known to her as the Christ. To this poor Samaritan woman, with her receptive heart, He unveils Himself more plainly than He had done to priests and rulers. John 4:25-26, *The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."*

*Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." (Jesus only revealed himself in this manner to two people, this woman and the blind man healed in John 9:37.)*

d. Work Has Its Reward: The woman went home and became an evangelist to her people, with notable results. John 4:28, 39, *The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men. . . . And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."* Jesus abode with them two days and confirmed the impression made by her testimony.

John 4:40-42, *So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."*

Meanwhile, He impressed on His disciples the need of earnest sowing and reaping in the service of the Kingdom, assuring them of unfailing reward for both sower and reaper. John 4:35-38, *“Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.”* He Himself was their great example. John 4:34, *Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”*

### C. The Galilean Ministry and Visits to the Feasts

1. The Scene: Galilee was divided into upper Galilee and lower Galilee. It has already been remarked that upper Galilee was inhabited by a mixed population, called Galilee of the Gentiles. Matthew 4:15, *“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.”* The highroads of commerce ran through it. It was a scene of constant traffic. The people were rude, ignorant, and superstitious, and densely crowded together in towns and villages. About 160 BCE there were only a few Jews in the midst of a large heathen population, however by the time of Christ the Jewish element had greatly increased. The busiest portion of this district was around the Sea of Galilee, at the Northeast corner of where wealthy and cosmopolitan Capernaum stood. In Nazareth, indeed, Jesus met with a disappointing reception. Matthew 13:54-57, *And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?” So they were offended at Him.*

*But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.”* Yet in Galilee generally, He found a freer spirit and greater receptiveness than among the stricter traditionalists of Judea.

2. The Time: We are still in the first year of Jesus’ ministry, the year of inauguration. Jesus has been in Judea after the first Passover and is now returned to Galilee. We left Jesus and the disciples in Samaria and need to pick up from that point. We can say that a division of the Galilean ministry may then be made into two periods, one preceding, the other succeeding the mission of the twelve in Matthew 10. One reason for this division is that after the mission of the twelve the order of events is the same in the first three Gospels until the final departure from Galilee.

a. First Period, from the Beginning of the Ministry in Galilee until the Mission of the Twelve

1.) Opening Incidents:

a.) Healing of the Nobleman’s Son: From sympathetic Samaria, Jesus had journeyed to unsympathetic Galilee, and first to Cana, where His first miracle had been performed. The reports of His miracles in Judea had come before Him. John 4:45, *So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.* Jesus’ reputation as a miracle worker led a certain nobleman, a courtier or officer at Herod’s court, to seek Jesus at Cana on behalf of his son who was near death. John 4:46-47, *So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.*

Jesus rebuked the sign seeking spirit at first, but, on the fervent appeal being repeated, Jesus relented. John 4:48-49, *Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will*

*by no means believe.” The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!” He told the nobleman to go his way: his son lived. The man’s prayer had been, Come down, but he had faith to receive the word of Jesus. John 4:50, *Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.* On his way home the nobleman received tidings of his son’s recovery. The nobleman, with his whole household, was won for Jesus. John 4:53, *So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole household.* This is noted as the second of Christ’s Galilean miracles. John 4:54, *This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.**

b.) The Visit to Nazareth: A very different reception awaited Him at Nazareth, *His own country*, to where He next went. We can scarcely take the incident recorded in Luke to be the same as that in Matthew, but we will view both. Luke 4:16-30, *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.*

*And they said, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”*

*He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.’” Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.*

Matthew 13:54-58, *And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?” So they were offended at Him.*

*But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.” Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.* Through Matthew’s habit of grouping his thoughts we understand that these two records may, in fact, be the same event. We know the Sabbath had come, and on Jesus entering the synagogue, as was His custom, the reputation He had could lead to His being asked to read. The Scripture He selected was Isaiah 61:1. The fact that Jesus was able to read from the synagogue scroll is interesting as He had to have a knowledge of Hebrew. From this He proceeded to amaze His hearers by declaring that this Scripture was now fulfilled in their ears. The words of grace he uttered are not given, but it can be understood that, following the prophet’s guidance, He would hold Himself forth as the predicted Servant of Yahweh, sent to bring salvation to the poor, the

bound, the broken-hearted, and for this purpose endowed with the fulness of the Spirit.

The idea of the passage in Isaiah is that of the year of jubilee, when debts were canceled, inheritances restored, and slaves set free. Jesus told them He had come to inaugurate that acceptable year of the Lord. At first He was listened to with admiration, then, as the magnitude of the claims He was making became apparent to His audience, a very different spirit took possession of them. *Who was this that spoke thus? Was it not Joseph's son?* They were disappointed, too, that Jesus showed no disposition to gratify them by working before them any of the miracles that they had heard about so much. Jesus saw the gathering storm, but met it resolutely. He told His hearers He had not expected any better reception. In reply to their reproach He told them He had performed miracles elsewhere, but had done none among them because of their unbelief. Jesus quoted examples of prophets who had done the same thing: Elijah, Elisha. This completed the fury of the Nazarenes, who, springing forward, dragged Jesus to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, and would have thrown Him down, had something in the aspect of Jesus not restrained them. With one of those looks we read of occasionally in the Gospels, He seems to have astonished His townsmen, and we are told He passed safely through their midst, and left the place.

c.) Call of the Four Disciples: After leaving Nazareth Jesus made His way to Capernaum, which seems to have been His Galilean headquarters. Matthew 4:13 informs us that Jesus dwelt there and in Matthew 9:1, Capernaum was called His own city. Before teaching in Capernaum itself, however, He appears to have opened His ministry by evangelizing along the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Matthew 4:18, *And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.* Mark 1:16, *And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.* Luke 5:1, *So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret.* (Other references indicate this is the Sea of Galilee.) There, at Bethsaida Jesus took His first step in gathering some of His disciples to be His chosen Apostles who would be more closely associated with Him. Hitherto, though attached to His person and cause, specifically the pairs of fisher brothers, Simon and Andrew, James and John, these last the sons of Zebedee, had not been in constant attendance with Him. Since the return from Jerusalem, they had gone back to their ordinary vocation of fishers. The four were partners in their fishing business. Luke 5:10, *and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. . . .* They had hired servants, therefore were moderately well off. Mark 1:20, *And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.* If we can find these clues pertaining to the early disciples as a record of Jesus' early first year ministry what else might be said about the beginning of Jesus' ministry and about the first miracle at Cana? We know that the time had now come when they were to leave all, and follow Jesus entirely.

(1) The Catch of Fishes: Luke alone records the striking miracle that led to the call. Jesus had been teaching the multitude from a boat borrowed from Simon, and now at the close He bade Simon put out into the deep, and let down his nets. Peter told Jesus they had toiled all night in vain, but he would obey His word. The result was an immense catch of fishes, so that the nets were breaking, and the other company had to be called upon for help. Both boats were filled and in danger of sinking. Peter's cry in so wonderful a presence was, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Luke 5:1-9, *So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless*



*at Your word I will let down the net.” And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken.*

(2) Fishers of Men: The miracle gave Jesus opportunity for the word He wished to speak. It is here that Matthew and Mark take up the story. The boats had been brought to shore when, first to Simon and Andrew, afterward to James and John engaged in mending their nets, the call was given. Matthew 4:18-22, *And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” They immediately left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.* Mark 1:16-20, *And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” They immediately left their nets and followed Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.* At once all was left, boats, nets, friends and they followed Jesus. Their experience taught them to have large expectations from Christ.

d.) At Capernaum: Jesus is now found in Capernaum. Matthew 4:17, *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”* An early Sabbath, perhaps the first of His stated residence in the city, and it was marked by notable events. The Sabbath found Jesus as usual in the synagogue, as teacher. Luke 4:31-32, *Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.* The manner of His teaching is specially noticed: Mark 1:22, *And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.* The scribes gave forth nothing of their own.

(1) Christ’s Teaching: They repeated the opinion of the great authorities of the past. It was a surprise to the people to find in Jesus, One whose wisdom, like waters from a clear fountain, came fresh and sparkling from His own lips. The authority also with which Jesus spoke commanded attention. He sought support in the opinion of no others, but gave forth His statements with firmness, decision, dignity and emphasis.

(2) The Demoniac in the Synagogue: While Jesus was teaching an extraordinary incident occurred. A man in the assembly, described as possessed by an unclean spirit, broke forth in cries. Mark 1:23, *Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out.* Luke 4:33, *Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice.* This man addressed Jesus and spoke as follows: Mark 1:24-26, *Saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.* Luke 4:34-35, *Saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out*

*of him and did not hurt him.* The diseased consciousness of the sufferer bore a truer testimony to Christ's dignity, holiness and power than most of those present could have given, and instinctively, but truly, construed His coming as meaning destruction to the empire of the demons. At Christ's word, after a terrible convulsion, from which, however, the man escaped unhurt, the demon was cast out. More than ever the people were amazed at the word that had such authority. Mark 1:27-28, *Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."* And immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee. Luke 4:36-37, *Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out."* And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

(a) Demon Possession, Its Reality: This is the place to say a word on this terrible form of malady, demon possession, met with so often in the Gospels. Was it a reality? Or a hallucination? Did Jesus believe in it? It is difficult to read the Gospels, and not answer the last question in the affirmative. Was Jesus, then, mistaken? This also is hard to believe. If there is one subject on which Jesus might be expected to have clear vision, where we might trust His insight, it was His relation to the spiritual world with which He stood in so close a rapport. Was He likely then to be mistaken when He spoke so earnestly, so profoundly, so frequently, of its hidden forces of evil? There is in itself no improbability, rather analogy suggests the highest probability, of realms of spiritual existence outside our sensible understanding. That evil should enter this spiritual world, and human life be deeply implicated with that evil, that its forces should have a mind and will organizing and directing them, are not beliefs to be dismissed with scorn. The presence of such beliefs in the time of Christ is commonly attributed to Babylonian, Persian or other foreign influences. It may be questioned, however, whether the main cause was not something far more real, perhaps an actual and permitted hour and the power of darkness in the kingdom of evil. Luke 22:53, *"When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."* Could evil discover itself as manifestations in the bodies and souls of men, that could be traced only to a supernatural cause. It should be noted that all diseases are not, as is sometimes affirmed, traced to demonic influence. The distinction between other diseases and demonic possession is clearly maintained. Matthew 4:24, *Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.* Insanity, epilepsy, blindness, dumbness, and other maladies, were frequent accompaniments of possession, but they are not identified with it.

(3) Peter's Mother-in-Law: Jesus, on leaving the synagogue, entered the house of Peter. In Mark it is called the house of Simon and Andrew. Mark 1:29, *Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.* Peter was married, and apparently his mother-in-law and brother lived with him in Capernaum. Paul confirms that Peter was married, along with others. 1 Corinthians 9:5, *Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?* It was an anxious time in the household, for the mother-in-law lay sick of a fever, a great fever, as Luke the physician calls it. Taking her by the hand, Jesus rebuked the fever, that instantaneously left her. The miracle, indeed, was a double one, for not only was the fever removed, but strength was at once restored. Luke 4:39, *So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.*

(4) The Eventful Evening: The day's labors were not yet done, they were, indeed, just beginning. The news of what had taken place quickly spread, and soon the extraordinary spectacle was presented of the whole city gathered at the door of the dwelling, bringing their sick of every kind to be healed. Demoniacs were there, crying and being rebuked, but multitudes of others as well. The Lord's

compassion was unbounded. He rejected none. He labored tirelessly until everyone was healed. Matthew 8:16, *When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick.* Mark 1:32-34, *At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.* Luke 4:41, *And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.* His sympathy was individual. Luke 4:40, *When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.*


2.) From First Galilean Circuit until the Choice of the Apostles. The chronological order in this section is to be found in Mark and Luke, with some from Matthew to convey instructional or informational purposes.

a.) The First Circuit: The morning after that eventful Sabbath evening in Capernaum, Jesus took steps for a systematic visitation of the towns and villages of Galilee. The task He set before Himself was prepared by early, prolonged and solitary prayer. Mark 1:35-37, *Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him. When they found Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You."*

Luke 4:42-44, *Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.* There are many instances that show much of Christ's life was steeped in prayer. His disciples followed Him, and reported that the multitudes sought Him. Jesus intimated to them His intention of passing to the next towns, and right away began a tour of preaching and healing throughout all Galilee. Mark 1:38-39, *But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.*

(1) Its Scope: Even if the expression all Galilee is used with some latitude, it indicates a very extensive work. It was a work likewise methodically conducted. Mark 6:6, *And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.* Jesus went round about the villages, literally, in a circle. Galilee at this time was extraordinarily populous (Josephus<sup>129</sup>), and the time occupied by the circuit must have been considerable. Matthew's condensed picture shows that Christ's activity during this period was incredibly great. Matthew 4:23-24, *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demonpossessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.* He stirred the province to its depths. His preaching and miracles drew enormous crowds after Him. Matthew 4:25, *Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.* This tide of popularity afterward turned, but much of the seed sown may have produced fruit at a later day.

<sup>129</sup> Titus Flavius Josephus, op. cit., *Wars of the Jews*, III, iii, 2.



(2) Cure of the Leper: The one incident recorded that seems to have belonged to this tour was a sufficiently typical one. While Jesus was in a certain city a man full of leprosy came and threw himself down before Him, seeking to be healed. Luke 5:12, *And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."* The man did not even ask Jesus to heal him, but expressed his faith, *"Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."* The man's apparent shamelessness was the very essence of his overly persistent request. Jesus, moved by his earnestness, touched him, and the man was made whole on the spot. The leper was cautioned to keep silence, Jesus did not wish to pass for a mere miracle worker, and instructed the man to show himself to the priests and offer the appointed sacrifices (note Christ's respect for the legal institutions). The leper failed to keep Christ's charge, and announced his cure all around, no doubt much to his own spiritual detriment, and also to the hindrance of Christ's work. Mark 1:45, *However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.*

b.) Capernaum Incidents: His circuit ended, and Jesus returned to Capernaum literally, after days. Mark 2:1, *And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.* Here again His fame at once drew multitudes to see and hear Him. Mark 2:2, *Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.* Among them were now persons of a more unfriendly spirit. Pharisees and lawyers, learning of the new rabbi, had come out of every village of Galilee, Judea and Jerusalem, to hear and judge of Him for themselves. Luke 5:17, *Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.* The chief incidents of this visit are the two now to be noted.

(1) Cure of the Paralytic: Jesus performed the cure upon the paralytic man in a room crowded until there was no space even to stand, not even near the door. The scene was a dramatic one. From Christ's words son, literally, child, we infer that the paralytic was young, but his affliction seems to have been complete. Mark 2:5, . . . *"Son, your sins are forgiven you."* It was no easy matter, with the doorways blocked, to get the man brought to Jesus, but his four litter carriers were not easily daunted. Mark 2:3 NIV, *Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them.* They climbed to the flat roof, and, removing part of the covering above where Jesus was and let down the man into the midst to Jesus. Jesus, pleased with the inventiveness and perseverance of their faith, responded to their wish. But, first, that the spiritual and temporal might be set in their right relations, and the attitude of His hearers be tested, He spoke the higher words: *"Son, your sins are forgiven you."* At once the temper of the scribes was revealed. Here was bold evasion of the law. Anyone could say, *"your sins are forgiven."* Worse, it was blasphemy, for "who can forgive sins but one, even God?" Mark 2:7, *"Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"* Unconsciously they were conceding to Christ the Divine dignity He claimed. Jesus perceives at once the thoughts of the scribes, and proceeds to expose their malice. Accepting their own test, He proves His right to say, *"your sins are forgiven."* Jesus proclaimed the following. Mark 2:8-12a, *But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all. . . .*

The multitude was amazed and glorified God. Mark 2:12b, . . . *so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"*

(2) Call and Feast of Matthew: The call of Matthew apparently took place shortly after the cure of the paralytic man. The feast was possibly later, but the call and the feast are best taken together, as they are in all the three narratives.

(a) The Call: Matthew is called Levi by Luke, and Levi, the son of Alphaeus by Mark. He was a tax collector by occupation. A collector of custom dues in Capernaum, an important center of traffic. There is no reason to suppose that Matthew was not a man of thorough uprightness, though naturally the class to which he belonged was held in great disfavor by the Jews. Jesus called Matthew to follow Him as He passed the place of toll on His way to or from the lakeside. The tax collector must by this time have seen and heard much of Jesus, and could not but keenly feel His grace in calling one whom men despised. Without an instant's delay, he left all, and followed Jesus. From tax collector, Matthew became Apostle, then evangelist. Matthew 9:9, *As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.* Mark 2:14, *He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.* Luke 5:27-28, *After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.*

(b) The Feast. Matthew made a feast for Jesus after experiencing the joy of his heart. To this feast he invited many of his own class, tax collectors and sinners" Matthew 9:10, *Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples.* Mark 2:15, *Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi's house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him.* Luke 5:29, *Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.* Scribes and Pharisees were loud in their renouncing to the disciples at what seemed to them an outrage on all propriety. Narrow hearts cannot understand the breadth of grace. Christ's reply was conclusive. Matthew 9:12-13, *When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."* Mark 2:17, *When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."* Luke 5:31-32, *Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

(c) Fasting and Joy. Another line of objection was encountered from disciples of John the Baptist. They, like the Pharisees, fasted often, and they took exception to the unconstrained way in which Jesus and His disciples entered into social life. Matthew 9:14, *Then the disciples of John (the Baptist) came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"* Jesus defends His disciples by adopting a metaphor of John the Baptist's own. John 3:29 (John the Baptist speaking in the following), *He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.* Jesus spoke of Himself as the heavenly bridegroom. Joy was natural while the bridegroom was with them, then, with a sad forecast of the end, He alludes to days of mourning when the bridegroom should be taken away. A deeper answer follows. The spirit of His gospel is a free, spontaneous, joyful spirit, and cannot be confined within the old guidelines. To attempt to confine His teaching within the worn out guidelines of Judaism

would be like putting a patch of new cloth on an old garment, or pouring new wine into old wineskins. The garment would be torn, and the wineskins would burst. The new spirit must make guidelines of its own.

c.) The Unnamed Jerusalem Feast: At this point there appears to be a mixture of events and one questions which one came next. Context is always a good leader to follow and in most cases we can follow a succession of events without problems. However, the four Gospels seem to differ at this junction. In order are the following: Matthew 9 - We leave the feast at Matthew's house and the discussion with John the Baptist's disciples over fasting. Next we have Jairus' daughter and the woman with the issue of blood. In Mark 2, we leave the feast and pick up issues concerning the Sabbath. Luke 5, The same as Mark, stated slightly different. Finally. John 4 ends with the Nobleman's son and chapter 5 begins with an unnamed feast at Jerusalem. (*There are two other feast besides Passover in the Old Testament that a man is required to appear at the Temple in Jerusalem, one in June and the other in October. Which one this is, is not certain, but, the next Passover will be shown in John 6.*) This feast may, if the article is admitted, have been the Passover (April), though in that case one would expect it to be named. It may have been Purim (March), only this is not a feast Jesus might be eager to attend. It may even have been Pentecost (June). In this last case it would succeed the Sabbath Controversies to be discussed shortly. Two other incidents will also appear later in our discussions. The raising of Jairus' daughter and the woman with the issue of blood. Fortunately, the determination of the actual feast has little bearing on the teaching of John chapter five (5).

(1) The Healing at Bethesda: Bethesda was the name given to a pool, fed by an intermittent spring, possessing healing properties, that was situated by the sheep gate (not the market gate as stated in the King James Version), near the temple. The East Porches were erected to accommodate the invalids who desired to make trial of the waters (the mention of the angel, in verse 4, with part of verse 3, is a later gloss over, and is omitted in the Revised Standard Version and in the New International Version). On one of these porches lay a helpless man. His infirmity was of long standing, 38 years. Hopelessness was making his heart sick, for he had no friend to put him into the pool, when the waters were troubled. Others invariably got into the pool before him. Jesus took pity on this man and asked him if he wanted to be made well, then by a word of power healed him. John 5:6, *When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"* The cure was instantaneous. John 5:8-9, *Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.* It was the Sabbath day, and as the man, at Christ's command, took up his bed to go, he was challenged as doing that which was unlawful. The healed man, however, rightly perceived that He who was able to work so great a cure had authority to say what should and should not be done on the Sabbath. Meeting the man after in the temple, Jesus cautioned him, *"Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."* Perhaps a hint that his previous infirmity was a result of sinful conduct.

(2) Son and Father: Jesus Himself was now challenged by the authorities for breaking the Sabbath. Their strict, artificial rules would not even permit acts of mercy on the Sabbath. This led Jesus to a momentous assertion of His Divine dignity. He first justified Himself by the example of His Father, who works continually in the upholding and government of the universe. This increased the offensiveness of the Jews through Jesus' suggestion of equality with the Father. They wanted to kill Him even more. Jesus spoke yet more explicitly of His unique relationship to the Father, and of the Divine prerogatives it conferred upon Him. The Jews were right: if Jesus were not a Divine Person, the claims He made would be blasphemous. Not only was He admitting to an intimacy with the Divine Father, but to Him was given the Divine power of giving life, judgment, and resurrection. It was the Father's will that the Son should be honored even as Himself. John 5:16-30, *For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because*

*He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.*

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."*

(3) The Fourfold Witness: These marvelous claims are not made without adequate confirmation. Jesus cites a fourfold witness:

(a) The witness of John the Baptist, whose testimony they had been willing for a time to receive.

(b) The witness of the Father, who by Christ's works supported His witness to Himself.

(c) The witness of the Scriptures, for these, if read with spiritual discernment, would have led to Him.

(d) Moses, whom they trusted, would condemn them. Their rejection of Jesus was due, not to want of light, but to the state of the heart: John 5:42-44, *"But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?"*

d). Sabbath Controversies: Shortly after His return to Galilee, if the order of events has been rightly apprehended, Jesus became involved in new disputes with the Pharisees about keeping the Sabbath. Possibly we hear in these the echoes of the charges brought against Him at the feast in Judea. Christ's conduct, and the principles involved in His replies, throw valuable light on the Sabbath institution.

(1) Plucking the Heads of Grain: The first dispute was occasioned by the action of the disciples in plucking heads of grain (ears of corn in the King James Version) and rubbing them in their hands as they passed through the grainfields on a Sabbath. In any case the ripened grain points to a time shortly after the Passover. If so the grain is winter wheat that is harvested in the spring. The law permitted this liberty. Deuteronomy 23:25, *When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.* Pharisaic strictness interpreted it as an offence to work on the Sabbath. Jesus first quotes Old Testament precedents in defending His disciples, such as, David and the showbread, an act done apparently on the Sabbath. 1

Samuel 21:6, *So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the Lord, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day when it was taken away.* Now we have an illustration of the truth that necessity overrides positive enactment. Next, Jesus falls back on the broad principle of the design of the Sabbath as made for man, for his highest physical, mental, moral and spiritual well being. Mark 2:27, *And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."* The Son of Man, therefore, asserts lordship over the Sabbath. Mark 2:28, *"Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."*

(2) The Man with the Withered Hand: The second collision with the Jews took place on another Sabbath in the synagogue. Luke 6:6, *Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered.* There was present a man with a withered hand. The Pharisees themselves, on this occasion, eager to entrap Jesus, seem to have provoked the conflict by a question. Matthew 12:10, *And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—that they might accuse Him.* Jesus met them by an appeal of permitting the rescue of a sheep that had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath day. Rhetorically Jesus asked the question of the Jews. Mark 3:4, *Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent.* On no reply being made, looking on them with holy indignation, Jesus ordered the man to stretch forth his hand, and it was at once perfectly restored. Mark 3:5, *And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.* The effect was only to inflame to madness the minds of His adversaries. Matthew 12:14, *Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.* Luke 6:11, *But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.* The Pharisees and Herodians plotted to destroy Him. Mark 3:6, *Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.*

(3) Withdrawal to the Sea: Jesus, quietly withdrew with His disciples to the shore, and there continued His work of teaching and healing, having left this scene of unprofitable conflict. Matthew 12: 15-17, *But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. Yet He warned them not to make Him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet.* People from all the neighboring districts flocked to His ministry where He taught them from a little boat, and healed their sick. Mark 3:9-10, *So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him. For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him.* Matthew sees this as a fulfilment of the prophecy found in Isaiah 42:1-4, *"Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law."*

e.) The Choosing of the Twelve Apostles: The work of Jesus was growing rapidly and so were the earthly complications. Friends and enemies alike were beginning to take sides. Accordingly, the time had come for selecting and attaching to His person a definite number of leaders. These selected followers would not simply be disciples, they would be the ones prepared to carry on His work after His departure. This He did in the choice of twelve Apostles. The choice was made in early morning, on the Mount of Beatitudes, after a night spent wholly in prayer. Luke 6:12-13, *Now it came to pass in those days*



*that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:*

(1) The Apostolic Function: Apostle means one sent. On the special function of the Apostle it is sufficient to say here that those set apart were chosen for the special end of being Christ's witnesses and accredited ambassadors to the world. They would be able from their personal knowledge to bear testimony: to what Christ had been; what He said and did; and the facts of His life, death and resurrection. They were instructed by Him, and endowed with His Spirit: the depositaries of His truth; sharers of His authority; messengers of His gospel; and His instruments in laying the foundations of His church. So responsible a calling was never, before or after, given to mortal men.

(2) The Lists: Four lists of the Apostles are given: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts (1:13, omitting Judas). The names are usually paired and given with some exceptions. For this list I present the following from the New English Translation (NET): Matthew 10:2-4 NET, *Now these are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (called Peter), and Andrew his brother; James son of Zebedee and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.* I used this version because of the notes incorporated in this translation. There seems to be some confusion who is Judas (this is not the betrayer, Judas Iscariot). One list identifies this Judas as son of James, another as brother of James and that James is a son of Alphaeus. Without having to go through every verse to clear this up, the simple answer is that this is Thaddaeus. The other question is who is Nathanael of John 1:47? That answer would be Bartholomew. In all the lists Peter, through his gifts of leadership, stands first; Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, stands last. The list contains at least two pairs of brothers and at least one pair of friends (Philip and Nathanael).

(3) The Men: All the Apostles were men from humble backgrounds, yet not illiterate, and mostly of comfortable circumstances. All were Galileans, except the betrayer, whose name Iscariot, same as, man of Kerioth, marks him as a Judean. We know a good deal about some of the apostles, of others very little. We are warranted in speaking of them all as men of honest minds and sincere piety, with the exception of Judas Iscariot. The band held within it a number of men of strongly contrasted types of character. Allusion need only be made to the impetuous Peter, the contemplative John, the matter-of-fact Philip, the cautious Thomas, the zealous Simon, the conservative Matthew, and the administrative Judas. The last named Iscariot is the dark problem of the apostolate. We have express testimony that Jesus knew him from the beginning. John 6:64, *"But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.* Even with that knowledge Jesus chose Judas as one of the twelve. The character of Judas, when Jesus received him, was doubtless undeveloped. Judas could not himself suspect the dark possibilities that slept in himself. His association with the apostles was for his good. His peculiar gift was, for the time, of service as he was the one who kept the money. In choosing him, Jesus must be viewed as acting for, and under the direction of, the Father. John 5:19, *Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.* John 17:12, *"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."*

3.) From the Sermon on the Mount until the Parables of the Kingdom: A Second Galilean Journey.

a.) The Sermon on the Mount: The choice of the Apostles inaugurates a new period of Christ's activity. The first and most precious fruit was the delivery of His great manifesto known as the

Sermon on the Mount. The hill is identified by Stanley,<sup>130</sup> and others with that known as the Horns of Hattin, where the level place at the top, from which Christ would come down from one of the higher horns, exactly suits the conditions of the narrative. The sick being healed, Jesus seated Himself a little higher up, His disciples near Him, and He addressed the assembly. Matthew 7:28-29, *And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.* The season of the year is shown by the mention of the lilies to be summer. Matthew 6:28 NIV, *“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.”*

(1) Its Scope: His words were weighty. At the beginning His aim was to establish in terms that were simple the principles, aims and dispositions of His kingdom. His desire was to expound its laws. Furthermore, Jesus wanted to exhibit its righteousness, both positively, and in contrast with Pharisaic formalism and hypocrisy. Only the leading ideas can be indicated here. Matthew, as is his way, groups material, part of which can be found in other connections in Luke’s Gospel. However it is well to study the whole in the well-ordered form as it appears in the First Gospel.

(2) The Blessings: Christ’s first words are those of blessing, in marked contrast with Moses’ lawgiving of Sinai. He shows on what inner conditions the blessings of the kingdom depend passing at once to the dispositions of the heart. His beatitudes of poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hunger and thirst after righteousness reverse all the world’s standards of judgment on such matters. In the possession of these graces consists true godliness of character. Through them the heirs of the kingdom become the salt of the earth, the light of the world. The obligation rests on them to let their light shine. Mark 4:21-23, *Also He said to them, “Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand? For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”* Luke 8:16-18, *“No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.”*

(3) True Righteousness and The Old and the New Law: Jesus defines His relation to the old law, not as a Destroyer, but as a Fulfiller. He proceeds to exhibit the nature of the true righteousness in contrast to Pharisaic literalism and formalism. Through adherence to the latter they killed the spirit of the law. Jesus leads everything back from the outward letter to the condition of the heart. With an absolute authority, *but I say unto you!* Illustrations are taken from murder, adultery, swearing, retaliation, and hatred of enemies, then gives a spiritual expansion to every precept. The sinful thought or desire holds in to itself the essence of transgression. The world’s standards are again reversed in the demands for nonresistance to injuries, love of enemies and retaliation of good for evil. Matthew 5:17-48, *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

*“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without*

<sup>130</sup> Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, op. cit., *Sinai and Palestine*, 368.

*a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny."*

*"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell."*



*"Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery."*

*"Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."*

*"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away."*

*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."*

(4) Religion and Hypocrisy and True and False Motive: Pursuing the contrast between the true righteousness and that of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus next draws attention to motive in religion. The Pharisees erred not simply in having regard only to the letter of the Law, but in acting in morals and religion from a false motive. He had furnished the antidote to their literalism. He now assails their boasting and hypocrisy. Illustrations are taken from alms giving, prayer and fasting. The Lord's Prayer is given as a model. Matthew 6:1-18, *"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."*



*“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”*


*“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*

*“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”*

(5) The True Good: **The true motive in religious acts is to please God.** The same motive should guide us in the choice of what is to be our supreme good. Earthly treasure is not to be put above heavenly. The kingdom of God and His righteousness are to be first in our desires. The eye is to be single. The true cure for worldly anxiety is then found in trust of the heavenly Father. His children are more to God than fowls and flowers, for whom His care in Nature is so conspicuously manifest. Seek first the kingdom knowing that all else you need will be granted along with it. Matthew 6:19-34, *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

*“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”*

*“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”*



*“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.*

*Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”*

(6) Relation to the World's Evil and The Conclusion: Jesus finally proceeds to speak of the relation of the disciple to the evil of the world. That evil has been considered in its hostile attitude to the disciple. The question is now as to the disciples free relations toward it. Jesus teaches the duties of the disciple's bearing himself wisely toward evil with charity, with caution, with prayer, and in the spirit of ever doing as one would be done by being on his guard against it. The temptation is great to follow the worldly crowd, to be misled by false teachers, to put pride of one's self above godliness. Against these perils the disciple is energetically warned. True religion will ever be known by its fruits. The discourse closes with the powerful similitude of the wise and foolish builders. Again, as on an earlier occasion, Christ's auditors were astonished at His teaching, and at the authority with which He spoke. Matthew 7:28-29, *And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*

b.) Intervening Incidents: A series of remarkable incidents are next to be noticed. The healing of the centurion's servant apparently took place on the same day as the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount. Luke 7:1-2, *Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.* It had been a day of manifold and exhausting labors for Jesus. A walk of perhaps 7 miles brought Him back to Capernaum, the crowds accompanying. However, all the same, Jesus heard a new appeal for help as soon as He arrived at Capernaum. Matthew 8:7, *And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."*

(1) Healing of the Centurion's Servant: The petitioner was a Roman Centurion. One who had endeared himself to the Jews. The request was for the healing of a favorite servant, paralyzed and tortured with pain. First, friends of the Centurion sought Christ's good will to heal the servant, then, when Jesus was on the way, a second message came, awakening even Christ's astonishment by the magnitude of its faith. The Centurion felt he was not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof, but let Jesus speak the word only, and his servant would be healed. Luke 7:7-10, *"Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."*

*When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick*

(2) The Widow of Nain's Son Raised: The exciting events of this day gathered a great crowd around the house where Jesus was. It left Him no leisure time even to eat and His friends, anxious for His health, sought to restrain Him. Mark 3:20-21, *Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "He is out of His mind."* It was probably to escape from this local excitement that Jesus, on the following day, is found at the little town of Nain, a few miles Southeast of Nazareth. A great multitude still followed Him. It was here, as He entered the city, that the most wonderful of the works He had yet performed occurred. A young man, the only son of a widowed mother, was being carried out for burial. With compassion Jesus stopped the mournful procession. He instructed the young man arise with a calm knowledge that His word would be obeyed. Jesus gave the son back to his mother the instant life returned. The amazement of the people was tenfold intensified. They felt that the old days had come back and God had visited His people. Luke 7:11-17, *Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his*

*mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us;" and, "God has visited His people." And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region. This is the first raising of a dead person!*



It was apparently during this journey or expedition that incorporated this visit to Nain, that the results brought increased fame to Jesus. It was also about this time that a group was sent from John the Baptist while in prison to ask of Jesus whether He was indeed He who would come, or should they look for another?

(3) Messengers from among John's Disciples and Christ and His Generation: This was a strange question coming from the lips of the forerunner, but is probably to be interpreted as the expression of perplexity rather than of actual doubt. There seems to be no question but that John's mind had been thrown into serious difficulty by the reports that had reached him concerning the work of Jesus. Things were not turning out as he expected. It was the peaceful, merciful character of Christ's work that caused John the Baptist to even question Jesus. The gloom of his prison combined with his disappointment, led him to send this message for the satisfaction of himself and his disciples. Luke 7:18-23, *Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"*

*When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'" And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.*

*Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."*

(a) Christ's Answer to John: If there was doubt, Jesus treated it tenderly. He did not answer directly, but instructed the two disciples who had been sent to return and tell John the things they had seen and heard: the blind receiving their sight; the lame walking; the deaf cured; the dead raised; and the Gospel preached. Little doubt the Messiah had come when works like these, the very works predicted by the prophets, were being done. Isaiah 35:5-6, *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.* Blessed were those who did not find occasion of stumbling in Him. Jesus, however, did more. By his disciples John the Baptist had put himself in a somewhat false position before the multitude. But Jesus would not have His faithful follower misjudged. His was no fickle spirit. Jesus nobly vindicated him as a prophet and more than a prophet; yes, a man whom a greater had not lived. Luke 7:24-29, *When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.' For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John."*



(b) A Perverse People and Christ's Grace. The implied contrast between Himself and John the Baptist led Jesus further to denounce the perverse spirit of His own generation. The Pharisees and lawyers had rejected John the Baptist. They were not pleased with Him. Their behavior was like children objecting to one game because it was merry, and to another because it was sad. Luke 7:30-35, *But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we mourned to you, and you did not weep.' For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'" But wisdom is justified by all her children.*" The flood of outward popularity did not deceive Jesus. The cities in which His greatest works were performed, Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, remained hardened in heart. Heavier would be their judgment, worse even than that on Tyre and Sidon, or on Sodom itself. Over against their unbelief Jesus reasserts His dignity and declares His grace. Matthew 11:25-30, *"I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* All authority was His; He alone knew and could reveal the Father (no claims from John the Baptist were higher).

(4) The First Anointing: The Woman Who Was a Sinner: Another beautiful incident connected with this journey is recorded by Luke: the anointing of Jesus in Simon's house by a woman who was a sinner. Jesus was invited to dine with a Pharisee named Simon in Nain or some other city visited by Him. His reception was a cold one. During the meal, a woman of the city, an outcast from respectable society came and entered the house. However, as the story implies, she was one whose heart Jesus had reached, and who, filled with sorrow, love, shame, penitence, had turned from her life of sin, and entered the room where Jesus was. There, bathing Christ's feet with her tears, wiping them with her hair, and imprinting on them fervent kisses, she anointed them with a precious ointment she had brought with her. Simon was offended. Jesus could not be a wise man, much less a prophet, or He would have rebuked this misbehavior from such a person. Jesus met the thought of Simon's heart by speaking to him the parable of the two debtors. Of these two men who had been freely forgiven of their debt, one 500, the other 50 denarii, which would love his creditor most? Simon gave the obvious answer, and the contrast between his own reception of Jesus and the woman's passionate love was immediately pointed out. Luke 7:36-50, *Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."*

*And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."*

*So he said, "Teacher, say it."*

*"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the*

*other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"*

*Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more."*

*And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."*

*And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"*

*Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."* Her greater love was the cause to her being forgiven. Though, had Simon only realized it, he perhaps needed forgiveness even more than she.

c.) Events at Capernaum: This woman's faith saved her and she was dismissed in peace. But again the question arose, "Who is this that even forgives sins?" Luke introduces here a second Galilean expedition of Jesus, after the return a new series of exciting incidents took place at Capernaum. The journey was an extensive one where Jesus went about the cities and villages preaching.

(1) Galilee Revisited: During this journey Jesus was attended by the twelve, and by devoted women, namely: Mary Magdalene; Joanna, wife of Herod's steward; Susanna; and others who ministered to Him of their substance. Luke 8:1-3, *Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.* At the close of this journey Jesus returned to Capernaum.

(2) Cure of Demoniac and Discourse on Blasphemy: Jesus, no doubt, did perform numerous miracles on demoniacs. He is said to have cast 7 demons out of Mary Magdalene, perhaps a form of speech to indicate the severity of the possession. The demoniac now brought to Jesus was blind and dumb. Jesus cured him, with the double result that the people were filled with amazement: "Can this be the son of David?" Matthew 12:22-23, *Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the Son of David?"* At the same time the Pharisees blasphemed, alleging that Jesus cast out demons by the help of Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. Matthew 12:24-25, *Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

*But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand."*

A quite similar incident is narrated in Matthew 9:32-34, *As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!"*

*But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."*

Luke records the following in 11:14. Luke 11:14, *And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled.*



*But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." The accusation may well have been repeated more than once. Jesus, in reply, points out, first, the absurdity of supposing Satan to be engaged in warring against his own kingdom, here was God's Son who is plainly stronger than Satan. Matthew 12:26-30, *If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.* Jesus then speaks the momentous word about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. All other blasphemies, even that against the Son of Man, may be forgiven, for they may proceed from ignorance and misconception. However deliberate, perverse rejection of the light, and attributing to Satan what was manifestly of God, was a sin that there would be no forgiveness, either in this world or the next. Matthew 12:33-37, *"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."**

*"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."* Mark uses a strong, yet simple, phrase. Mark 3:29, *"But he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation."*

(3)The Sign of Jonah: Out of this discourse arose the usual Jewish demand for a sign, that Jesus met by declaring that no sign would be given but the sign of the prophet Jonah: This was an allusion to His future resurrection. Understanding this sign will give you the reason for a Wednesday crucifixion, you do the math! Matthew 12:38-40, *Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."*

*But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* Jesus reiterates His warning to the people of His generation for their rejection of greater light than had been enjoyed by the Ninevites and the Queen of Sheba. Matthew 12:41-42, *"The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."*

(4) Two Incidents: These were not dissimilar in character, however, they did interrupt this discourse.

(a) First Interruption: The one was a voice raised by a woman in the audience, if the similarity of the teachings indicate the time is the same, Luke 11:27-28, *And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!"*

*But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"*

(b) Second Interruption: A messenger interrupted Jesus with a message that His mother and brethren (doubtless anxious for His safety) desired to speak with Him. Matthew 12:46-50, *While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."*

*But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."*

Mark 3:31-35, *Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You."*

*But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."* Kinship in the spiritual kingdom consists in fidelity to the will of God, not in ties of earthly relationship.

d.) Teaching in Parables: On the same day that the preceding discourses were delivered, Jesus, seeing the multitudes passed to the shore, entered a boat, and inaugurated a new method in His public teaching. This was speaking in parables. Similarity, and metaphor always entered into the teaching of Jesus. His use of a parable has been met with the comparing of two different things, for example, Life is a wide river. Parable is systematically employed as a means of imparting and illustrating important truths, while yet veiling them from those whose minds were hostile and unreceptive. The parable thus at once reveals and conceals. The motive of this partially veiled teaching was a growing hostility of the Pharisees. A parable is usually a short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle. In its natural form the parable is a representation of earthly analogy of truths relating to divine and eternal things. The parables of the kingdom bring together a valuable series of illustrations. Mark adds the parable of the seed growing secretly as one in the series of parables (the sower, the tares, the dragnet), concerning the kingdom. Jesus Himself gives the interpretation.

(1) Parables of the Kingdom: In this series of parables we find the origin, mixed character and development of the kingdom in its present imperfect earthly condition, and the perfection that awaits it after the crisis at the end of time. The origin of the kingdom is the good seed of the word represented in the parable of the sower, and the varied soils on which that seed falls. The law of orderly growth in the kingdom is found in the seed growing secretly. We see the mixed character of the subjects of the kingdom in the parable of the tares. We see the progress of the kingdom in the parables of the mustard seed and leaven where we find external growth, and an internal transformation effect. We find the worth of the kingdom in the parables of the treasure and the pearl. Finally, we have the consummation of the kingdom presented in the parable of the dragnet. Matthew 13:18-52, *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

*Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared."*

*So the servants of the owner came and said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?"*

*He said to them, "An enemy has done this."*

*The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?"*

*But he said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."*

*Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."*

*Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

*All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."*

*Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house and His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."*

*He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."*

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it."*

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

*Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?"*

*They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."*

*Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."*

#### 4.) From the Crossing to Gadara to the Mission of the Twelve

a.) Third Expedition. He spoke the parables on the evening of the day when Jesus had instructed His disciples to cross over to the other side of the lake. Though in Luke's Gospel he seems

unaware of the progression of the day. Mark 4:35, *On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."* Luke 8:22, *Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out.* At this juncture He was confronted by a wannabe or applicant for discipleship. Matthew gives two cases of wannabes, Luke gives three. Luke's connection (departure from Galilee) is perhaps preferable for the second and third, but the three may be considered together.

(1) Aspirants (Wannabes or applicants) for Discipleship: The three types of applicants desiring to become a disciple may be distinguished as:

(a) The Forward Disciple: One who in an atmosphere of enthusiasm offered himself under impulse, without counting the cost. Jesus checks the zeal of this would-be follower with the warning words, *The foxes have holes . . .* Matthew 8:19-20, *Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go."*

*And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

Luke 9:57-58, *Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go."*

*And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

(b) The Procrastinating Disciple: The first candidate needed to slow down and think. The second needed an extra push. He would follow Jesus, but first let him bury his father. There had come a crisis, however, when the Lord's claim was paramount: *Leave the dead to bury their own dead.* Matthew 8:22, *Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."*

*But Jesus said to him, Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."*

Luke 9:59-60, *Then He said to another, "Follow Me."*

*But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."*

*Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."* Jesus was the last to be indifferent about natural relationships. He understood that there were times when an earthly event took priority. Look at the structure of the scriptures. Jesus called this disciple and said *"Follow Me!"* It was then that the disciple asked to first go and bury his father. Jesus took the event to the higher level and placed it in the realm of spirit. Jesus claimed a higher priority to *"Go and teach the kingdom of God!"*

(c) The Wavering Disciple: The third type disciple is one who offers himself, but his heart remained attached to the things at home. Jesus, again, puts His finger on the weak spot and points it out. Luke 9:61-62, *And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house."*

*But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* As mentioned, the latter two cases tally better with a final departure from Galilee than with a temporary crossing of the lake.

(2) The Storm Calmed: The inland lake was exposed to violent and sudden tempests. One of these storms broke on the disciples' boat as they sailed across. Everyone's life seemed in jeopardy. Jesus, meanwhile, in calmest repose, was asleep on a cushion in the stern. Mark 4:37-41, *And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"*

*Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"*

*And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"*

(3) The Gadarene (Gerasene) Demoniac: The lake being crossed, Jesus and His disciples came into the country of the Gadarenes (Matthew), or Gerasenes (Mark, Luke). Gadara was the capital of the district (see Stanley,<sup>131</sup>). From the lakeshore rises a mountain riddled with ancient tombs. Here Jesus was met by a demoniac (Matthew mentions two demoniacs: M. Henry's<sup>132</sup> quaint comment is, "If there were two, there was one." Possibly one was the fiercer of the two, the other figuring only as his companion). The man, thus described, was a raving maniac of the worst type. Mark 5:2-20, *And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me."*

*For He said to him, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!" Then He asked him, "What is your name?" And he answered, saying, "My name is Legion; for we are many." Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains.*

*So all the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, that we may enter them." And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea. So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon possessed, and about the swine. Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region. And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon possessed begged Him that he might be with Him.*

*However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you." And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled. He lived in the tombs, wearing no clothes, of supernatural strength, wounding himself, and shrieking. Luke 8:27, *And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.* This man was totally possessed by an unclean spirit. His consciousness was as if he were possessed by a legion of demons. From that consciousness the demon(s) addressed Jesus as the Son of God and asked if He had come to torment them.*

<sup>131</sup> Albert Penrhyn Stanley, *Ibid.*, *Sinai and Palestine*, 380-381.

<sup>132</sup> Matthew Henry, 1662-1714 *Henry's Concise Commentary of the Bible*, (1706), In 1704 he began writing his Biblical commentary. His purpose was to present practical theology in plain words. Still in print after more than 250 years, his work has stood the test of time, and has been hailed as the greatest devotional commentary. This is an abridged version of his full 6 volume work, the *Matthew Henry Unabridged Commentary*. WORDsearch, Corp. (2008).

In what follows it is difficult to distinguish what belongs to the broken, incoherent consciousness of the man, and the spirit or spirits who spoke through him. In the question, *What is your name?* Jesus evidently sought to arouse the victim's shattered soul to some sense of its own individuality. On Jesus commanding the unclean spirit to leave the man, the request was made that the demons might be permitted to enter a herd of swine feeding nearby. The reason for Christ's permission, with its result in the destruction of the herd need not be scrutinized too closely. It may have had an aspect of judgment on the owners of the swine. Surely we should realize that the owner of the swine was not Jewish. The eating of pork was forbidden under the law and there was no reason for a Hebrew to be raising swine. The Samaritans might be the owners or someone termed a Gentile. On the other hand, it may have had reference to the victim of the possession, as enabling him to realize his deliverance. Whatever the reason may be for the miracle, it might be explained as the simple reality of demonic influence. When the people of the city came they found the man fully restored, *clothed and in his right mind*. Yet, their fear and shortsightedness caused them to ask Jesus to depart from their borders. The man, cured of his malady desired to depart with Jesus. However, Jesus sent him home to declare to his friends the great things the Lord had done for him.

(4) Jairus' Daughter Raised and Woman with Issue of Blood: Repelled by the Gerasenes, Jesus received a warm welcome on His return to Capernaum on the western shore. Mark 5:21, *Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea*. It was probably at this point that Matthew gave the feast formerly mentioned. It was in connection with this feast, Matthew himself informed us that Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue, made his appeal for help. Matthew 9:18-19, *While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live."* So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples. Luke 8:41-42, *And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged (mobbed) Him*. The ruler's faith, though real, was not equal to the centurion's, who believed that Jesus could heal without being present.

(a) Jairus' Appeal and Its Result: Jesus went to Jairus' house, and after He expelled the professional mourners, He raised the girl to life in sacred privacy, permitting only the father and mother, along with Peter, James and John to enter the death chamber. Luke 8:49-56, *While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; **only believe**, and **she will be made well!**"* When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, *"Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping."* And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, *"Little girl, arise."* Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened. It is the second miracle on record of the raising from the dead!

(b) The Afflicted Woman Cured: Another wonder occurred on the way to the ruler's house, a miracle within a miracle. A poor woman, whose case was an especially distressing one, as regarding the nature of her malady, the length of its continuance, and the fruitlessness of her application to the physicians. She crept up to Jesus, confident that if she could but touch the hem of His garment, she would be healed. The woman was ignorant, her faith was blended with superstition, but Jesus, reading the heart, gave her the benefit she desired. It was His will, however, that, for her own good, the woman thus

cured should not obtain the blessing by stealth. He therefore brought her to open confession, and cheered her by His commendatory word. Luke 8:43-48, *Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?"*

*When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, "Who touched Me?"*

*But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."*

(5) Some of the Incidents of the Third Expedition: We begin the third expedition of Galilee with the crossing of the Sea of Galilee to Gadara, then back to Capernaum. At this point begins a new evangelistic tour extending methodically to all the cities and villages. To it belong the narratives of the healing of two blind men, the cure of a demoniac who was dumb, a similar case to that in Matthew 12. 22, *Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.* This is also, the second rejection of Jesus at Nazareth. The incident at Nazareth is similar to that before and shows that the people's hearts were unchanged. Of this journey Matthew gives an affecting summary, emphasizing the Lord's compassion, and His yearning for more laborers to reap the abundant harvest. Matthew 9:35-38, *Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."*

(6) The Twelve Sent Forth and Discourse of Jesus: Partly with a view to the needs of the rapidly growing work and the training of the Apostles, and partly as a witness to Israel Jesus deemed it expedient to send the twelve on an independent mission. Matthew 10:5-6, *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* The discourse in Matthew that is attached to this event seems to be a compilation. Parts of it are given by Luke in connection with the mission of the Seventy. Luke 10:1, *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. The directions were doubtless similar in both cases. Luke 12:2-12, "For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops."*

*"And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."*

*"Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God."*

*And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”*

The Twelve were sent out two by two. Their work was to be a copy of the Master’s, to preach the gospel and to heal the sick. To this end they were endowed with authority over unclean spirits, and over all manner of sickness. They were to go forth free from all encumbrances, no money, no changes of clothing, no staff except that in their hand, (Mark 6:8, *He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff, no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts.*), and sandals only on their feet. Christians are similarity empowered, but few use the authority.

(a) The Commission: They were to rely on those to whom they preached for support. They were for the present time to confine their ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Matthew 10:6, *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* The saying in Matthew 10:23, apparently has reference to the judgment on the nation, not to the Second Coming of Christ. Matthew 10:23, *When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.* Compare this with the statement Jesus made to the Apostles concerning the coming of His kingdom (the Second Advent). Matthew 16:28, *“Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”*

(b) Counsels and Warnings: The mission of the twelve was the first step of Christianity as an aggressive force in society. Jesus speaks of it, accordingly, in the light of the whole future that was to come out of it. He warns His apostles faithfully of the dangers that awaited them: exhorts them to prudence and to be wise in their actions; holds out to them Divine promises for consolation; directs them when persecuted in one place to flee to another; and points out to them from His own case that such persecutions were only to be expected. He assures them of a coming day of revelation, bids them at once to fear and trust God, impresses on them the duty of courage in confession, and instills in them supreme love to Himself. That love would be tested in the dearest relations. Though in itself peace, the gospel would be the innocent occasion of strife, enmity and division among men. Those who receive Christ’s disciples will receive their reward. When Christ had ended His discourse He proceeded with His own evangelistic work, leaving the disciples to inaugurate theirs. Matthew 11:1, *Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.*

#### b. Second Period, Jesus’ Fourth Journey in Galilee and

After the Mission of the Twelve until the Departure from Galilee:

##### 1.) From the Death of John the Baptist until the Discourse on Bread of Life.

a.) The Murder of John the Baptist and Herod’s Alarms: Shortly before the events now to be narrated, John the Baptist had been foully murdered in prison by Herod Antipas at the instigation of Herodias. We need to remember and understand why Herod and Herodias wanted John the Baptist killed. We find the story in Matthew. Matthew 14:3-4, *For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife. Because John had said to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.”* If the truth is made known it appears that Herod was a womanizer having an adulterous relationship with Herodias, his brother’s wife. Josephus<sup>133</sup> gives as the place of John the Baptist’s imprisonment as the fortress of Machaerus, near the Dead Sea, or John the Baptist may have been removed to Galilee. Herod would have killed John the Baptist previously, but was restrained by fear of the people. Matthew 14:5, *And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared*

<sup>133</sup> Titus Flavius Josephus, op. cit.



*the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.* The hatred of Herodias, however, did not slumber. Her relentless will contrasts with the hesitation of Herod, as Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare contrasts with Macbeth. A birthday feast gave Herodias the opening she sought. Her daughter had obtained from him a promise on oath to give her whatever she asked because she pleased Herod by her dancing. Prompted by Herodias, she boldly demanded John the Baptist's head. The weak king was shocked, but, for his oath's sake, granted her what she craved. The story tells how John the Baptist's disciples reverently buried the remains of their master, and went to tell Jesus. Herod's conscience did not let him rest. When rumors reached him of a wonderful teacher and miracle worker in Galilee, he leapt at once to the conclusion that it was John the Baptist risen from the dead. Herod could not have heard much about Jesus before, besides, an evil conscience makes men cowards. At about the same time the Apostles returned from their mission and reported to Jesus what they had said and done. Luke 9:10, *And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.* Jesus had also heard of John the Baptist's fate and of Herod's fears, and now He proposed to His disciples a retirement to a desert place across the lake, near Bethsaida (Stanley<sup>134</sup>).

b. The Feeding of the Five Thousand: As it proved, however, the multitudes had observed their departure, and, running around the shore, were at the place before them. Mark 6:33, *But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him.* The purpose of finding a place for rest was frustrated, but Jesus did not complain. Look at the story: The people were relentless in getting to Jesus to have a loved one healed. We learned above that they ran around the edge of the shore as Jesus and the Apostles traveled by boat. Jesus could see what they were doing and knew what awaited Him when they reached the opposite shore. He pitied the shepherdless state of the people, and went out to teach and heal them. The day wore on, and the disciples suggested that the fasting multitude should disperse to seek food in the nearest towns and villages. Instead Jesus instructed the Apostles to feed them and they asked if He wanted them to go and buy bread. Jesus next commanded them to find out what was available. Mark 6: 37-38, *But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat."*

*And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?"*

*But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see."*

*And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish."* At His command the Apostles fed the whole multitude with the scanty provision, those 5 loaves and 2 fish. By His blessing, the food was multiplied until all were satisfied. Mark 6:41-42, *And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. So they all ate and were filled.* The Apostles went through and collected what remained after everyone had eaten their fill. The leftovers filled 12 baskets! John 6:12-13, *So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.* It was a stupendous act of creative power that no rationalizing can reduce to natural dimensions.

c.) Walking on the Sea: The enthusiasm created by the miracle of the feeding was intense. John 6:14, *Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."* With this story Luke falls out of the Synopsis for a time. Matthew and Mark relate that Jesus hurriedly constrained His disciples to enter into their boat and recross

<sup>134</sup> Albert Penrhyn Stanley, op. cit.

the lake, even though a storm was gathering. In the mean time Jesus remained in the mountain alone to pray and gather Himself. John gives one viewpoint to this action in the statement that the people were about to take Him by force and make Him a king. John 6:15, *Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone*. However, we really need to look at reality. Jesus and the Apostles had been on the move healing, teaching, and even feeding the people for days. They were all tired and even Jesus needed a period to rest so He could regenerate His energy level. We must remember that even though Jesus is God in the flesh He laid down His royal Divine raiment and took on the characteristics of man. This means even to the ability of the body and the constraints of the body. Jesus was also fatigued and needed rest as any man would. Yes! He could run on a demanding high energy pace, but even so, still needed rest. Look at the following verse: The Apostles were rowing across the sea and it took time for them to do this. Three hours after midnight found the disciples still in the midst of the lake, distressed in rowing. Mark 6:48, *Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by*. The Apostles were deeply anxious because Jesus was not with them. Jesus came down from the mountain and saw the boat in the middle of the sea and went to them. The Apostles, at the darkest hour of their extremity, saw Jesus approaching in a way unheard of, He was walking on the water. Matthew 14:25-27, *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear*.

*But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."* Every new experience of Jesus was a surprise to the Apostles. They were at first terrified, thinking they saw a spirit. Jesus calmed them all by speaking to them. In response to his feelings the impulsive Peter asked Jesus to permit him to come to Him on the water. Jesus said *come* and for the first moment or two Peter did walk on the water. Matthew 14:28-29, *And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."*

*So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus*. It is by faith that we have also been granted the authority. But, the results of Peter's walk demonstrates our lack of faith. Peter then realized his unnatural situation, his faith failed, and he began to sink. Jesus, with gentle chiding, caught him, and assisted him back into the boat. Once again the sea was calmed, and the disciples found themselves safely at land. Matthew 14:30-33, *But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"*

*And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.*

*Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."* To their adoring minds the miracle of the loaves was eclipsed by this new marvel. Mark 6:51-52, *Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.*

d.) Gennesaret and Discourse on the Bread of Life: On the return to Gennesaret the sick from all quarters were brought to Jesus. Mark 6:54-55, *And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him, ran through that whole surrounding region, and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was*. This appears to be the commencement of a new, more general ministry of healing. Mark 6:56, *Wherever He entered into villages, cities, or in the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well*. Meanwhile,

here we must depend on John's record in chapter 6, the people on the other side of the lake took boats hastily, and came over to Capernaum when they found that Jesus was gone. John 6:22-25, *On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone—however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.* And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “*Rabbi, when did You come here?*” They had apparently found Jesus in the synagogue. John 6:59, *These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.* In reply to their query, *Rabbi, when did You come here?* Jesus first rebuked the motive that led them to follow Him, not because they had seen in His miracles signs of higher blessings, but instead because they had eaten of the loaves and were filled. John 6:26, *Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”* But then Jesus must have changed His mind and began His great discourse on the bread from heaven. John 6:27, *“Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”* When asked to authenticate His claims by a sign from heaven like the manna, He replied that the manna was but typical bread given not by Moses but by God. John 6:28-31, *Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?”*

*Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”*

*Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”* Jesus surprised them by declaring that He Himself was the true bread of life from heaven. John 6:35, *And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”* The bread was Christ's flesh, given for the life of the world on the Cross, if men were to have eternal life they had to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus had put His doctrine in a forceful testing manner. The time had come when His hearers must make their choice between a spiritual acceptance of Him or a break with Him altogether. What He had said greatly offended those present, because of the claims implied (John 6:42, *And they said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”*), and the doctrine taught. John 6:60, *Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”* Many went back and walked no more with Him because of the hardening of their hearts. John 6:66-67, *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”* The withdrawal of many disciples only evoked a more confident confession of their faith from the chosen twelve.

(1) Peter's First Confession: Peter, as usual, was the outspoken one who spoke for the rest. John 6:69, *But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words*

*of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?”* If we use the writings of Matthew and John we find it was here, at Gennesaret on the coast of the Sea of Galilee, and not at Caesarea Philippi, that Peter made his first brave confession of his Master’s Messiahship. Matthew 16:16, *Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Twelve therefore confessed Jesus as the Son of God, but even of this select circle Jesus was compelled to say, *one of you is a devil.*

2.) From Disputes with the Pharisees until the Transfiguration: The discourse in Capernaum seems to mark a turning point in the Lord’s ministry in Galilee. Soon after, we find Him ceasing from public teaching, and devoting Himself to the instruction of His Apostles, because He needed to prepare them to take over when He was gone.

a.) Jesus and Tradition, Outward and Inward Purity: Christ’s work in Galilee attracted the attention of the central authorities as shown by the fact that scribes and Pharisees came up from Jerusalem to watch Him. They speedily found grounds for complaint against Him in His unconventional ways and His total disregard for the traditions of the elders. They specially blamed Him for allowing His disciples to eat bread with unwashed hands. The Pharisees placed great stress on this ritual. Mark 7:3-4, *For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.* Ceremonial washing formed a large part of their religion. These washings were part of the oral tradition said to have been delivered to Moses, and transmitted by a succession of elders. Jesus set all this ceremonialism aside. It was part of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Mark 7:6, *He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.’”*

When questioned regarding this, He drew a sharp distinction between God’s commandment in the scriptures and man’s tradition, and accused the Pharisees of making void the former through the latter. Mark 7:8-9, *“For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do. He said to them, ‘All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.’”*

This led to the broader question of what true defilement included. Christ’s rational position here is that it did not consist in anything outward, as in meats, but consisted in what came from within the man: as Jesus explained afterward, in the outcome of his heart or moral life: Mark 7:20-23, *And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”* Christ’s saying was in effect cancelling the old ceremonial distinctions, as Mark notes: Mark 7:19, *“Because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?”* The Pharisees, naturally, were deeply offended at His sayings, but Jesus was unmoved. Every plant not of the Father’s planting must be uprooted. Mark 7:13, *“Making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”*

Modern day Christians need to reread this verse from Mark. We, Jesus’ disciples, should let no man deceive us with hand-me-down traditions. Jesus brought the free gift of eternal life to mankind, He did not bring religion! It is mankind who formed religion and has established the various traditions and ceremonies that exist in today’s churches. Jesus instructs us to be on guard in Luke’s witnessing. Luke 21:8, *And He said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and,*

*'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them.* Paul tells us this in Ephesians 5:6 NIV, *Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.* Let's be truthful, Paul even goes so far as to instruct us on who are some who will be deceived and therefore they will not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.* John the Apostle teaches the following. 1 John 3:7, *Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.*

b.) Retirement to Tyre and Sidon and the Syro-Phoenician Woman: From this point Jesus appears to have made journeys privately from place to place in order to escape notice. His first retreat was to the borders, or neighborhood, of Tyre and Sidon. We must stop for a moment and determine where Jesus was physically located at this time. Tyre and Sidon are towns on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in the present day country of Lebanon north of Israel. From Mark we are informed that Jesus entered the heathen territory, however, He could not be hidden. It was not long before there reached Him the cry of human distress in the house He had entered.

A woman came to Him, a Greek (or Gentile, Greek speaking), but Syro-Phoenician by race. Her little daughter was grievously afflicted with an evil spirit. Flinging herself at His feet, and addressing Him as Son of David, she sought His mercy for her child. At first Jesus seemed, yet only seemed, to repel her. He spoke of Himself as being sent only to the lost sheep of Israel, and the impropriety of giving the children's food to the little dogs. The woman focused on the expression, to the little dogs with a beautiful urgency that won for her the reply she sought. The woman seized on the word as an argument in her favor. Saying, "Even the little dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." At Jesus' word the child was restored. Mark 7:24-30, *From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden. For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."*

*And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."*

*Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.*

c.) At Decapolis, New Miracles: Christ's second retreat was to Decapolis, the district of the ten cities East of the Jordan. Here also He was soon discovered, and followed by the multitude. Sufferers were brought to Him, whom He cured. Later, He fed the crowds. Mark 7:31, *Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee.*

(1) The Deaf Man: The miracle of the deaf man is attested only by Mark. The patient was doubly afflicted: he was deaf and had a speech impediment. The cure presents several peculiarities: its privacy; the actions of Jesus in putting his fingers into his ears; touching his tongue with spit; His sigh, accompanied with prayer; and the word Ephphatha: Be opened. Mark 7:32-37, *Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is,*

*“Be opened.” Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it.*

*And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.” The charge to those present was that they should tell no one, but they widely proclaimed the healing.*

(2) Feeding of Four Thousand: The next miracle closely resembles the feeding of the Five Thousand at Bethsaida, but the place and numbers are different; 4,000 instead of 5,000; 7 loaves and a few fishes, instead of 5 loaves and 2 fishes; 7 baskets of fragments instead of 12. There is no reason for doubting the distinction of the incidents. Matthew 15:32-39, *Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.”*

*Then His disciples said to Him, “Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?”*

*Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?”*

*And they said, “Seven, and a few little fish.” So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.*

Mark 8:1-9, *In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar.”*

*Then His disciples answered Him, “How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?”*

*He asked them, “How many loaves do you have?”*

*And they said, “Seven.” So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and they set them before the multitude. They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before them. So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments. Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away.*

d.) Leaven of the Pharisees, Cure of Blind Man and Returning to the plain of Gennesaret: Matthew 15:39, *And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.* or a region of Dalmanutha, Mark 8:10, *Immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.)* Jesus soon found Himself assailed by His old adversaries. Pharisees and Sadducees were now united. They came trying Jesus, and desiring a sign from heaven from Him, some signal of Divine manifestation. Mark’s gospel records that Jesus sighed deeply at their hypocritical spirit, then He repeated His word concerning signs. Mark 8:12, *But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation.”* The times in which they lived were full of signs, if they, so proficient in weather signs, could only see them. To be rid of such questioners, Jesus once again took a boat to Bethsaida. On the way He warned His Apostles against the leaven of the spirit they had just encountered. The Apostles misunderstood, thinking that Jesus referred to their forgetfulness in not taking bread. Mark states in his graphic way that they only

had one loaf. Mark 8:14, *Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat.* The leaven Christ referred to, in fact, represented three spirits:

- (1) the Pharisaic leaven: formalism and hypocrisy;
- (2) the Sadducean leaven: rationalistic skepticism;
- (3) the Herodian leaven: political expediency and procrastination. Mark 8:15,

*Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."* Upon arriving at Bethsaida a blind man was brought to Jesus to be healed. The healing of this blind man resembled the cure of the deaf man at Decapolis, in some of its features. In both cases Jesus took the patients away from the crowd; a physical means was used, the spittle; and the strict instruction not to boast about the cure. Mark 8:22-27, *Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking." Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.*

*Then He sent him away to his house, saying, "Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town."* A peculiarity was the gradualness of the cure. It is probable that the man had not been blind from his birth, else he could hardly have recognized men or trees at the first opening of his eyes. The complete cure needed Jesus to lay His hands on Him the second time before he saw all things clearly.

e.) At Caesarea Philippi and the First Announcement of the Passion: The next retirement of Jesus with His Apostles was to the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi, near the source of the Jordan. Modern day teachings of the life of Jesus do not incorporate geographic reference locations. We tend to think in the simple terms that Jesus lived and walked in what we presently call the country of Israel. Actually that is not the entire truth. If we take Biblical text and correlate with a modern world map of the Middle East we would find that Jesus walked and taught in Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Here at Caesarea Philippi Jesus was toward the northernmost point of His journeys on the border of Israel and what was the Golan Heights. Here, "on the geographical frontier between Judaism and heathenism" (Liddon<sup>135</sup>), our Lord questioned the sincerity and faith of the Apostles.

(1) The Voices of the Age and the External Truth: The question put to the Twelve in this remote region was: "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" Son of Man, as already stated, was the familiar name given by Jesus to Himself, to which a Messianic significance might or might not be attached, according to the prepossessions of His hearers. First the unpredictable voices of the age were recited concerning the identity of Jesus: "Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah, and others, one of the prophets." Recall the travels Jesus and the twelve had already made and the multitudes surrounding Him. Jesus is in need to take a check on the faith of the Apostles. Now, in a remote place away from the crowds and the Jews He questions the twelve. He is ready to make the first announcement of His death and He needs to teach the Apostles to use His teachings and authority when He is gone. Here, Jesus asked these questions about who people say He is and this time we find the recorded answers from the Gospel of Mark. We have already seen similar questions and answers in Matthew and John. Next, we have Jesus' specific question directed toward the twelve: "But who do you say that I am?" The reply rang out from Peter as the unchanging truth about Jesus: "You are the Christ!" In clearness, boldness, and precisely, Peter's faith once again rose to the top as he confessed his Master and Lord. Mark 8:27-30, *Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?"*

<sup>135</sup> Henry Parry Liddon, 1829-1890, *The Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*: eight lectures preached before the University of Oxford, in the year 1866, on the foundation of the late Rev. John Bampton (1867) London: Rivingtons.

*So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

*Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ." Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.* The confession embodies two truths:

(a) Peter: The Rock. Jesus did honor to the confession of His Apostle. Not by flesh and blood, but the Father had revealed the truth to him. Here at length was *a rock* on which Jesus could build a church. We must go back to their first meeting to fully understand how Peter becomes the rock upon which Christ will build His church. The Gospel of John records the first five disciples of Christ. Andrew goes and tells his brother Simon about Jesus and takes Simon to meet Him. Here is the verse (John 1:42) as recorded from four translations:

● King James Version (KJV): *And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, by interpretation, a stone.* Stone, as used here, is (Strong's<sup>136</sup>) Greek 4074, *petros*, a piece of rock, rock. Compared with Matthew 21:42, *Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"* Stone, as used here, is Greek 3037, *lithos*, a stone. By this comparison between Matthew and John we have Simon as a rock and Jesus as a stone. The same two Greek words are also translated as such in the NKJV below.

● New International Version (NIV): *And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (when translated, is Peter ).* Cephas, as used here, is (Strong's) Greek 2786, *Kephas*, goes back to Hebrew 3710, Keph, and means *rock* in both Hebrew and Greek. Compared with Matthew 4:18, *As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.* Peter, as used here, is Greek 4074, *petros*, a piece of rock, rock.

● New English Translation (NET): *Andrew brought Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You will be called Cephas" (translated Peter).*

● New King James Version (NKJV): *And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (translated, a Stone).*

In some ways all three words, Cephas, Peter and rock are all the same meaning. If there is a slight difference, it is the mistranslation illustrated above between Matthew 21:42 and John 1:42. We can accept in our English translation that a stone is a rock and a rock is a stone. However, in the original there is a difference between a rock and a stone. We most likely could also accept that both, as translated, could mean a foundation building block. Jesus is the principle building block for the spiritual church. There are those verses of scripture that allude to the church as the bride of Christ, the body of Christ or the New Jerusalem as being the bride. Paul probably explains it best in Ephesians 5:32, *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.* Peter is the leading Apostle building up the earthly church. Matthew 16:18, *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."* Both reflecting the Church as the Bride of Christ. However, there is a problem within the first steps of Peter being termed as the rock upon which the church is built. The papacy has reared an unwarrantable structure of pretensions on this passage in supposing the rock to be Peter personally and his successors in the see of Rome (none such existed; Peter was not bishop of Rome). It is not Peter the individual, but Peter the confessing apostle, Peter as representative of

<sup>136</sup> James Strong, op. cit.



all, that Christ names rock. The truth he had confessed was that which constituted him a foundation.

(b) New Testament Church and Ekklesia Founded: This is the first New Testament mention of a church.<sup>137</sup> Once again look at Matthew 16:18, *“And I also say to you that you are Peter; and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”* Ekklesia as noted by Cooper P. Abrams, III<sup>138</sup> in *The Translation of the Greek Word Ekklesia*. Abrams says:

The purpose of this paper is to show that the early translators of the English Bible mistranslated the word “ekklesia” using the English word “church” instead of “assembly” or “congregation.” This translation has helped promote the false doctrine of a universal or world wide church, a hierarchical authority over the local congregation, and the church as being a building. The purpose of this article is to show how this translation of ekklesia as “church” has adversely affected the proper understanding of the biblical doctrine of the ekklesia will demonstrate the true meaning of the word as God inspired it and reject the influence of any particular church’s false theology.

An examination of the Greek word “ekklesia” reveals that the word is properly translated into English as the *assembly* or *congregation*. It is used to refer to a group of persons that are organized together for a common purpose and who meet together. Brown<sup>139</sup> states the word was used as early as the 5th Century BCE

The Christian church, therefore, is founded on:

- The truth of Christ’s Divine Sonship;
- The truth of His Messiahship, or of His being the anointed prophet,



priest and king of the new age. A society of believers confessing these truths is a church; no society that denies these truths deserves the name. To this confessing community Jesus, still addressing Peter as representing the apostolate, gives authority to bind and loose, to admit and to exclude. Matthew 18:19-20, *“And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”* Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. Jesus, it is noted, instructed His disciples to tell no man of these things.

(2) The Cross and the Disciple: The confession of Peter prepared the way for an advance in Christ’s teaching. Matthew notes, Jesus began to speak plainly of His approaching sufferings and death from that time. Matthew 16:21, *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.* There are three solemn announcements of the Passion in the Gospel of Matthew: Matthew 16:21-23; 17:22-23; and 20:17-19. Jesus clearly foresaw, and foretold, what would happen to Him at Jerusalem. He would be killed by the authorities, but on the third day He would rise again. Following His confession, on the first announcement, Peter took it upon himself to oppose and protest the words of Jesus. Matthew 16:22, *Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!”* This action brought upon him the stern rebuke of Jesus. Matthew 16:23, *But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”*

<sup>137</sup> James Strong, Ibid., Greek 1577, Church, Ekklesia in the Greek, calling out, an assembly, congregation, church, the Church, the whole body of Christian believers.

<sup>138</sup> Cooper P. Abrams, III, *The Translation of the Greek Word “Ekklesia” as church in the English Bible and its Ramifications*, <http://www.bible-truth.org/Ekklesia.html>.

<sup>139</sup> Colin Brown, DD PhD, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (1979) Grand Rapids: Zondervan.



Peter, the Rock, who Christ illustrated that he had the strength to build a church upon, demonstrated that he was still a man when his worldly side rebuked Christ and is now identified with Satan, the tempter. This concept, that duty is only to be done when personal risk is not required, Jesus renounced for Himself, and bid His disciples renounce it also. Duty is to be completed, no matter what the consequences may be. Through this discourse we switch over from the Apostles to all the disciples. Jesus said the disciple must be prepared to deny himself and take up his personal cross. The cross is the symbol of anything distressing or painful to bear. There is a saving of life that is a losing of life. What shall a man profit if he gain the whole world, and forfeit his eternal life? Jesus had spoken, not only of His dying, but of His rising again, so now He encourages His disciples by announcing His future coming in glory to provide to every man according to His deeds. That final coming might be at some time in the distant future, but there would be those living who would see the pledge of that: Christ's coming in the triumphs and successes of His kingdom.

f.) The Transfiguration and The Epileptic Boy: The glorious event of the transfiguration took place shortly after the announcement of His passion. Jesus had spoken of His future glory, and here was pledge of it. In strange contrast with the scene of glory on the summit of the mountain was the painful sight that met Jesus and His three companions when they descended again to the plain.

(1) The Glory of the Only Begotten: Tradition connects the scene of the transfiguration with Mount Tabor. Once again tradition seems to be way out of place. Our discussion under review has taken us upon Jesus' northernmost journey and, by text, we were in the area of Caesarea Philippi. Coming to the event of the transfiguration we can only assume that Jesus is still in the same locale. The nearest mountain is Mount Hermon, along the border between Lebanon and Syria and not Mount Tabor, 50 miles away and on the southwest coast of the Sea of Galilee. Here, somewhere on this 9,000 foot mountain, maybe on one of the spurs, Jesus transfigured Himself in the presence of Peter, James and John. For prayer, Jesus had ascended the mountain with these three. It was while He was praying the wonderful change happened. The veiled glory of the Only Begotten from the Father was permitted to burst forth, overflowing His person and garments, and changing them into a dazzling brightness. His face did shine as the sun; His raiment became white as light. Matthew 17:1-2, *Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.* Heavenly visitors were recognized from their conversation as Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Jesus. A voice from an enveloping cloud attested: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 17:5, *While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"* This is the second time that God, the Father, speaks concerning His son. Little wonder the disciples were afraid, or that Peter in his confusion should say. Matthew 17:4, *Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."* This, however, was not permitted. Earth is not heaven. Glimpses of heavenly glory are given, not to separate one from earthly duty, but to prepare for the coming associated trials.

(2) Faith's Petition and its Answer: The spectacle that met the eyes of Jesus and the chosen three as they descended was extremely distressing. A man had brought his epileptic boy, an afflicted sufferer and dumb, to the Apostles to see if they could cast out the evil spirit that possessed him, but they were not able. Lack of faith was their failure as shown by Jesus. The story continues in Matthew but we shall shift over to the one left in Mark just to show that the Synoptic Gospels do parallel one another. Mark 9:17-18, *Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth,*

*gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."*

The man's appeal was now to Jesus. Mark 9:22, *"And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."*

The reply of Jesus shifted the question to the right person. Mark 9:23, *Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."*

The father of this child understood and replied. Mark 9:24, *Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"* When the multitude begun to press around, there was no call for further delay. With one energetic word Jesus expelled the unclean spirit. The first effect of Christ's approach had been to cause a violent reaction and the boy appeared as dead. Jesus, taking the boy's hand, raised him up, and he was found well.

Mark 9:25-27, *When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him.*

*And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.*

The lesson drawn to the Apostles was the importance of faith and the power of prayer. Matthew 17:19-21, *Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"*

*So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."*

Mark 9:28-29, *And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "could we not cast it out?"*

*So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."*

3.) From Private Journey through Galilee until Return from the Feast of Tabernacles: Soon after the last mentioned events Jesus passed privately through Galilee, returning later to Capernaum. Mark 9:30-33, *Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day." But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him. Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?"*

a.) Galilee and Capernaum: During the Galilean journey Jesus told His disciples His second announcement of His approaching sufferings and death, accompanied as before by the assurance of His resurrection. The disciples still could not take in the meaning of His words, though what He said made them exceedingly sorrowful. Let us review the second announcement Jesus made to His Apostles concerning His forthcoming death in the three Synoptic Gospels.

(1) Second Announcement of the Passion: Matthew 17:22-23, *Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up." And they were exceedingly sorrowful.* Mark 9:30-33, *Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day." But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him. Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among*

*yourselves on the road?” Luke 9:44-45, “Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.” But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.*

(2) The Temple Tax: The return to Capernaum was marked by an incident that raised the question of Christ’s relation to temple institutions. The collectors of tribute for the temple inquired of Peter: Matthew 17:24-27, *When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?”*

*He said, “Yes.”*

*And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?”*

*Peter said to Him, “From strangers.”*

*Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”* The origin of this tax was the half shekel of atonement money in Exodus 30:13, *This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is twenty gerahs). The half shekel shall be an offering to the Lord.* The purpose of the tax was the upkeep of the temple. (Schurer<sup>140</sup>). The usual time of payment was March, but Jesus had probably been absent and the inquiry was not made until some months later. Peter, answered at once that He did pay the tax. He knew that Christ ordinarily respected temple ordinances. It had not occurred to him that Jesus might have something to say on it, if formally challenged. Occasion therefore was taken by Jesus to gently correct Peter. Peter had but recently acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God. Jesus asked Peter if kings of the earth take tribute of their own sons? The half shekel was suitable for the subjects of the king, but not for the son of the king. Jesus did not desire another occasion for stumbling be given to the Pharisees. Jesus could easily waive this tax, as He had waived so many other traditions of the temple. Peter was instructed to cast his hook into the sea, and Jesus foretold that the fish he would bring up would have in its mouth the necessary coin. The tax was paid, yet in such a way as to show that the payment was an act of condescension of the King’s Son.

(3) Discourse on Greatness and Forgiveness: On the way to Capernaum a dispute had arisen among the disciples as to who should be greatest in the Messianic kingdom about to be realized. The fact of such disputing showed how their minds were still dominated by worldly, sensuous ideas of the kingdom. Now, in the house, Jesus took this occasion to check their spirit of ambitious rivalry, and to instruct much needed lessons on greatness and similar matters. Mark 9:33-35, *Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, “What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?” But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”*

(a) Greatness of Humility: First, by the example of a little child, Jesus teaches that humility is the root of His kingdom. Childlike humility alone provides admittance to the kingdom and the continued humility orchestrates the means to honor the kingdom. He is greatest who humbles himself most, and is the servant of all. Mark 9:36-37, *Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them, “Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent*

<sup>140</sup> Emil Schurer, op. cit.

*Me.*” He warns against slighting the little ones, or causing them to stumble, and uses language of terrible severity against those guilty of this sin. Matthew 18:3-6, *“Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”*

(b) Tolerance: The mention of receiving little ones in Christ’s name led John to remark that he had seen one casting out demons in Christ’s name, and had forbidden him, because he was not of their company. “Forbid him not,” Jesus said, “for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us” Mark 9:38-41, *Now John answered Him, saying, “Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.”*

*But Jesus said, “Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”*

(c) The Erring Brother: The subject of offences leads to the question of sins committed by one Christian brother against another. Here Christ instructs kindness and forgiveness. Only if private representations and the good offices of brethren fail, is the matter to be brought before the church. If the brother repents he is to be absolutely forgiven. If the church is compelled to interpose, its decisions are valid (under condition, however, of prayer and Christ’s presence. Matthew 18:15-20, *“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”*

(d) Parable of the Unmerciful Servant: To enforce the lesson of forgiveness Jesus speaks the parable of the unmerciful servant. This servant was forgiven much, but refuses to forgive his fellow a much smaller debt. His lord visits him with severe punishment. Only as we forgive others can we look for forgiveness. Matthew 18:21-35, *Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”*

*Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.”*

*The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, “Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.” Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.*

*But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, “Pay me what you owe!”*

*So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you all." And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.*

*Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, "You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?" And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.*

*"So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."*

b.) The Feast of Tabernacles and Other Discourses: The Gospel of John leaves a blank of many months between chapters 6 and 7, covered only by the statement: *After these things Jesus walked in Galilee* (John 7:1). The Feast of Tabernacles was now at hand (October). To this Jesus went up, and John preserves for us a full record of His appearance, discourses and actions there.

(1) The Private Journey and Divided Opinions: The brothers of Jesus, still unpersuaded of His claims, had urged Jesus to go up with them to the feast. *Go up*, in their sense, included a public manifestation of Himself as the Messiah. Jesus replied that His time for this had not yet come. Afterward He went up quietly. John 7:1-10, *After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."* For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

*Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come."* When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee. But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. In the midst of the feast Jesus appeared in the temple as a teacher. The comments made about Jesus at the feast before His arrival vividly reflect the divided state of opinion regarding Him. "He is a good man," thought some.

"Not so," said others. His teaching evoked even deeper division.

While some said, "Thou hast a demon."

Others argued, "When the Christ shall come, will he do more signs?"

Some declared, "This is a true prophet!" or "This is the Christ!"

Others objected that the Christ was to come out of Bethlehem, not Galilee. Yet no one dared to take the step of persecuting Him. John 7:12-13, *And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people."* However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

(2) The Test of Truth, Christ's Self Witness and A Failed Purpose: Christ's wisdom and use of the Scriptures caused great surprise. John 7:14-15, *Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"* Jesus met this surprise by stating that His knowledge was from the Father. He made reference to the division of opinion about Him by laying down the principle that knowledge of the truth was the result of an obedient will. John 7:16-19, *Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know*

concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him. Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?" The people objected, stating that He had a demon. They wanted to know who was trying to kill Him? John 7:20-24, *The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"*

*Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."*

In the mean time others in Jerusalem who knew who Jesus was asked, "Wasn't He the one they wanted to kill?"

It was objected that they knew who Jesus was, and whence He came. In a sense, Jesus replied, this was true, in a deeper sense, it was not. He came from the Father, whom they knew not. John 7:25-31, *Now some of them from Jerusalem said, "Is this not He whom they seek to kill? But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from."*

*Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, "You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me."*

*Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. And many of the people believed in Him, and said, "When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?"*

The last and great day of the feast brought with it a new self witness. Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me. . . . from within him shall flow rivers of living water." The words are understood to have reference to the ceremony of pouring out a libation of water at this feast. The libation, in turn, commemorated the gift of water when the rock was struck.

Meanwhile, the chief priests and Pharisees had sent officers to apprehend Jesus, but they returned without Him. "Why did ye not bring him?"

The reply was confounding, "Never man so spake."

The reply was a poor one, "Are ye also led astray?" In vain Nicodemus, who was present, tried to put in a moderating word. It was very clear toward what end hate like this was moving.

John 7:37-53, *On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

*Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ."*

*But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.*

*Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?"*

*The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"*

*Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."*

*Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"*

*They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee." And everyone went to his own house.*

(3) The Woman Taken in Adultery: The discourses at the feast are at this point interrupted by the episode of the woman taken in adultery, which, by general consent, does not belong to the original text of the Gospel.<sup>141</sup> It is probably, however, an authentic incident, and illustrates, on the one hand, the eagerness of the official classes to find an accusation against Jesus, and, on the other, the Savior's dignity and wisdom in foiling such attempts.

(4) Continued Self Witness: Jesus put forth even higher claims than in the foregoing discourse in His continued teaching. As He had applied to Himself the water from the rock, so now He applied to Himself the symbolic meaning of the two great candelabra. Jesus used not only parables but symbolism as well. These were lit in the temple court during the feast and bore reference to the pillar of fire and cloud in the wilderness as the Israelites traveled with Moses. "I am the light of the world," said Jesus. John 8:12, *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."* Only a Divine person could put forth such a claim as that.

The Jews objected that they had only His witness to Himself. Jesus replied that no other could bear adequate witness of Him, for He alone knew from where He came and where He was going. John 8:13-19, *The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."*

*Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going. You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me."*

*Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?"*

*Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also."* This discourse, delivered in the area of the temple treasury, was soon followed by another, yet no man dared to touch Him. In this continued discourse Jesus warned the Jews of the fate their unbelief would cause them: "You will die in your sins." John 8:23-24, *And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."* Shortly after this we find Jesus addressing the Jews who believed Him in the preceding discussion. He urged them to continue in His word as the condition of true freedom. John 8:31-32, *Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

However, resentment was again aroused at the suggestion that the Jews, Abraham's seed, were not free. Jesus made clear that the real bondage was that of sin. Only the Son could make them spiritually free. Descent from Abraham meant nothing, if the spirit was of the devil. John 8:33-47, *They answered*

<sup>141</sup> Dr Frank Charles Thompson, op. cit., NIV note inserted at John 7:53 indicating 7:53 to 8:11 not original text.



Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, ‘You will be made free?’”

Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.”

They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.”

Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father.”

Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.”

Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears God’s words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.”

Another conflict was provoked by the saying, “If a man keeps my word, he shall never see death.” John 8:51, “Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.” Did Jesus make Himself greater than Abraham? The controversy that ensued resulted in the sublime utterance, “Before Abraham was born, I am.” John 8:58, *Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”* The Jews would have stoned Him, but Jesus eluded them, and departed. John 8:59, *Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*

(5) The Cure of the Blind Man: The Feast of Tabernacles was past, however Jesus was still in Jerusalem. John, chapter 9, becomes the source for our next incident. On a certain Sabbath Jesus saw a blind man, a beggar, well known to have been blind from his birth. John 9:2, *And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”*

The narrative of the cure and examination of this blind man is illustrated by Paley<sup>142</sup> in its unequalled circumstances. The man, cured in strange but symbolic fashion by the anointing of his eyes with clay (thereby apparently sealing them more firmly), then washing in the Pool of Siloam, became an object of immediate interest. John 9:6-7, *When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.*

Every effort was made by the Pharisees to shake his testimony as to the miracle that had been performed. The man, however, held to his story, and his parents could only confirm the fact that their son had been born blind, and now could see. John 9:20-23, *His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself.” His*

<sup>142</sup> William Paley, DD, 1743-1805, *Natural Theology: or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity*, 12th ed. (1809), London: J. Faulder.

parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." The Pharisees themselves were divided, some reasoning that Jesus could not be of God because He had broken the Sabbath, the old charge against Him.

Others, like Nicodemus, stood on the fact that a man who was a sinner could not do such signs. John 9:15-16, *Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."*

*Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath."*

*Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.*

The healed man applied the logic of common sense. John 9:33, *"If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."*

The Pharisees, incapable of accepting the wonder, could only cast him out of the synagogue. John 9:34, *They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.*

Jesus found him, and brought him to full confession of faith in Himself. John 9:35-38, *Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"*

*He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"*

*And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you."*

*Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.* This is the second person, outside of the Apostles, to whom Jesus revealed His true self. The other was the woman at the well.

(6) The Good Shepherd: Yet another name for Jesus is on record arising out of this incident. Jesus continued His reply to the question of the Pharisees in John 9:40, "Are we also blind?"

At this time Jesus spoke to them His discourse on the Good Shepherd. Flocks in eastern countries are gathered at night into an enclosure surrounded by a wall or palisade. This is the fold, that is under the care of a gatekeeper, who opens the closely barred door to the shepherds in the morning. As contrasted with the legitimate shepherds, the false shepherds enter not by the door, but climb over some other way. The allusion is to priests, scribes, Pharisees and generally to all, in any age, who claim an authority within the church unsanctioned by God (Godet<sup>143</sup>).

Jesus now gathers up the truth in its relation to Himself as the Supreme Shepherd. He is not only the Shepherd watching over His flock, but the point of entry: the door to the church. John 10: 7-14, *Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own."* To those who enter by Him there is given security, liberty, provision. Christ is preeminently all that a faithful shepherd ought to be. The highest proof of His love is that, as the Good Shepherd, He lays down His life for the sheep. This laying down of His life is not an accident, but is

<sup>143</sup> Frederic Louis Godet, op. cit.

His free, voluntary act.

Again there was division among the Jews because of these remarkable sayings. John 10:19-21, *Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings.*

*And many of them said, "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?"*

*Others said, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"*

(a) Chronological Note: There is little doubt that Jesus returned to Galilee after this visit to Jerusalem, though John does not mention the fact. After a short interval, He took His final departure southward toward Jerusalem. The chronology of this closing period in Galilee is somewhat uncertain. Some would place the visit to the Feast of Tabernacles before the withdrawal to Caesarea Philippi, or even earlier (Andrews<sup>144</sup>), but the order adopted above appears preferable.

D. Last Journey to Jerusalem and Jesus in Perea: An interval of two months has elapsed between verses 21 and 22 in John 10, from the Feast of Tabernacles (October) until the Feast of Dedication (December).

1. Departure from Galilee: This period witnessed the final withdrawal of Jesus from Galilee. Probably while yet in Galilee He sent forth the seventy disciples to prepare His way in the cities through which He would travel. Luke 10:1, *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.* Repulsed on the borders of Samaria, He passed over into Perea, where he exercised a considerable ministry. The record of this period belongs in great part to the writings of Luke. Luke seems to have had a rich special source relating to various events from chapter 9, verse 51 to chapter 19, verse 28 with the entry into Jerusalem. The discourses in Luke embrace many passages and sections found in other connections in Matthew. It is difficult to determine their proper chronological order, as doubtless sometimes happens because portions between Matthew, Mark and Luke were not repeated.

a. Leaving Galilee until the Feast of Dedication: Jesus steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem conscious that He went to suffer and die. Luke 9:51-52a, *Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face.*

1.) Rejected by Samaria: His route was first by Samaria, but here at a border village, the messengers He sent before Him were repulsed. Most likely, He Himself on His arrival was rejected because of His obvious intention to go to Jerusalem. James and John wished to imitate Elijah in calling down fire from heaven on the rejecters, but Jesus rebuked them for their thought. Luke 9:52b-55, *And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"*

*But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village.*

2.) Mission of the Seventy: In the present connection Luke inserts the incidents of the three aspirants (wannabes) formerly considered. It has been suggested that the second and third cases may belong to this period.

A new and significant step was now taken by Jesus. He sent out seventy disciples, who should go before Him to announce His coming in the cities and villages He was about to visit. The number sent indicates how large a following Jesus had now acquired. The directions given to the messengers are similar

<sup>144</sup> Samuel James Andrews, op. cit.

to those formerly given to the Twelve. In this mission Jesus no longer made any secret of His Messianic character. The messengers were to proclaim that the kingdom of God was come nigh to them in connection with His impending visit. The mission implies that a definite route was marked out by Jesus for Himself, but this would be subject to modification according to the reception of His emissaries. The circuit need not have occupied a long time with so many engaged in it. The results show that it aroused strong interest. Later the disciples returned elated with their success, emphasizing their victory over the demons. Jesus instructed them to rejoice instead knowing that their names were written in heaven. Luke 10:1-24, *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city."*

*"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."*

*Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."*

*And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

*In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."*

3.) The Lawyer's Question and the Parable of the Good Samaritan: Jesus had now passed beyond the Jordan into Perea, and vast crowds waited on His teaching. At one place a lawyer put what he meant to be a testing question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus referred him to the great commandments of love of God and one's neighbor. The lawyer further queried, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus spoke to him the immortal parable of the Good Samaritan, and asked who proved neighbor to him who fell among the robbers.

The lawyer could give but one answer, "He that showed mercy on him."

"Go," said Jesus, "and do thou likewise."

Luke 10:25-37, *And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*

*He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"*

*So he answered and said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'"*

*And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."*

*But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*

*Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'"*

*"So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"*

*And he said, "He who showed mercy on him."*

*Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

The incident of Mary and Martha, that Luke inserts here (verses 38-42), would fit better later, when Jesus was nearer Bethany.

4.) Discourses, Parables, and Miracles: At this point in scripture Luke brings together a variety of discourses, warnings and exhortations. Some of these have already been noticed in earlier contexts. Other discourses are incorporated in Luke's writings that do not appear in the other synoptic gospels. We must remember that even with Divine inspiration we are still dealing with men who penned these words. The differences between the synoptic gospels could be a matter of memory of the writer, more so than inspiration. This is probably the case with the Lord's Prayer, with portions of what Matthew includes in the Sermon on the Mount, and in other discourses.

a.) Unique Parables only in Luke: Narratives of originality penned by Luke in the chapters between 11 and 19 may be noted by such passages as:

(1) The Friend at Midnight: Luke 11:5-8, *And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him.' And he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you.' I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs."*

(2) The incident of the man who wished Jesus to bid his brother divide his inheritance with him, to whom Jesus spoke the parable of the Rich Fool: Luke 12:13-21, *Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."*

*But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."*

*Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.' And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'"*

*"But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

(3) The parable of the Barren Fig Tree, called forth by the disposition to regard certain Galileans whom Pilate had slain in a tumult at the temple, and eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam had fallen, as sinners above others: "Nay," said Jesus, "but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13:1-9, *There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*

*And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."*

*He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?'"*

*"But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'"*

(4) Most of the teaching in chapter 14. Some will be referred below.

(5) Pharisee invited Jesus to dine, and his astonishment at the Lord's neglect of the customary cleansing before eating. Luke 11:37-44, *And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat. When the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner. Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness. Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also? But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you. But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them."*

(6) Fury to which the scribes and Pharisees were aroused by the severity of Christ's denunciations. Luke 11:53-54, *And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.*

(7) Pharisees try to frighten Jesus from the district by telling Him that Herod would kill Him. Jesus instructed them to tell that fox that His work would go on uninterruptedly in the brief space that remained until He was perfected. Luke 13:31-33, *On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You."*

*And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.' Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow,*

*and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.”*

(8) Woe to Jerusalem: Given by Matthew in his discourse. Luke 13:34-35, *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”* Matthew 23:37-39, *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”*

b) The Infirm Woman and The Dropsied Man: In connection with the miracles in this section, the casting out of the demon that was mute, is evidently the same incident as that already noted in Matthew. Luke 11:14, *And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled.* Matthew 12:22, *Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.* Two other miracles are connected with the old accusation of Sabbath breaking. One was the healing in a synagogue on the Sabbath day of a woman bowed down for 18 years with a spirit of infirmity. Luke 13:10-17, *Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.” And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.*

*But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.”*

*The Lord then answered him and said, “Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it? So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?” And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.*

The other miracle was the cure on the Sabbath of a man afflicted with dropsy at a feast to which Jesus had been invited in the house of a ruler of the Pharisees. Luke 14:1-6, *Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go.*

*Then He answered them, saying, “Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?” And they could not answer Him regarding these things.* The motive of the Pharisee’s invitation was hostile as in most such cases. In both instances Jesus met the objection in the same way, by appealing to their own acts of humanity to their animals on the Sabbath.

c) Parable of the Great Supper: This feast at the Pharisee’s house had an interesting sequel in the discourse. It led Jesus to utter against vain glory in feasting, and on the spirit of love that would prompt the table being spread for the helpless and destitute rather than for the selfish enjoyment of the select few. In answer to a pious comment of one of the guests, Jesus answered with the parable of the

Great Supper. Luke 14:7-24, *So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: “When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”*

*Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, “Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!”*

*Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’”* The parable, has in its climax the invitation to bring in the poor, maimed, blind, and those from the highways and hedges. This was a commentary on the counsels He had just given to the Pharisees. It also had its deeper lesson in picturing the rejection by the Jews of the invitation to the feast God had made for them in His kingdom, and the call that would be given to the Gentiles to take their place.

d.) Counting the Cost: The injunctions to the multitudes as to the sacrifice and cross bearing involved in discipleship are pointed to by the examples of a man building a tower, and a king going to war, who count the cost before entering on their enterprises. Luke 14:25-35, *Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”*

*“Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”*



5.) Mary and Martha: At or about this time for the Feast of Dedication it seems fitting for the introduction of the episode of Mary and Martha that Luke narrates a little earlier. Luke 10:38-42, *Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.*

*But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."*

*And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."* The village that Jesus entered was no doubt Bethany. The picture given by Luke of the contrasted dispositions of the two sisters: Martha active and serving; Mary retiring and contemplative entirely corresponds with that in John. Martha busied herself with preparations for the meal, Mary sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word. To Martha's complaint, as if her sister were idling, Jesus gave the memorable answer, "One thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part."

6.) Feast of Dedication: The Feast of Dedication, held in December, was in commemoration of the cleansing of the temple and restoration of its worship after its desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes<sup>145</sup> (164 BCE). Great excitement was occasioned by the appearance of Jesus at this feast, and some asked, "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus said He had told them, and His works attested His claim, but they were not of His true flock, and would not believe. To His own sheep He gave eternal life. John 10:22-39, *Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."*

*Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."*

*Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?"*

*The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*

*Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, I said, 'You are gods?' If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God?' If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.*

b. From the House at Bethabara until the Raising of Lazarus: After leaving Jerusalem Jesus went beyond Jordan again to the place where John had first baptized. John 10:40, *And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed.* There He most likely stayed until His triumphant entry into Jerusalem about three months later. This spot may be regarded now as His headquarters from which excursions would be made to places in the

<sup>145</sup> Antiochus IV Epiphanes, op. cit.

neighborhood. Several of the incidents recorded by Luke are probably connected with this sojourn.

1.) Parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Piece of Silver, and the Prodigal Son: The stronger the opposition of scribes and Pharisees to Jesus became, the more the classes regarded as outcast felt drawn to Him. He did not repel them, as the Pharisees did, but ate and drank with them. Publicans and sinners gathered to His teaching, and He associated with them. The complaining was great: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

The defense of Jesus was in parables. The Pharisees' reproach may be thanked for three of the most beautiful parables Jesus ever spoke. They were the Lost Sheep; the Lost Piece of Silver; and the Prodigal Son. Why does the shepherd rejoice more over the one lost sheep brought back than over the ninety-nine that have not gone astray? Luke 15:1-7, *1 Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them." So He spoke this parable to them, saying: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!" I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.*

Why does the woman rejoice more over the recovery of her lost drachma than over all the coins safe in her keeping? Luke 15:8-10, "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Why does the father rejoice more over the prodigal son coming back in rags and penitent from the far off country than over the obedient son that had never left home? Luke 15:11-32, *Then He said: A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father,*

*"Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me."*

*So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.'" And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son."*

*But the father said to his servants, "Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." And they began to be merry. Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.*

*And he said to him, "Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf." But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him.*

*So he answered and said to his father, "Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him."*

*And he said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found."*

These parables were gateways into the innermost heart of God. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents more so than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

2.) Parables of the Unjust Steward, the Rich Man and Lazarus: Two other parables were spoken at this time, that of the Unjust Steward and that of the Rich Man and Lazarus (verses 19-31). The dishonest steward, about to be dismissed, utilized his opportunities, still dishonestly, to make friends of his master's creditors. Luke 16:1-13, *He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'*"

*Then the steward said within himself, "What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses." So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, "How much do you owe my master?"*

*And he said, "A hundred measures of oil."*

*So he said to him, "Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty."*

*Then he said to another, "And how much do you owe?"*

*So he said, "A hundred measures of wheat."*

*And he said to him, "Take your bill, and write eighty."*

*"So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?"*

*"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."*

The rich man, pampered in luxury, let the afflicted Lazarus starve at his gate. The positions are reversed at death, in Hades: the rich man is in torment, stripped of all he had enjoyed; the poor man is at rest in Abraham's bosom, compensated for all he suffered. It is character, not outward estate, that determines destiny. The unmerciful are doomed. Even a messenger from the unseen world will not save men, if they hear not Moses and the prophets. Luke 16:19-31, *There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died,*

and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

But Abraham said, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us."

Then he said, "I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment."

Abraham said to him, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."

And he said, "No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent."

But he said to him, "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead."

3.) The Summons to Bethany and Raising of Lazarus: While Jesus was in transJordan Bethabara, or in its neighborhood, a message came to Him from the house of Martha and Mary in the Judean Bethany that His friend Lazarus was ill. The conduct of Jesus seemed strange, for He stayed where He was another two days. As the story shows, this was only for the end of a yet more wonderful manifestation of His power and love, to the glory of God. Meanwhile Lazarus died, and was buried. When Jesus announced His intention of going into Judea, the disciples sought hard to persuade Him not to go. Jesus was not moved by the fears they suggested and went to Bethany.

He reached Bethany (a distance of between 20 and 30 miles) on the fourth day after the burial of Lazarus. He was met on the outskirts by Martha, and afterward by Mary, both plunged in deep sorrow. Both stated the same thing: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." To Martha Jesus gave the pledge, "Your brother shall rise again," strengthening the faith she already had expressed in Him by announcing Himself as *the resurrection, and the life*. However, at Mary's words He was deeply moved, and asked to be taken to the tomb. Here, it is recorded, *Jesus wept*. The only other instance of His weeping in the Gospels was as He looked on lost Jerusalem. Luke 19:41, *Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it*. The proof of love was manifest, but some, as usual, suggested blame that this miracle worker had not prevented His friend's death.

Arriving at the tomb, Jesus, still groaning in Himself, asked for the stone at its mouth to be removed, and, after prayer, spoke with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" The spirit returned, and the man who had been dead came out still bound with his grave clothes. He was released and restored to his sisters. John 11:1-44, *Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.*

Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?"

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles,

*because the light is not in him.” These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.”*

*Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.”*

*Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”*

*So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.*

*Then Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”*

*Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”*

*Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”*

*Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*

*She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, “The Teacher has come and is calling for you.” As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him.*

*Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, “She is going to the tomb to weep there.”*

*Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”*

*Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, “Where have you laid him?”*

*They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept.*


*Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!”*

*And some of them said, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?”*

*Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.”*

*Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.”*

*Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?” Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.” Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.”*



Even this mighty deed did not alter the mind of the Pharisees who held a council and decided, on the advice of Caiaphas, that for the safety of the nation it was expedient that this man should die. John 11:45-53, *Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."*

*And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death.*

The circumstance of this beautiful narrative speaks entirely of the compassion, love for mankind and the historical truth of the events. To illustrate the Glory of God, this is now the third time Jesus has performed such a miracle as that of raising to life a person who was dead.

For a moment let us recall the other events that preceded the raising of Lazarus. The first such event was performed in the village of Nain, where Jesus raised the widow's son. Luke 7:11-17, *Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.*

*Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.*

The second occurrence of Jesus raising a person from the dead was the raising of Jairus' daughter. Luke 8:49-56, *While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher."*

*But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.*

One other item must be recalled. Remember that Jesus had told the scribes and Pharisees that the only sign they would be given was that of Jonah. To do justice to the statement that Jesus makes we must, out of necessity, show you all three incidents where Jesus makes this statement. Matthew 12:39-41, *But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it,*

*because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. Secondly, Matthew 16:4, “A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.” And He left them and departed. Finally, Luke 11:29-30, And while the crowds were thickly gathered together; He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.”*

The important verse is Matthew 12:40. This is a statement directly from Jesus indicating He must be three days and three nights in the grave. Jesus uses another illustration in this verse. What did He say about Jonah? Didn't He say that “*Jonah was three days and three night in the belly of the great fish?*” Jesus did not say if Jonah was alive or dead while in the great fish and traditional teaching would tell us Jonah was alive during this period! Really? What does the story of Jonah say? We find the book of Jonah between the Books of Obadiah and Micah and only four chapters in length. The portion we need to study is the last verse of chapter one along with part of the prayer of Jonah in chapter two. Look first at Jonah chapter 1:17, *Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights*. Notice two things in this verse, first, the LORD (that means God) prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. Secondly, notice that Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. Now, notice something that is not stated. There is no statement saying Jonah was alive or dead in this verse. Once again we can find an answer in Biblical text, away from the teachings of denominational training. This writer interprets this passage of scripture to read that Jonah was dead for these three days and three nights. Look at the wording recorded in the following verses:

Jonah 2:1, *Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's belly*. This may have been the last conscious thing Jonah did as he was drowning. Was he really dead? Well, read the next verse to see if you agree.

Jonah 2:2, *And he said: “I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, and He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice.”* You did see where it says Jonah was dead, didn't you? Notice this verse does not say out of the *belly of the fish*, instead it says out of the *belly of Sheol*. I need to explain Sheol. Sheol is the Hebrew word for grave, or the representation of death. So Jonah himself tells us he had died. Now, let's confirm that statement in verse 6:

Jonah 2:6, *I went down to the moorings of the mountains; the earth with its bars closed behind me forever; yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God*. There are two confirmations that Jonah was dead in this one verse. Jonah says the *earth with its bars closed behind me forever*. Isn't that being buried? But look at the next statement: *Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God*. The term *from the pit* means from the grave. My understanding is that Jonah admitted his life was saved by God alone (after three days and three night).

If you agree Jonah was dead, then we are ready to find some sort of confirmation that there was a resurrection of Jonah. This is found in verse ten: Jonah 2:10, *So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land*. It was God who brought Jonah back from the grave by first having the great fish vomit him out onto dry land. All this is fine and good, but what does it have to do with the study of John? Now pick up one more reference we jumped over in chapter ten. John 10:17-18, *“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”* The command to resurrect Jonah came from God and in these two verses, we understand God has given this capability to Jesus. Jesus used that capability on three different occasions to raise someone from the dead. We also know from all that we have gone through that all this is leading to one thing: The passion of the Christ!

The objections raised by critical writers centers really in their aversion to the miracle as such. The hardness of mankind's soul and spirit had taken shape over many millennia since the first Adam committed the original sin in the Garden of Eden. At the time of Jesus the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, those Jesus announced as Jews, for the most part wanted him dead. This was not because of a religious viewpoint but from a status, position or nationalism position. Jesus was getting into their pride and taking away their authority to control daily life through the temple traditions. Now, two thousand years later we can find the same concepts still existing. Some denominations denounce these acts of Jesus as make believe and that Jesus was not the Son of God, nor did He die and rise again. Other denominations adhere to their brand of tradition and ceremony. Pride, control, position, and authority still stand in the way of some people believing in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the world.

c. From the Retirement to Ephraim until the Arrival at Bethany: The hostility of the ruling classes was now so pronounced that, in the few weeks that remained until Jesus should go up to the Passover, He deemed it advisable to abide in privacy at a city called Ephraim.

1.) Retreat to Ephraim: That He was in secrecy during this period is implied in the statement that if anyone knew where He was, he was to inform the chief priests and Pharisees. The retirement would be for Jesus a period of preparation for the ordeal before Him, as the wilderness had been for the commencement of His ministry. John 11:54-57, *Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?" Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.*

2.) The Journey Resumed: On His leaving this retreat to resume His journey toward Jerusalem the narratives again become rich in incident and teaching.

3.) Cure of the Lepers: It is not easy to define the route that brought Jesus again to the border line between Samaria and Galilee. In traversing this region, He was met by ten lepers, who besought Him for a cure. Jesus instructed them to go and show themselves to the priests, and on the way they were cleansed. Only one of the ten, and he a Samaritan, returned to give thanks and glorify God. Gratitude appeared in the unlikely quarter. Luke 17:11-19, *Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"*

*So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."*

4.) Pharisaic Questionings: At some point in this journey the Pharisees sought to entrap Jesus on the question of divorce.

a.) Divorce: Was it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? Jesus in reply admitted the permission to divorce given by Moses, but declared that this was for the hardness of their hearts, and went back to the original institution of marriage in which the two so joined were declared to be one flesh. Only one cause is admissible as grounds for separation, divorce and remarriage. Matthew



19:3-12, *The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?”*

*And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”*

*They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”*

*He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”*

*His disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry.”*

*But He said to them, “All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: for there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother’s womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it.”*

Mark 10:2-12, *The Pharisees came and asked Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” testing Him.*

*And He answered and said to them, “What did Moses command you?”*

*They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her.”*

*And Jesus answered and said to them, “Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh;’ so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter. So He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”*

b.) Coming of the Kingdom: Another question asked by the Pharisees of Jesus was as to when the kingdom of God should come. The expectation excited by His own ministry and claims was that it was near. When should it appear? Rebuking their worldly ideas, Jesus warned them that the kingdom did not come with observation, was not a See, here! See, there!, it was within them, or in their midst, though they did not perceive it. In the last decisive coming of the Son of Man there would be no doubt as to His presence. He adds exhortations as to the suddenness of His coming, and the separations that would ensue. Luke 17:20-37, *Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” Then He said to the disciples, “The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, ‘Look here!’ or ‘Look there!’ Do not go after them or follow them. For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days*

*of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."*

*And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?"*

*So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."*

c.) Parable of the Unjust Judge: In close connection with the foregoing, as furnishing the ground for the certainty that this day of the Son of Man would come, Jesus spoke the parable of the unjust judge. This judge, though heedless of the claims of right, yet yielded to the widow's petition, and granted her justice against her adversary. How much more surely will the righteous, long-suffering God avenge His own elect, who cry unto Him day and night! Yet men, in that supreme hour, will almost have lost faith in His coming. A series of sayings and incidents at this time throw light upon the spirit of the kingdom. Luke 18:1-8, *Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' Then the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"*

5.) The Spirit of the Kingdom: The spirit of self-righteousness is rebuked and humble penitence as the condition of acceptance is enforced in the parable of the Pharisee and Publican.

(a) Parable of Pharisee and Publican: The Pharisee posing in his self-complacency at his fastings and tithes, and thanking God for his superiority to others, is set in vivid contrast to the abased publican, standing afar off, and able only to say, "God, be thou merciful to me a sinner." Yet it was he who went down to his house justified. Luke 18:9-14, *Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."*

(b) Blessing of the Babies: A similar lesson is inculcated in the beautiful incident of the blessing of the babes. The disciples rebuked the mothers for bringing their little ones, but Jesus, moved with indignation, received and blessed the babes, declaring that to such (to them and those of like spirit) belonged the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 19:13-15, *Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.*

Mark 10:13-16, *Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.*

Luke 18:15-17, *Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."*

(c) The Rich Young Ruler: A third illustration, this time of the peril of covetousness, is afforded by the incident of the rich young ruler. This amiable, blameless, and evidently sincere young man knelt, and addressed Jesus as *Good Teacher*. He then asked what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus first declined the term *good*, in the easy, conventional sense in which it was applied, then referred the ruler to the commandments as the standard of doing. All these, however, the young man declared he had observed from his youth up. He did not know himself. Jesus saw the secret hold his riches had upon his soul, and revealed it by the searching word, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that which thou hast." That was enough. The young man could not yield up his *great possessions*, and went away sorrowful. Jesus gave an earnest warning against the love of riches based on the rich young ruler's refusal. He points out, in answer to a question of Peter, that loss for His sake in this life is met with overwhelmingly great compensations in the life to come. Matthew 19:16-30, *Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"*

*So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."*

*He said to Him, "Which ones?"*

*Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

*The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"*

*Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor; and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*

*Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*

*When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"*

*But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*

*Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"*

*So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first."*

Mark 10:17-31, *Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”*

*So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother.”*

*And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.”*

*Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*

*Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!” And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, “Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”*

*And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, “Who then can be saved?”*

*But Jesus looked at them and said, “With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.”*

*Then Peter began to say to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.”*

*So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”*

Luke 18:18-30, *Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”*

*So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.*

*You know the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother.”*

*And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.”*

*So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me. But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.*

*And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”*

*And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?”*

*But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”*

*Then Peter said, “See, we have left all and followed You.”*

*So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”*

6.) Third Announcement of the Passion: Not unconnected with the foregoing teachings is the third solemn announcement to the disciples of His approaching sufferings and death, followed by resurrection. It was so hard to be persuaded that the kingdom was not immediately to be set up in glory.

The disciples had been *amazed* and *afraid* due to something strange in the aspect and walk of Jesus as they were on the way, going to Jerusalem. His words gave the explanation. With them should be taken what is said in a succeeding incident of His baptism of suffering. Matthew 20:17-19, *Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."*

Mark 10:32-34, *Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."*

Luke 18:31-33, *Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."*

7.) The Rewards of the Kingdom: The spirit of the kingdom and sacrifice for the kingdom have already been associated with the idea of reward, but the principles underlying this reward are now made the subject of special teaching. First the lesson is communicated that reward in the kingdom is not according to any legal rule, but is governed by a divine equity, in accordance with which the last may often be equal to, or take precedence of, the first.

a.) Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard: The laborers were hired at different hours, yet all at the end received the same wage. The murmuring at the generosity of the householder of those who had worked longest betrayed a defectiveness of spirit that may explain why they were not more highly rewarded. The kingdom is a gift of grace in the sum total of its blessings, one and the same to all. Matthew 20:1-16, *For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you." So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?"*

*They said to him, "Because no one hired us."*

*He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive." So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, "Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first." And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius.*

*And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, saying, "These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day."*

*But he answered one of them and said, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because*

*I am good?" So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.*

b.) The Sons of Zebedee: Still there are distinctions of honor in God's kingdom, but these are not arbitrarily made. This is the lesson taught by Jesus when He replied to the plea of the mother of the sons of Zebedee, James and John. Apparently, the apostles themselves had concurred, that they might sit one on the right hand and the other on the left hand in His kingdom. It was a bold and ambitious request, and naturally moved the indignation of the other apostles. Still it was grounded in a certain nobility of spirit, for when Jesus asked if they were able to drink of His cup and be baptized with His baptism, they answered, "We are able." Jesus told them they should share that lot of suffering, but to sit on His right hand and on His left were not favors that could be arbitrarily bestowed. These positions would be given to those for whom it had been prepared of His Father. The Father alone was judge with regard to the character and fitness of the ones who would be so honored. Jesus went on to rebuke the spirit that led one to seek prominence over another, and laid down the essential law: Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister, enforcing it by His own never-to-be-forgotten example: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom, for many. Matthew 20:20-28, *Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.*

*And He said to her, "What do you wish?"*

*She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."*

*But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"*

*They said to Him, "We are able."*

*So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."*

*And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

*Mark 10:35-45, Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask."*

*And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?"*

*They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."*

*But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"*

*They said to Him, "We are able."*

*So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared."*

*And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be*

*so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*

8.) Jesus at Jericho: Jesus accompanied by a great throng, possibly of pilgrims to the feast, drew near to the influential city of Jericho, in the Jordan valley about 17 miles distant from Jerusalem. Here two notable incidents marked His progress.

a.) The Cure of Bartimaeus: There appears to be a different opinion between the writers of the synoptic gospels as to when the healing of Bartimaeus occurred. Luke indicates it was as they approached the city, and Matthew and Mark indicate it was as they were leaving the city. Here is the story. A blind beggar, Bartimaeus, hearing that *Jesus the Nazarene* was passing by, loudly called on Him as the *Son of David* to have mercy on him. The multitude would have restrained the man, but their rebukes only made him the more urgent in his cries. Jesus stopped in His way, called the blind man to Him, then, when he came, questioned him as to his request and healed him. The cry of the beggar shows that Jesus was known by His Davidic descent, if not the Messiahship. Matthew varies from the other evangelists in speaking of two blind men. Matthew and Mark record that the cure takes place on leaving, not on entering the city. Not improbably there are two healings, one on entering Jericho, the other on going from the city, and Matthew, after his fashion, groups them together. Luke’s language is really indefinite and reads that it occurred, literally, as they were near to Jericho. Matthew 20:29-34, *Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!”*

*Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!”*

*So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, “What do you want Me to do for you?”*

*They said to Him, “Lord, that our eyes may be opened.”*

*So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.*

Mark 10:46-52, *Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging.*

*And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”*

*Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”*

*So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, “Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.” And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.*

*So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?”*

*The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”*

*Then Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.*

Luke 18:35-43, *Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.*

*And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”*

*Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”*

*So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?"*

*He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight."*

*Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.*

b.) Zacchaeus the Tax Collector: Jesus' entrance into Jericho was signaled by a more striking incident. Zacchaeus, one of the chief tax collectors in the city was rich, but held in reproach because of his occupation. Being short of stature, Zacchaeus had climbed into the branches of a sycamore tree to see Jesus as He passed. To his amazement and that of the crowd, Jesus stopped on His way, and called Zacchaeus by name to hasten him to come down. He told Zacchaeus that He must stay at his house that day. Zacchaeus joyfully received Him, and completely changed his views of duty. He declared his decision to give half his goods to the poor, and to restore fourfold anything he might have taken by false accusation. It was a revolution in the man's soul, worked by love. Luke 19:1-10, *Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.*

*And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.*

*But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."*

*Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."*

*And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

c.) Parable of the Pounds: The expectations of the multitude were that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. Jesus forewarned them that the consummation they looked for might be longer delayed than they thought. He impressed on them the need for loyalty, faithfulness and diligence, if that day, when it came, was not to prove disastrous to them. This led Jesus to speak the parable of the pounds (money). A nobleman went into a *far country* to receive a kingdom. In his absence his ten servants were to continue to carry on his business and each servant began with an equal amount of money. On his return the faithful servants were rewarded in proportion to their diligence, the faithless one lost what he had, and the rebellious citizens were destroyed. Thus Jesus foretold the doom that would overtake those who were plotting against Him, and checked hopes that disregarded the moral conditions of honor in His kingdom. Luke 19:11-27, *Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.*

*So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, "Do business till I come."*

*But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us." And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might*



*know how much every man had gained by trading.*

*Then came the first, saying, "Master, your mina has earned ten minas."*

*And he said to him, "Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities."*

*And the second came, saying, "Master, your mina has earned five minas."*

*Likewise he said to him, "You also be over five cities."*

*Then another came, saying, "Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow."*

*And he said to him, "Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?" And he said to those who stood by, "Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas."*

*But they said to him, "Master, he has ten minas."*

*"For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me."*

(1) Arrival at Bethany: Jesus moved on to Bethany from Jericho. This was the village of Lazarus and his sisters. The next events belong to His stop here before His public entrance into Jerusalem.

E. The Passion Week: Betrayal, Trial and Crucifixion: We reach now the closing week and last solemn events of the earthly life of Jesus.

1. Importance of the Last Events: The importance attached to this part of their narratives is seen by the space the writers of the Gospels devote to it. Of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark fully one-third is devoted to the events of the Passion Week and their sequel in the resurrection. Luke has several chapters and John gives half his Gospel to the same period. It is obvious that in the minds of the Gospel writers the crucifixion of Jesus is the pivot of their whole narrative. The final outcome to which everything leads was deemed from the first.

a. The Events Preceding the Last Super. John places the arrival in Bethany as *six days before the Passover*; as a point of reference. John 12:1, *Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.*

1.) The Chronology: The chronology of Passion Week is difficult to follow in its own right, without having to remove all of the manmade traditions that have evolved over the last two thousand years. I presented the three days and three nights that Jesus must spend in the grave between pages 44 and 48. The one key factor that facilitates understanding is being aware of the Hebrew method of determining when a day began and when it ended. God ordained that His feast days began at evening and went until evening the next day. If we accept this method of determining days and have a definite beginning date to work with, we should be able to figure out the happenings taking place on each day leading up to Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan, Passover. With that said I assure you that I am not attempting to take away from any of the events associated with the crucifixion of Jesus. I am, and will, attempt to show you the truthful facts based fully upon Biblical statements. Here are some of those facts. Jesus was the Lamb of God and had to die on Passover Day, the 14th of Nisan. This would be on a Wednesday. I say a full three days and three nights are required before Jesus rises because Jesus Himself repeated that the sign of Jonah would be the only sign given. I gave the full text explanation pertaining to Jonah on pages 130-131. Jesus would rise

again on the 17th of Nisan, Saturday, the Sabbath at approximately 3 PM in the afternoon. This time would be a full three days after he died on the cross. Remember, Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath and not the lord of the first day of the week. There is no day of the week given at any point for any of the events leading up to the crucifixion. The only two entries we can base events upon is the 14th of Nisan as Passover and the statement made by John that Jesus arrived at Bethany six days before Passover. John 12:1, *Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.* For the purposes of going through Passion Week, I will use these two facts from the Bible and everything will be written with full reference to these two events. Therefore, Jesus arrived at Bethany on the 8th of Nisan, Thursday, six days before Passover!

2.) The Anointing at Bethany: This beautiful deed occurred at a supper given in honor of Jesus at the house of one Simon, a leper (identified in the Matthew and Mark accounts), probably cured by Jesus. Mary, Martha and Lazarus were guests at this event. Martha aided in serving. In the course of the meal, or at its close, Mary brought a costly box of nard and with the perfume anointed the head (Matthew, Mark) and feet (John) of Jesus, wiping His feet with her hair. Indignation, instigated by Judas, was at once awakened at what was deemed wanton waste. How much better it would have been if the money had been given to the poor! Jesus vindicated Mary in her loving act, a prophetic anointing for His burial. He declared that wherever His gospel went, it would be spoken of as a memorial to her. It is the hearts from which such acts come that are the true friends of the poor. The chief priests were only the further exasperated at what was happening, and at the interest shown in Lazarus, therefore they plotted to put Lazarus to death also. Matthew 26:6-13, *And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table.*

*But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor."*

*But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."*

Mark 14:3-9, *And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.*

*But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply.*

*But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."*

John 12:1-11, *Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.*

*Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.*

*But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."*

*Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.*

3.) The Entry into Jerusalem: On the following day Jesus made His public entry as Messiah into Jerusalem. This would be on Friday, the 9th of Nisan and five days before Passover. Many people now accept this event as Palm Sunday. There is no such event as Palm Sunday in the Bible! Yes! Palm branches and clothing items were spread out before Jesus' route into the city. However, there is no day of the week identified with this event and mankind has established various traditions based on what they call Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Once again, the later two are events that are not stated in the Bible. Yes! the King James translation misuses the term Easter in the Acts of the Apostles. Acts 12:4 KJV, *And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.*

Returning to the facts we know that all four gospel writers narrate this event: the entry into Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives had to be crossed from Bethany, and Jesus sent two disciples to an adjacent village, probably Bethphage, where an ass and its colt would be found tied. These they were to bring to Him. Jesus assured them the permission of the owners had been granted. Garments were thrown over the colt, and Jesus seated Himself on it. In this humble fashion Jesus proceeded to Jerusalem, where a multitude, bearing palm branches, had already come out to meet Him. Throngs accompanied Him, going before and after spreading their garments, and strewing branches in the way. They hailed Him with hosannas as the Son of David, the King of Israel, who came in the name of the Lord. Very different were the feelings in the breasts of the Pharisees. They requested Jesus rebuke His disciples, but Jesus replied that if they were silent, the very stones would cry out.

Matthew 21:1-11, *Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

*So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road.*

*Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"*

*And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"*

*So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."*

Mark 11:1-11, *Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite*

you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it. And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here." So they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it.

But some of those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?" And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it. And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve. Evening of Friday, the 9th of Nisan, 5 days before Passover.

Luke 19:29-44, When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when He came near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, saying, "Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'" So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them.

But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?"

And they said, "The Lord has need of him." Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road.

Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

John 12:12-19, The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out:

"Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel!"

Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt."

His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him

*from the dead, bore witness. For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.*

*The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!”*

a.) *Jesus Weeping over Jerusalem and Return to Bethany.* One incident in this progress to Jerusalem is related only by Luke, as shown on the previous page in the passage from the gospel of Luke. Jerusalem suddenly became visible at a bend in the road and Jesus paused and wept over the city. Jerusalem did not understand it was so blind to its day of visitation, and so near to its awful doom. Jesus was filled with anguish, not for His own sufferings, but the thought of Jerusalem’s guilt and woes. This incident is the second time we are told Jesus wept. On reaching the city, Mark’s testimony is explicit that He did no more than enter the temple, and look around on all things. He returned to Bethany with the Twelve when evening came.

4.) *Cursing of the Fig Tree and Second Cleansing of Temple:* We find Jesus and His disciples again on their way to the city the morning of Saturday, the weekly sabbath, the 10th of Nisan, four days before Passover. In other discourses we have seen that Jesus performed miracles on the sabbath. He and the twelve ate, walked about and proclaimed the greatness of God the Father on the sabbath, all these displeasing to the Pharisees. Now, possibly the early morning hours had been spent by Jesus in solitary prayer, and, as they went, it is recorded that He hungered. A fig tree stood invitingly by the wayside and by the appearance of its foliage, fruit might have been expected, but when Jesus approached it, it was found to have nothing but leaves. Jesus illustrated this as a striking symbol of the outwardly religious, but spiritually barren Jewish community. And in this sense Jesus used it in pronouncing on it the word of doom. Matthew 21:18-19, *Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, “Let no fruit grow on you ever again.” Immediately the fig tree withered away.* Mark 11:14, *In response Jesus said to it, “Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.” And His disciples heard it.* The tree was found withered from the roots as the disciples passed by the next morning, Sunday, 11th of Nisan, three days before Passover. Matthew combines the events of the cursing and the withering, placing both on the same day, but Mark more accurately distinguishes them. Jesus used the surprise of the disciples as the occasion of a lesson on the authority of faith, with added counsels on prayer. Matthew 21:20-22, *And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, “How did the fig tree wither away so soon?”*

*So Jesus answered and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”*

*Mark 11:20-26, Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.*

*And Peter, remembering, said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.”*

*So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”*

a.) Second Cleansing of the Temple: Continuing His journey on this morning, Saturday, the weekly sabbath, the 10th of Nisan, Jesus reached the temple, and there, as His first act, cleansed the temple of the traders. It is a difficult question whether this is a second cleansing, or the same act as that recorded by John at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, and here narrated out of its chronological order. The acts are at the very least quite similar in character and significance. The anger of the priests and scribes and their demand the following day for His authority to do such things tends to favor a second cleansing of the temple. Matthew 21:12-13, *Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"* Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.

*But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?"*

*And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have perfected praise?'" Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.*

Mark 11:15-19, *So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple.*

*Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations?' But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"*

*And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching. When evening had come, He went out of the city.*

b.) The Demand for Authority and Other Parables: Jesus was met by a demand from the chief priests, scribes and elders (representatives of the Sanhedrin), for the authority by which He acted as He did on His first appearance in the temple on Sunday morning, the 11th of Nisan, three days before Passover. Matthew 21:23-27, *Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"*

*But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: the baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?"*

*And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."*

*And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."*

Mark 11:27-33, *Then they came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to Him.*

*And they said to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority to do these things?"*

*But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one question; then answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things: the baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me."*

*And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men'"—they feared the people, for all counted John to have been a prophet indeed. So they answered and said to Jesus, "We do not know."*

*And Jesus answered and said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."*

The parables spoken on this occasion were: The Two Sons, The Wicked Husbandman and The Marriage of the King's Son:

(1) The Two Sons: Matthew 21:28-32, *But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, "Son, go, work today in my vineyard."*

*He answered and said, "I will not," but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise.*

*And he answered and said, "I go, sir," but he did not go.*

*"Which of the two did the will of his father?"*

*They said to Him, "The first."*

*Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him."*

(2) The Wicked Husbandman: Matthew 21:33-46, *"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"*

*They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."*

*Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.*

(3) Marriage of the King's Son: Similar to the parable of the Great Supper in its gathering of the outcasts to take the place of those who had been invited, but distinguished from it by the feature of the wedding garment. The lack of a wedding garment meant being thrust into the outer darkness. Matthew 22:2-14, *The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, 'See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.'"*

*But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding."*

*So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?"*

*And he was speechless.*

*Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

*For many are called, but few are chosen.*

The Pharisees easily perceived that these parables were spoken about them, and were correspondingly enraged, yet dared not touch Jesus for fear of the people. Matthew 21:45-46, *Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.*

5.) The Eventful Monday: Far different is it with the third day of these visits of Jesus to the temple, the Monday of Passion Week, the 12th of Nisan, 2 days before Passover. This is crowded with parables, discourses, incidents, so numerous, impressive, tragical, as to oppress the mind in seeking to grasp how one short day could embrace them all. It was the last day of the appearance of Jesus in the temple, and marks His final break with the authorities of the nation, on whom His words of denunciation fell with overwhelming force. The thread of the day's proceedings may thus be briefly traced.

a.) Ensnaring Questions: The Pharisees, Herodians and Sadducees made attempts to ensnare Jesus by captious and compromising questions as they were now joined in a common cause. These attempts He met with a wisdom and dignity that foiled His adversaries. Additionally, He showed a ready appreciation of a candid spirit when it presented itself, and turned the point against His opponents by putting a question on the Davidic sonship of the Messiah.

(1) Tribute to Caesar: First the Pharisees with the Herodians sought to entrap Jesus by raising the question of the lawfulness of tribute to Caesar. Jesus obtained from them a recognition of their acceptance of Caesar's authority by causing them to produce a denarius bearing Caesar's image and superscription, bidding them render Caesar's things to Caesar, and God's to God. Matthew 22:23-33, *Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"*

*But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the tax money." So they brought Him a denarius. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?"*

*They said to Him, "Caesar's."*

*And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.*



Mark 12:13-17, *Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words. When they had come, they said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?"*

*But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it." So they brought it. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?"*

*They said to Him, "Caesar's."*

*And Jesus answered and said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at Him.*

Luke 20:20-26, *So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor. Then they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth: Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"*

*But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?"*

*They answered and said, "Caesar's."*

*And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent.*

(2) The Resurrection: The Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, next tried Him with the puzzle of the wife who had seven husbands, but Jesus met their question by showing that marriage relations have no place in the resurrected life. Jesus pointed to the implication of a future life in God's word to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham." God, therefore, is not the God of the dead, but of the living. This fact carries with it all the weight of resurrection, as needed for the completion of the personal life. Matthew 23-33, *The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her."*

*Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.*

Mark 12:18-27, *Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife."*

*Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."*

*Luke 20:27-40, Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife."*

*And Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him."*

*Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." But after that they dared not question Him anymore.*

(3) The Great Commandment: The candid scribe, who came last with His question as to which commandment was first of all, had a different reception. Jesus met Him kindly, satisfied him with His answer, and pronounced him, *not far from the kingdom of God*. Matthew 22:34-40, *But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"*

*Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

*Mark 12:28-34, Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"*

*Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."*

*So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."*

*Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that no one dared question Him.*

(4) David's Son and Lord: The adversaries were silenced, but Jesus now put to them His own question. If David could say in the Psalms, The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at my right

hand, . . .” how was this reconcilable with the Christ being David’s son? The question was based on the acceptance of the oracle as spoken by David, or one of his house, of the Messiah, and was intended to suggest the higher nature of Christ as one with God in a Divine sovereignty. David’s son was also David’s Lord. Allow me to give you the scripture first before I give you further information. Matthew 22:41-46, *While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?”*

*They said to Him, “The Son of David.”*

*He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: “The Lord said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool?” (Jesus continued and asked them), “If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.*

*Mark 12:35-37a, Then Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, “How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Spirit: The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” Therefore David himself calls Him ‘Lord’; how is He then his Son?”*

*Luke 20:41-44, And He said to them, “How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” Therefore David calls Him ‘Lord’; how is He then his Son?”*

These series of questions had been asked of Jesus by the scribes (lawyers), Pharisees and Sadducees and this last question is poised by Jesus to them. Here Jesus turns the table on His adversaries and asked them the question about the Messiah being the son of David. I now ask this question of you. How can Jesus be called the son of King David? Search yourself for an answer! I can tell you this, the answer will be proven in this work. When Jesus spoke this question the Gospels had not even been thought of, much less written. Therefore, it would have taken the scribes and Pharisees some time to come up with the correct answer.

With the writing of the Gospels we have two series of *begots* to show line of descent for Christ. One is given in the Gospel of Matthew and represents the lineage of Joseph going back through King David. The other record is in the Gospel of Luke and represents the lineage of Mary going back through King David. Now, I understand that this is not what you have been taught. Allow me to explain several things: Toward the back of this book, after we get through the life of Jesus, there is a chart showing the various passages of scripture as an Old Testament prophecy pertaining to the Messiah and the fulfillment of each prophecy in the New Testament. Secondly, prophecy indicates that the Messiah must come through the line of King David. Tradition has declared that the genealogies given in both Matthew and Luke are those for Joseph. There is an error presented by one denomination in particular that incorporates names and situations that are not supported by Biblical text. Yet, there is a truthful answer given in clear text.

Turn with me to Luke 3:23-31, *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah, the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er, the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David.*

The corresponding verses from Matthew are: Matthew 1:6-16, *And Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.*

*And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph **the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.***

Here are the differences. In Matthew the line of descent comes down and the father of Joseph is named Jacob. Look very carefully at verse 16 indicating that Joseph **is the husband of Mary**. This verse does not say the father of Jesus! In the Luke account the line goes back through ancestors. I desire you to see and understand two things. First, in the Luke account the statement is made that Joseph (**as was supposed**) is the father of Jesus and the father of Joseph is named here as Heli. Secondly, there is no means possible that a person can have two natural fathers! In this case for Joseph it would have to be Jacob (his real father) and Heli (his father-in-law). If you desire to see the entire lineage of Christ see my chart, *Adam and Eve Family Tree*.<sup>TM146</sup> There is one more question.

The question above pertaining to Jesus and King David goes back to Psalms 110. There is another Psalms that is relative to the discussion at present. First, look at Psalms 89:3-4, *“I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: ‘Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.’”* Next look at Psalms 89:28-37, *My mercy I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with him. His seed also I will make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. “If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, if they break My statutes and do not keep My commandments, then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail. My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; It shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky.”*

The covenant God made with King David can be confirmed by reading 2 Samuel 7:12-17, *“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.” According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.*

To understand the full impact of this covenant and where the throne of David is today read my book *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel*.<sup>147</sup> The throne that Jesus will sit on when He returns is being maintained by a descendant of King David. There are many people, throughout the world, who do not understand who they are and how they fit into the overall picture of God’s will and His prophecies as pertaining to the Second Advent of Jesus. I assure you Jesus is the (descendant) son of King David and as the Messiah the

<sup>146</sup> Charles E. Darnell, op. cit., *Adam & Eve Family Tree*<sup>TM</sup> (1996/2015) Campbellsville: VisionQuest Publishing, Inc.

<sup>147</sup> Charles E. Darnell, op. cit., *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel* (2003/2015) Campbellsville: VisionQuest Publishing, Inc.

Lord of King David. With that information given, let us return to our current study.

b.) The Great Denunciation: At this point, among the multitudes and His disciples as audience in the temple, Jesus delivered His tremendous indictment on the scribes and Pharisees. With denunciations of woes upon them for their hypocrisy and iniquity of conduct, Jesus' words are most fully recorded in Matthew, chapter 23. A more tremendous denunciation of a class of people was never uttered. While conceding to the scribes and Pharisees any authority they lawfully possessed, Jesus specifically dwelt on their divorce of practice from precept. They said and did not. He denounced their perversion of what was right, their tyranny, and their boasting. Jesus rebuked them for their keeping back others from the kingdom, their zeal in securing proselytes, only to make them worse than themselves, when gained.

Continuing He chastised their immoral false reasoning, their scruples about trifles, while neglecting essentials. Jesus lambasted their exaltation of the outward at the expense of the inward, their building the tombs of the prophets, while harboring the spirit of those that killed the prophets. He declared them to be foul and corrupt to the last degree: sons of Gehenna. So awful a condition meant ripeness for doom. On them, through that law of retribution that binds generation with generation in guilt and penalty, would come all the righteous blood shed since the days of Abel. At the close of this discourse indignation melts into tenderness with Jesus' cry over Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered your children together," All seems to have been gathered up afresh in this final accusation toward the scribes and Pharisees. It can be imagined that the anger of the Pharisees was fierce at such words, yet they did not venture openly to touch Him.

Matthew 23:1-36, *Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."*

*"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation."*

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."*

*"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it."*

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These*

*you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!”*

*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.”*

*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”*

*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’”*

*“Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.”*

*Mark 12:38-40, Then He said to them in His teaching, “Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.”*

*Luke 20:45-47, Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, “Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.”*

c.) The Widow’s Offering: Before finally leaving the temple, Jesus seems to have passed from the outer court into the women’s court, and there to have sat down near the receptacles provided for the gifts of the worshipers. Many who were wealthy cast their gold and silver into the treasury, but the eye of Jesus singled out one poor widow who cast in two mites that made up but a farthing. It was little, but it was her all, and Jesus immortalized her poor offering by declaring that, out of her want, she had given more than the wealthiest there. Gifts were measured in His sight by the willingness that prompted them, and by the sacrifice they had made. *Mark 12:41-44, Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.”*

*Luke 21:1-4, And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, “Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.”*

There are reasons to believe that these were the last words spoken by Jesus while in the temple. From this point forward there is no mention of Jesus returning to the temple.

d.) The Visit of the Greeks: It is perhaps on this crowded day that the incident should be referred to the request of certain Greeks to see Jesus. Who these Greeks were, or from whence they came, is unknown, but they were evidently proselytes to the Jewish faith, and men of a sincere spirit. Their request was made through Philip of Bethsaida, and Philip and Andrew conveyed it to Jesus. It is not said whether their wish was granted, but we can hardly doubt that it was. Jesus evidently saw in the incident a prelude of that glory that should accrue to Himself through all men being drawn to Him. But He saw as clearly that this *glorifying* could only be through His death. He universalized it into a law of His Kingdom that, as a grain of wheat must fall into the earth and die if it is to be multiplied, so only through sacrifice can any life be made truly fruitful. The thought of death, however, always brought trouble to the soul of Jesus, and a voice from the Father was given to comfort Him. The multitude thought it thundered, and failed to apprehend the meaning of the voice, or His own words about being *lifted up*. John 12:20-36, *Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.*

*But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor."*

*"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name."*

*Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."*

*Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him."*

*Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die.*

*The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up?' Who is this Son of Man?"*

*Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.*

e.) Discourse on Last Things: Jesus had now bidden farewell to the temple. As He was going out, His disciples, or one of them, called His attention to the magnificence of the buildings of the temple, eliciting from Him the startling reply that not one stone should be left upon another that would not be thrown down. Later that evening on their return journey, when Jesus was seated on the Mount of Olives in view of the temple some of His disciples joined Him. Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately when these things should be, and what would be the signs of their fulfilment. In Matthew the question is put more precisely, "When shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" It is in answer to these complex questions that Jesus spoke His great discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem and His final coming.

Matthew 24:1-31, *Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these*

things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened. Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.”

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

Mark 13:1-27, Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!”

And Jesus answered and said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?” And Jesus, answering them, began to say: “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and will deceive many. But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows. But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be



brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved."

"So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter. For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days. Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand."

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven."

Luke 21:5-37, Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, "These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."

So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?"

And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them. But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately." Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost. By your patience possess your souls."

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

*And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”*

*“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”*

f.) Parables of Ten Virgins, Talents and Last Judgment: To this great Olivet discourse on the sadness of the end times, Jesus, while still addressing His disciples, added three more memorable parables of instruction and warning.

(1) The first parable, that of the Ten Virgins: Visualize those who went to meet the bridegroom with insufficient oil for their lamps. The unwise should have planned ahead and taken extra as did the wise. How oft one regrets not considering the what ifs or things that could change expected plans. Matthew 25:1-13, *“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.”*

*And at midnight a cry was heard: “Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!” Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*

*And the foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.”*

*But the wise answered, saying, “No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.” And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*

*Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us!”*

*But he answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you. Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”*

(2) The second parable, that of the Talents: Similar to the parable in Luke of the Pounds (money), and emphasized the need for perseverance in carrying out action in the Lord’s absence. Matthew 25:14-30, *For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, “Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.”*

*His lord said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”*

*He also who had received two talents came and said, “Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.”*

*His lord said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”*

*Then he who had received the one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours."*

*But his lord answered and said to him, "You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

(3) The third parable, that of the Sheep and Goats, or Last Judgment: This parable shows how the last division will be made according to discipleship as evidenced by loving deeds done to those in need on earth. Such deeds are owned by Christ the King as though done to Himself. Love is thus declared to be the ultimate law in Christ's kingdom, and a loveless spirit is condemned. "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." Matthew 25:31-46, *When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me."*

*Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?"*

*And the King will answer and say to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."*

*Then He will also say to those on the left hand, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me."*

*Then they also will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?"*

*Then He will answer them, saying, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me." And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*

6.) A Day of Retirement: Once again I must make the statement that there are no reference dates in the Bible indicating what day, and what event, happened in which order. There are scholars who suggest that Jesus taught in the temple every day until Passover. However, if the denunciation took place, as can be shown, on the third day that Jesus taught in the temple we have come through Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Now, on Tuesday, the 13th of Nisan, 1 day before Passover, Jesus probably spent this day in retirement in Bethany in preparation of spirit for His last great conflict. Again, I am using the 14th of Nisan as Passover Day and the day that the Lamb of God must be crucified. Therefore, on this Tuesday evening will be the last supper and the events of the arrest and trials that will take place

overnight in preparation for the crucifixion early on the next morning. There are still several events that must take place.

7.) An Atmosphere of Plotting and Judas and the Priests: While Jesus was presenting His Olivet discourse to the Apostles others were plotting the death of Jesus. Jesus had forewarned the disciples of His approaching betrayal and crucifixion. We need to pick up our timeline at the end of the Olivet discourse. Matthew 26:1-2, *Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, “You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”* This statement matches exactly as I have stated that Passover will be on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan. The Olivet discourse occurred on Monday evening, the 12th of Nisan and 2 days before Passover. Now, probably at that very same hour a secret meeting of the chief priests and elders was being held in the court of the house of the high priest, Caiaphas, to consult as to the means of putting Jesus to death. Their resolve was that it should not be done on the feast day.

Matthew 26:3-5, *Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”* There is a very important piece of information that is given in this passage that seems to be overlooked. Notice that it says, *Not during the feast*. The feast being spoken of is not the Passover, it is the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that requires a high holy day on the first day and on the last day. Those two days are High Sabbath Days ordained by God as a part of His feast days. The chief priest and the others did not want Jesus to be killed during the seven day period of the Feast. Notice even they call the Passover the preparation day for the feast.

We will take up the discussions of scholarly men shortly concerning when the crucifixion happened. Meanwhile, the appearance of Judas quickly changed their plans. For the paltry sum of 30 pieces of silver the disloyal disciple sold his Master. Perhaps he persuaded himself that he was really forcing Jesus to exercise His Messianic power, therefore he agreed to betray his Lord. The covenant of infamy was made, and the traitor now only waited his opportunity to carry out his project. Matthew 26:14-16, *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.*

b. From the Last Supper until the Cross. A question of admitted difficulty arises in the comparison of the Synoptic Gospels and John as to the dates of the Last Supper and the crucifixion.

1.) The Chronology: The Synoptic Gospels seem clearly to place the Last Supper on the evening of the 14th of Nisan (in Jewish reckoning, the beginning of the 15th), and to identify it with the ordinary paschal meal. Matthew 26:17-19, *Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”*

*And He said, “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, the Teacher says, ‘My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.’” So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.* The crucifixion would then have to take place on the 15th.

John, on the contrary, seems to place the supper on the day before the Passover the 13th, and the crucifixion on the 14th. John 13:1, *Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*

For the sake of discussion I am placing all the references here that I am aware of that pertain to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We have already seen the difference between Matthew and John. Here also are the other Synoptic versions from Mark and Luke.

Mark 14:12-16, *Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"*

*And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, the Teacher says, 'Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'"*

*"Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us." So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.*

Luke 22:7-13, *Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat."*

*So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?"*

*And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, the Teacher says to you, 'Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'"*

*"Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.*

We know that we are discussing an ordinance from the Old Testament and we must show you the passages pertaining to the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread from the perspective of Moses.

Exodus 12:17-20, *"So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread."*

Exodus 34:25, *"You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven, nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning.*

Notice several things from these verses in Exodus. In the first passage the feast is stated as the Feast of Unleavened Bread and it begins at evening on the 14th of the first month. In the second passage the feast is now the Feast of the Passover and none of the sacrifice shall be left until morning. Did you catch the error in these verses? The passage states the feast runs from the 14th until the 21st and for seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses. From the 14th to the 21st is eight days and not seven.

Leviticus 23:4-8, *"These are the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it."*

This passage from Leviticus appears to support John's presentation more closely than any of the others. From all that we have available to us it seems that there is absolutely no way to confirm any date for Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, therefore, no absolute date for the crucifixion. That is not

my style! One of the problems is the matter of what is termed, Jewish reckoning. Is the Jewish day from sunset to sunset, sunrise to sunrise, or even a combination of both? No one seems to have a desire to figure out the factor of Jewish reckoning as it pertains to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Samuele Bacchiocchi<sup>148</sup> in his book *The Time of the Crucifixion and Resurrection* in chapter 5 gives a presentation on the Reckoning of the Day in Bible Times. In this work he presents a discussion that there are scripture text that supports a sunset to sunset day (P. J. Heawood<sup>149</sup> and U. Cassuto<sup>150</sup>), while others support a sunrise to sunrise day (Solmon Zeitlin<sup>151</sup> and Roland de Vaux<sup>152</sup>), and still others (Lauterback,<sup>153</sup> G. Barrois,<sup>154</sup> G. von Rad<sup>155</sup> and Roger Beckwith<sup>156</sup>) support both as a matter of presentation depending upon the situation that is being discussed. The nonsense that under Jewish reckoning any part of a day constitutes a full day is simply that: Nonsense! They are constructed so the traditions of mankind could stand up and be stated that Jesus was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday. By such nonsense you call both God and Jesus liars! I do not care to call either a liar and figure that they both knew what they said and said what they meant!

In simple terms here is my belief on the matter. **Fact:** Jesus Himself stated on more than one occasion that He must spend three days and three nights in the tomb as Jonah spent in the great fish. **Fact:** Jesus is identified as Lord of the Sabbath and not as lord of the first day of the week. **Fact:** Jesus was the Lamb of God sacrificed to rectify the original sin of disobedience in the Garden by the first Adam. These facts along with the date of Passover, the 14th of Nisan, provide me with the evidence that Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday and arose on Saturday, the Sabbath!

I will not be naive and declare that there are no references to dispute what I have said. In fact there are lengthy discussions for both sides of the coin. Was Matthew correct or was John correct? That seems to be the easy question to be asked. The following will take up that discussion. You be the judge.

Many, on this ground, affirm an irreconcilable discrepancy between John and the Synoptic Gospels, some (Meyer,<sup>157</sup> Farrar,<sup>158</sup> less decisively Sanday<sup>159</sup>) preferring John; others (Strauss,<sup>160</sup> Baur,<sup>161</sup> Schmiedel<sup>162</sup>) using the date to discredit John. By those who accept both accounts, various modes of reconciliation are proposed.

<sup>148</sup> Samuele Bacchiocchi, PhD, 1938-2008, *The Time of the Crucifixion and Resurrection* (1985) Berrien Springs: Biblical Perspectives.

<sup>149</sup> Percy John Heawood, 1861-1955, *The Beginning of the Jewish Day*, *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 36: 393-401(1945) Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

<sup>150</sup> Umberto Cassuto, 1983-1951, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: from Noah to Abraham*, trans. from Hebrew by Israel Abrahams. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University.

<sup>151</sup> Dr. Solomon Zeitlin, *The Beginning of the Jewish Day during the Second Commonwealth*, *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 36: 403-414 (1945) Philadelphia: American Academy for Jewish Research.

<sup>152</sup> Roland de Vaux, 1903-1971, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, pp 180-183, trans. by John Mchugh (1961) New York: McGraw-Hill.

<sup>153</sup> Jacob Zallel Lauterback, 1873-1942, *Rabbinic Essays*, p 448 (1951) Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press.

<sup>154</sup> Georges Augustin Barrois, *Manuel d'Archeologie Biblique, Faits Socieux Religieuse*, vol 2, p183 (1953) Paris: Auguste et J. Picard et Cie.

<sup>155</sup> Gerhard von Rad, 1901-1971, vol 2, p 943, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (1974) Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans.

<sup>156</sup> Roger T. Beckwith, *The Day, its Divisions, and its Limits, in Biblical Thought*, *The Evangelical Quarterly*, 43 (October-December 1971) Oxford: Latimer House.

<sup>157</sup> Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, ThD, 1800-1873, *Meyer's Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, 20 vol (1873), Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. *Kritischexegetischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*, 16 vols, (1862) Gottingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.

<sup>158</sup> Frederic W. Farrar, DD, F.R.S, op. cit.

<sup>159</sup> Dr. William Sanday, op. cit.

<sup>160</sup> Dr. David Friedrich Strauss, 1808-1874, *Das Leben Jesu, Kritisch Bearbeitet*, (1835) Kessinger Publishing, LLC. English, *The Life of Jesus, Critically Examined*.

<sup>161</sup> Bruno Baur, 1809-1882, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker*, 2 vol. (Leipzig, 1841); *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker und des Johannes, Dritter und letzter Band*, Braunschweig, 1842.<sup>129</sup> Paul Wilhelm Schmiedel, 1851-1935, *Die Person Jesu im Streit der Meinungen der Gegenwart* (1906). Schmiedel & Canney, *Jesus in Modern Criticism: A Lecture* (1907) London: Adam & Charles Black.

<sup>162</sup> Paul Wilhelm Schmiedel, 1851-1935, *Die Person Jesu im Streit der Meinungen der Gegenwart* (1906). Schmiedel & Canney, *Jesus in Modern Criticism: A Lecture* (1907) London: Adam & Charles

A favorite opinion (early church writers; many moderns, as Godet,<sup>163</sup> Westcott,<sup>164</sup> Farrar<sup>165</sup>) is that Jesus, in view of His death, anticipated the Passover, and ate His parting meal with His disciples on the evening of the 13th. Others (Tholuck,<sup>166</sup> Luthardt,<sup>167</sup> Edersheim,<sup>168</sup> Andrews<sup>169</sup> and D. Smith<sup>170</sup>), adhere to the Synoptic Gospels, and take the view that the apparent discrepancy is accounted for by a somewhat freer usage of terms in John. (*John would appear to have it correct, if you go back to Old Testament details, with the Passover on the 14th and the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15th. Jesus, to be the Lamb of God, and the only acceptable sacrifice, had to be crucified on Passover day and no other, thus the 14th. Exodus 12:6; Numbers 9:5; Joshua 5:10; 2 Chronicles 30:15; Ezra 6:20.*)

Details of the discussion must be sought in the works on the subject. The case for the anticipatory view is well given in Westcott,<sup>171</sup> *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*; and in Farrar,<sup>172</sup> *Life of Christ*; a good statement of that for the Synoptics may be seen in Andrews,<sup>173</sup> *Life of Our Lord*; compare Tholuck,<sup>174</sup> *Commentary on John*, on John 13:1; Luthardt,<sup>175</sup> *Commentary on John*, on John 13:1; 18:28, D. Smith,<sup>176</sup> *Days of His Flesh*. The language of the Synoptists, in regard to the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the passover, see Mark 14:12, leaves no doubt that they intended to identify the Last Supper with the regular Passover, and it is hardly conceivable that they could be mistaken on so vital a point of the apostolic tradition. This also was the view of the churches of Asia Minor, where John himself resided in later years.

On the other hand, the phrase to eat the passover in John 18:28 may very well, in John's usage, refer to participation in the special sacrifices that formed a chief feature of the proceedings on the 15th. The allusion in John 13:1 need mean no more than that. The Passover was now impending, Jesus, loving His disciples to the end, gave them a special token of that love during the meal that ensued. The *preparation of the passover* in John 19:14, 31 most naturally refers to the preparation for the Sabbath of the Passover week, alluded to also by the Synoptics (Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54).

The objections based on rabbinical regulations about the Sabbath are convincingly met by Tholuck<sup>177</sup> (see also Andrews<sup>178</sup>). Therefore, I believe Our Lord ate the Passover with His disciples at the usual time, the evening of the 13th of Nisan (the beginning of the 14th).

2.) The Last Supper: In the scene in the upper chamber, at the observance of the Last Supper, we enter the holy of holies of this part of the Lord's history. It is difficult, in combining the narratives, to be sure of the order of all the particulars, but the main events are clear. They may be exhibited as follows:

a.) The Preparation: On Tuesday, the 13th of Nisan Jesus instructed two of His disciples to go and make preparations for the observance of the Passover. The Gospel of Luke informs us that the two sent were Peter and John. Preparations would include the securing of a guest-chamber or inn-like

<sup>163</sup> Frederic Louis Godet, op. cit.

<sup>164</sup> Brooke Foss Westcott, 1825–1901, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (1902) New York: The Macmillan Company.

<sup>165</sup> Frederic W. Farrar, DD, F.R.S, op. cit.

<sup>166</sup> August Tholuck, 1799-1877, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. John* (1842) New York: Saxton & Miles.

<sup>167</sup> Christoph Ernst Luthardt, 1823–1902, *Apologie des Christentums* (1864) Leipzig: Dörfpling und Franke.

<sup>168</sup> Alfred Eidersheim, op. cit.

<sup>169</sup> Samuel James Andrews, 1817-1906, *Life of Our Lord upon the Earth* (1891) New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>170</sup> David Smith, op. cit.

<sup>171</sup> Brooke Foss Westcott, op. cit.

<sup>172</sup> Frederic W. Farrar, DD, F.R.S, op. cit.

<sup>173</sup> Samuel James Andrews, op. cit.

<sup>174</sup> August Tholuck, op. cit.

<sup>175</sup> Christoph Ernst Luthardt, op. cit.

<sup>176</sup> David Smith, op. cit.

<sup>177</sup> August Tholuck, op. cit.

<sup>178</sup> Samuel James Andrews, op. cit.

place to rest. Jesus instructed the two to follow a man whom they would meet bearing a pitcher. Jesus told them that at the house where the man stopped, they would find one willing to receive them. The master of the house at once gave them a large upper room furnished and arranged. There they made ready.

b.) Dispute about Precedence, Washing of the Disciples' Feet and Departure of Judas: Jesus and the Twelve assembled in the evening and took their places for the meal. We gather that John reclined on the right next to Jesus, and that Peter and Judas were near. John 13:23, *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.* It was probably this arrangement, that gave rise to the unseemly strife for precedence among the disciples narrated in Luke. Luke 22:24-30, *Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."*

Jesus rebuked the spirit the Apostles displayed, as He had done on more than one occasion. Then rising from the table, He gave them an amazing illustration of His own teaching, *Yet I am among you as the One who serves.* Jesus divested Himself of His garments, girded Himself with a towel, and performed the act of a servant in washing His disciples' feet. Peter's exclamation must have expressed the feelings of all: "Lord, are you washing my feet?" John 13:6-11, *Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"*

*Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."*

*Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"*

*Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."*

*Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"*

*Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."* Resuming His place at the table, He instructed them to imitate the example He had just given them.

An ominous word had accompanied the reply to Peter, *"You are not all clean."* As the supper proceeded, the meaning of this was made plain. Judas, who had already sold his Master, was at the table with the rest. He had permitted Jesus to wash his feet, and remained unmoved by that surpassing act of condescending love. Jesus was troubled in spirit and now openly declared, one of you will betray me." John 13:21, *When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."*

It was an astounding announcement to the Apostles, and from one and another came the trembling question, Lord, is it I? Mark 14:19, *And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, "Is it I?" And another said, "Is it I?"*

Jesus answered that it was one of those dipping his hand with Him in the dish, and spoke of the woe that would overtake the betrayer. Mark 14:20-21, *He answered and said to them, "It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he*



*had never been born.” Luke 22:21-22, “But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!”*

Peter motioned to John to ask Jesus, Who is it? John 13:24-25, *Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. Then, leaning back on Jesus’ breast, he said to Him, “Lord, who is it?”*

Jesus replied, but only to John, it was he to whom He would give a sop, and the sop was given to Judas. John 13:26, *Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.*

The traitor even yet sought to mask his treachery by the words, Rabbi, is it I? Matthew 26:25, *Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, “Rabbi, is it I?”*

*He said to him, “You have said it.”*

Then, as Satanic passion stirred the breast of Judas, Jesus added, What you do, do quickly. John 13:27-29, *Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.” But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, “Buy those things we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor.*

Judas at once rose and went out into the night. John 13:30, *Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.*

Jesus was relieved by his departure and spoke of the glory coming to Himself and to His Father, and of love as the mark of true discipleship. John 13:31-35, *So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*



c.) The Lord’s Supper: We must add one item that is not normally known by non-Jewish observers of Passover. It appears in Jewish practice that 4 cups are used during the paschal meal. Luke alone of the New Testament writers speaks of 2 cups. Luke 22:17, 20, *Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves.” . . . Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.”* Codex Bezae (D),<sup>179</sup> omits Luke’s 2nd cup, from which some (compare Sanday,<sup>180</sup> *Hastings’ Dictionary of the Bible*<sup>181</sup>) infer duplication, but this is not necessary. Luke’s 1st cup (verse 17) may be that with which the paschal supper opened. The 2nd cup, that mentioned by all the Gospel writers, was probably the 3rd Jewish cup, known as the cup of blessing (compare 1 Corinthians 10:16, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*). Some, however, as Meyer,<sup>182</sup> make it the 4th cup. It is implied in Matthew, Mark, and John, that by this time Judas had gone. The essentials of the paschal meal were complete, therefore Jesus proceeded. He took and served bread and wine, identifying them with His body and blood, soon to be offered in death upon the cross. By doing this Jesus instituted the sacred rite of communion. This sacred rite we now call the Lord’s Supper. Through all ages since it has been used to commemorate His love and sacrifice for us.

<sup>179</sup> Codex Bezae (D), *An Early Christian Manuscript and its Text* (2008) David C. Parker, autore. Cambridge: University Press.

<sup>180</sup> Dr. William Sanday, op. cit.

<sup>181</sup> James Hastings, *Hastings’ Dictionary of the Bible*, op. cit.

<sup>182</sup> Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, op. cit.



With this information presented as to how the Jewish paschal meal is conducted there is something every Christian should understand. If there were four cups, which one is the holy grail? It would seem that there would be no means for any man to identify which cup would be the holy grail. Recall that in the painting by Divinci of *The Last Supper* there is no cup shown on the table. All through my youth I listened to the telling of the stories of King Arthur and his knights, of the crusades with Christians fighting Muslims over Jerusalem. Of course there were the extra sidebars that the knights found the cup Jesus passed among the Apostles as He established the Lord's Supper. Even Indiana Jones came into the picture as he went in search of the holy grail. The holy grail is supposed to be the cup that was shared on that eventful evening. All of this about being in search of the holy grail means nothing, or at least not toward one cup if there were four in play. There is one other thing to think about. The 4 cups could be four toasts served over the course of the meal. We really do not know the details from text.

There are variations of phrase in the different accounts, but in the essentials of the sacramental institution there is an entire agreement. Taking bread, after giving thanks to God, Jesus broke it, and gave it to the disciples with the words: This is my body; the cup, in like manner, after giving thanks, He gave them with the words: This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many. Matthew adds, unto remission of sins. Matthew 26:26-28, *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."*

Mark 14:22-24, *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many."*

Luke and Paul add what is implied in the others: This do in remembrance of me. Luke 22:19-20, *And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*

Nothing could more plainly designate the bread and wine as holy symbols of the Lord's body and blood. These were offered by His death for mankind's redemption, and a seal of a new covenant with God through Jesus' blood. As long as the rite is observed in its Divine simplicity, as Jesus instituted it, will it be possible to expunge from His death the character of a redeeming sacrifice? In touching words Jesus intimated that He would no more drink of the fruit of the vine until He drank it new with them in their Father's Kingdom. Matthew 26:29, *"But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."*

d.) The Last Discourses: The Supper was over, and parting was imminent. Jesus did not leave the chamber until He had poured out His inmost heart in those tender, consolatory, profoundly spiritual addresses that John preserved for us in the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of his Gospel. This was followed by the wonderful closing intercessory prayer of chapter 17. He reminded them that He was

leaving them, but their hearts were not to be troubled. John 14:1-4, *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 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. And where I go you know, and the way you know.”*

Thomas seemed to be confused by this statement from Jesus and asked Him how would they know the way? John 14:5-7, *Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”*

*Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”*

Phillip then asked Jesus to show them the Father and received His reply. John 14:8-22, *Phillip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”*

*Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.”*

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.”*

*“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”*

*“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”*

Judas, not the betrayer, but the one of the twelve, also known as Thaddaeus, continued the discussion by asking Jesus the following. John 14:22-31, *Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?”*

*Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.”*

*“These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.”*

Jesus continues the discourse as they walk to Gethsemane. John 15:1-17, *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”*

*“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”*

Comparing the Gospel writers, one would infer that the conversation when Jesus foretold the denial of Peter at least commenced before they left the chamber. Luke 22:31-34, *And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.”*

*But he said to Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.”*

*Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.”* John connects it with the exposure of Judas, probably through relation of subject. John 13:36-38, *Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?”*

*Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.”*

*Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.”*

*Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow until you have denied Me three times.”* However, it seems the discussion continued on the way to Gethsemane according to the narratives of Matthew and Mark. Matthew 26:31-35, *Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.”*

*Peter answered and said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.”*

*Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”*

*Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And so said all the disciples.*

Mark 14:27-31, *Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."*

*Peter said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be."*

*Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times."*

*But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all said likewise.*

e.) Intercessory Prayer: There is a wonderful prayer that Jesus makes to the Father for the protection of the Apostles, and really for you and I. Together with understanding we all should know that the prayer commonly called The Lord's Prayer should be called The People's Prayer. I say this because Jesus begins this with the statement: This is how you should pray. It does not say: This is how I pray. The true Lord's Prayer is this wonderful prayer of intercession recorded in John. John 17:1-26,

*Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."*

*"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth."*

***"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.** And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."*

f.) The Departure and Warning: Jesus had spoken of their being tested or tried, causing them to stumble that night. In his exaltation of spirit, Peter declared that though all should stumble, he would never falter. Jesus, who had already warned Peter that Satan sought to have him now told him that before the cock should crow, he would deny Him three times. Peter stoutly maintained that he would die rather than be guilty of so base an act, so little did he or the others know themselves! The puzzling words in Luke 22:36 about taking moneybag and sword point metaphorically to the need, of taking every lawful means of self-defence to be prepared, self assured and confident. The succeeding words show that sword is not intended to be taken literally. Luke 22:36-38, *Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end."*

*So they said, "Lord, look, here are two swords."*

*And He said to them, "It is enough."*

3.) Gethsemane: the Betrayal and Arrest: Descending to the valley, Jesus and His disciples, crossed the brook Kidron and entered the garden known as Gethsemane, at the foot of the Mount of Olives. Here the agony took place, which is the proper commencement of the Passion, the betrayal by Judas and the arrest of Jesus.

During the evening the thoughts of Jesus had been occupied mainly with His disciples. Now that the hour had come when the things predicted concerning Him should have fulfilment, it was inevitable that mind and spirit should concentrate on the awful mental and bodily sufferings that lay before Him.

a.) Agony in the Garden: It was not the thought of physical suffering alone that Jesus shrank from, but also the pure and sensitive humanity of this natural horror. Death to Him, the Holy One and Prince of Life, had an indescribably hateful character as a hostile power in humanity, due to the judgment of God on sin. Now, He knew that shortly this horror of humanity would descend upon Him through the workings of the vilest of human passions in the religious heads of His nation. What anguish to such a One, filled with love and the desire to save, to feel Himself rejected, betrayed, deserted, doomed to a malefactor's cross! Today, even after twenty centuries of mankind's existence on this great plain called Earth, we still do not understand the full impact of the Passion that Christ had to suffer in order to be able to present God's free gift of salvation to us all. No one, of all mankind, can possibly understand, or accept, the feelings of Christ at that moment in the garden at Gethsemane. Oh yes! He surely felt rejected, betrayed and deserted! He was alone! **Yet not alone, for the Father was with Him!** John 16:32-33, *"Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."*

The burden on His spirit when He reached Gethsemane was already, as the language used shows, all but unendurable, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even to death. Mark 14:33-34, *And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch."* Leaving these also a little behind, He sank on the ground in solitary prayer. Mark 14:35-36, *He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will. Take this cup away from Me."* It could not be, but thus the revulsion of His nature was expressed, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

The writer of Hebrews records that Jesus prayed passionately and cried emotionally. Shedding heart felt tears He poured out His soul in earnest supplication to His Father. Hebrews 5:7-9, *Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.*

The stress, strain and sheer concentration of His prayer with the Father caused His sweat to become as if it were great drops of blood. Then returning to the three, He found them overpowered with sleep: even the support of their wakeful sympathy was denied Him! Watch and pray, He gently admonished them, lest you enter into temptation. Luke 22:43-46, *Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."*

A second and third time the same thing happened! Jesus was wrestling with God on His part! The disciples slept on their part, until the angel brought Divine strengthening, victory was attained, and calm restored. Jesus said to His disciples, "It is enough! The crisis is past; your help can avail no more. Rise, let us be going! The future has to be faced, My betrayer is at hand!" Matthew 26:42-46, *Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."* And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand." Mark 14:41-42, *Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."* See the remarkable sermon of F. W. Robertson,<sup>183</sup> sermon 22.

b.) Betrayal by Judas and Jesus Arrested: The crisis had indeed arrived. Even as Jesus spoke, flashes of light from torches and lanterns were seen through the darkness, revealing a mingled company of armed men. The chief priests, scribes and elders sent Roman soldiers, temple officers, and others to apprehend Jesus. Their guide was Judas. It had been found impractical to lay hands on Jesus in public, but Judas knew this retreat. John 18:2, *And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples.* Judas had arranged, to enable them to effect the capture in privacy, by an act of dastardly treachery. The sign was to be a kiss. Matthew 26:48, *Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him."* Mark 14:44, *Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely."* Judas faked his affection and friendship, only possible to one whose heart the devil had truly entered. Luke 22:3, *Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve.* John 13:27, *Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."*

Judas advanced, and hailed Jesus as "Rabbi," and kissed Him. Matthew 26:49, *Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.* Mark 14:45, *As soon as He had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, "Rabbi, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.* Jesus

<sup>183</sup> Frederick William Robertson, 1816-1853, *The Israelite's Grave in a Foreign Land*, Vol 1, Sermon 22 (1849) <http://www.articles.ochristian.com/preacher535-2.shtml>

asked of Judas: Luke 22:48, *But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"* Jesus then said to Judas: Matthew 26:50a, *But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?"* The soldiers moved to take Jesus, but on their first approach, they were driven back as if by a supernatural power and they fell to the ground. John 18:4-6, *Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"*

*They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth."*

*Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.* Compare this with the statement recorded in Matthew. Matthew 26:53-54, *"Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?"* Therefore this provides proof that Jesus volunteered to surrender Himself to this group. Jesus, remarked only on the lawlessness of secret violence when every day they had opportunity to take Him in the temple. Matthew 26:55, *In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."* At this point Peter, with characteristic recklessness, remembered, perhaps, his pledge to die with Jesus, drew a sword, and cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus. Luke 22:49-50, *When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.* Peter was fully aware that Jesus had just rebuked him. Matthew 26:52, *But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.* John 18:11, *So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"* Most likely Peter was even more amazed by Jesus' healing of the ear. Luke 22:51, *But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And He touched his ear and healed him.* **This is the last miracle of Jesus before His death!** How little this flicker of impulsive boldness meant is shown by the general panic that immediately followed. "All the disciples," it is related, "left him, and fled." Matthew 26:56, *Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.* Mark 14:50, *Then they all forsook Him and fled.*

4.) Trial before the Sanhedrin: It would be about midnight when Jesus was arrested. Jesus was at once hurried to the house of the high priest, where in expectation of the capture, a company of chief priests, scribes and elders were already assembled. Here the first stage in the trial of Jesus took place. John 18:12-14, *Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.*

a.) Before Annas and Caiaphas: The legal and constitutional questions connected with the trial of Jesus are considered by Dr. Taylor Innes,<sup>184</sup> *The Trial of Jesus Christ*; on the powers of the Sanhedrin, also compare Schurer,<sup>185</sup> *Jewish People*. There seems little doubt that, while certain judicial forms were observed, the trial was illegal in nearly every aspect. The arrest itself was arbitrary, and not founded on any formal accusation. The night session lacked a definite charge: There was no search for testimony; interrogation of accused; and there was great haste in the condemnation of Jesus. The persecutors were unquestionably in flagrant violation of the established rules of Jewish judicial procedure in such cases.

<sup>184</sup> Alexander Taylor Innes, *The Trial of Jesus: A Legal Monograph* (1899) Edinburgh: T & T Clark.

<sup>185</sup> Emil Schurer, op. cit., p. 163.



It is to be remembered that the death of Jesus had already been decided by the heads of the Sanhedrin. The trial was wholly a means to a foregone conclusion. In other words this was a kangaroo court.

On the historical side, certain difficulties arose. First Jesus was led before Annas. Then, while He was still bound Annas transferred Him to Caiaphas. Annas had been deposed 15 years before, but still retained the name and through his sons and relations, exercised much of the authority of high priest. Like all those holding this high office, he and Caiaphas were Sadducees. Annas, if he is the questioner in John 18:19-23, asked Jesus questions concerning His disciples and His teaching.

Such interrogation was unlawful. The duty of the accuser, in Jewish law, was to produce witnesses. Properly, therefore, Jesus referred him to His public teaching in the temple, and advised him to ask those who heard Him there. An officer standing by struck Jesus with his hand for so speaking. This was an indignity that Jesus endured with meek objection. John 18:19-24, *The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said."*

*And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?"*

*Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?" Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.*

The narrative is simplified if either the verses 19-23 or verse 24 is regarded as a preliminary interrogation by Annas until matters were prepared for the arraignment before Caiaphas. Otherwise verse 24 must be taken as retrospective and the interrogation is included in the trial by Caiaphas. Annas and Caiaphas may be presumed to have occupied the same official residence from the account of Peter's denials. If this was not the case it appears Annas was present on this night to be in readiness for the trial. The frequently occurring term chief priests denotes the high priests, and those who had formerly held this position (compare Schurer,<sup>186</sup>). They formed the most important element in the Sanhedrin, with the scribes.

(1) An Illegal Session and The Unjust Judgment: Meanwhile a company of the Sanhedrin had assembled and Jesus was brought before this tribunal, that was presided over by Caiaphas. A hurried search had been made for witnesses but even the false testimony obtained was found useless for the purpose of establishing a charge of blasphemy against Jesus. At length two witnesses were produced who gave a garbled version of the early saying of Jesus about destroying the temple and rebuilding it in three days. To speak against the temple might be construed as speaking against God but here too the witnesses broke down through lack of agreement. At all costs, however, Jesus must be condemned. The unprecedented course therefore was taken, that of seeking a conviction from the mouth of the accused Himself. Rising from his seat, the high priest charged Jesus by the living God to tell them whether He was the Christ, the Son of God. In using this title, Caiaphas had evidently in view a claim to equality with God. The supreme moment had come, and Jesus did not falter in His reply: "It is as you said." Matthew 26:59-64, *Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none.*

*But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'"*

*And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?" But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You*

<sup>186</sup> Emil Schurer, *Ibid.*, p. 203.

*under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”*

*Jesus said to him, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*

It was enough. Without even the pretense of inquiry into the truth or falsehood of the claim, the high priest tore his garments, exclaiming, “He hath spoken blasphemy!” Jesus was judged worthy of death by assent of all. Matthew 26:65-66, *Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, “He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?”*

*They answered and said, “He is deserving of death.”*

Abuse and insult followed. The minor officials of the Sanhedrin were permitted to spit on the condemned One, smite Him, blindfold and mock Him, saying, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one that struck You?” Then, with further blows, He was led away. Matthew 26:67-68, *Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?”*

(2) A Morning Confirmation: To give color of judicial sanction to these tumultuous and wholly irregular night proceedings, a more formal meeting of the Sanhedrin was convened as soon as day had dawned. Probably the irregularities were excused by the urgency of the occasion and the solemnities of the feast. Jesus was again brought forward. New questions were put that He declined to answer. Possibly a new avowal of His Messiahship was made. The judgment of the past night was confirmed. Matthew 27:1-2, *When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.* Mark 15:1, *Immediately, in the morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council; and they bound Jesus, led Him away, and delivered Him to Pilate.*

b.) The Threefold Denial: While this greatest moral tragedy of the trial and condemnation of Jesus was in process, a lesser, but still awful tragedy in the history of a soul was being enacted in the courtyard of the same building. It was around this courtyard that Peter’s threefold denial of his Master took place. The chamber in which the Sanhedrin sat was visible to Peter. Peter, who had followed at a distance, had gained access to the courtyard through an unnamed disciple, whom it is easy to identify as John. As he stood warming himself at a fire that had been kindled, the maid who had admitted them gazed attentively at Peter and said boldly, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.” Unnerved, and frightened by his surroundings, Peter took the easiest mode of escape in denial: “I know him not.” Peter withdrew to the porch, only to be accosted by another maid with the same charge. More afraid than ever, he declared again, “I know not this man,” and, seeing he was not believed, strengthened the denial with an oath. Yet a third time, a bystander, this time because of Peter’s Galilean dialect, announced, “Surly you also are one of them.” Peter, to clear himself, cursed and swore, again disclaiming knowledge of his Lord. To this depth had the boastful apostle fallen, as low, it might seem, as Judas! But there was a difference. As Peter spoke the cock crowed. At the same instant, either from within, or as He was being led forth, Jesus turned and looked on His erring disciple. That look, so full of pity, sorrow, and reproach, could never be forgotten! Its effect was instantaneous: “Peter went out, and wept bitterly.” Matthew 26:69-75, *Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.”*

*But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you are saying.”*

*And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, “This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.”*

*But again he denied with an oath, “I do not know the Man!”*

*And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you."*

*Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.*

*Luke 22:54-62, Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance. Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them.*

*And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him."*

*But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him."*

*And after a little while another saw him and said, "You also are of them."*

*But Peter said, "Man, I am not!"*

*Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean."*

*But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So Peter went out and wept bitterly.*

c.) Remorse and Suicide of Judas: Peter's heartfelt repentance in contrast to the remorse of Judas cannot be paralleled. First, Judas sought to return the 30 shekels paid him as the price of blood. Judas said to the priests and elders, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." Callously rebuffed by the priests and elders, he flung down the accursed money in the sanctuary, and went and hanged himself. Matthew 27:3-10, *Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood."*

*And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood." And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.*

*Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."*

Matthew and Acts (Luke) seem to follow slightly different traditions as to Judas' end and the purchase of the potter's field. The underlying facts probably are that the priests applied the money, that they could not put into the treasury, toward the purchase of the field, where, either before or after the purchase, Judas destroyed himself. Acts 1:16-20, *"Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry." (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.) "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, and let no one live in it'; and, 'let another take his office.'"*

The Jews might condemn, but they had no power to execute the sentence of death. John 18:31, *Then Pilate said to them, "You take Him and judge Him according to your law."*

*Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death."* This power had been taken from them by the Romans, and was now vested in the Roman governor. The procurator of Judea was Pontius Pilate, a man hated by the Jews for his ruthless tyranny. Yet, as the Gospels show him, he had a sense of right, but was vacillating and weak-willed in face of mob clamor, and risk to his own interests.

5.) Trial Before Pilate: Pilate's residence in Jerusalem was called the Praetorium (palace), and was probably Herod's former palace (Schurer,<sup>187</sup> G. A. Smith<sup>188</sup>). Jesus was now brought to the mosaic decorated pavement in the semicircular front where the tribunal (bema) was placed. It was from here that Roman judgments were delivered. The events took place when it was early, probably between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. John 18:28-29, *Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover. Pilate then went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?"*

a.) Attitude of the Accusers: Jesus was taken within the Praetorium, but His accusers were too scrupulous about defilement at the Passover festival to enter the building. Pilate therefore came out to hear their accusation. They would have gladly had him endorse their condemnation without further inquiry, but this he would not do. They would not accept that it was a simple question of their law, yet had to justify their demand for a death sentence. Therefore they based their decision on the alleged revolutionary character of Christ's teaching, His forbidding to pay tribute to Caesar (a false charge), and His claim to be a king. Jesus answered not a word to all these charges. John 18:33-40, *Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"*

*Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?"*

*Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?"*

*Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."*

*Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?"*

*Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."*

*Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all. But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"*

*Then they all cried again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas!"* Now Barabbas was a robber. Pilate knew very well that no mere uprising against the Roman power had called forth all this passion as evidenced by their choice of Barabbas. Pilate had declared that he found no crime in Jesus. The real source of their action was laid bare: "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." John 19:7, *The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."* This declaration made Pilate only the

<sup>187</sup> Emil Schurer, Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> George Adam Smith, op. cit.

more unwilling to yield to their rage, therefore they returned to the political motive for crucifying Jesus. They retaliated to Pilate in the form of a personal threat: "If thou release this man, thou art not Caesar's friend." John 19:12, *From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."* This was Pilate's weak point, and the Jews knew it. The clamor grew ever louder, "Crucify him, crucify him." Hate of Jesus and national degradation could go no farther than in the cry, "We have no king but Caesar." John 19:15, *But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!"*

*Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?"*

*The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"*

b.) The Attitude of Pilate: Pilate was impressed with the innocence of Jesus from the first. As his actions showed Pilate was sincerely anxious to save Jesus from the terrible and disgraceful death His implacable enemies were bent on inflicting upon Him. His crime was to gratify the brutal passions of a mob, against his own convictions, and through fear of a charge of disloyalty to Caesar, as a Roman judge. In the end, however, Pilate yielded up to torture and death, One whom he had pronounced guiltless. By his own admissions, Christ's death was a judicial murder not a punishment for any crime. First, it was through private examination Pilate satisfied himself that the kingship Jesus claimed carried with it no danger to the throne of Caesar. Jesus was a king indeed! His kingdom was not of this world, or like earthly kingdoms supported by violence. It was founded on the truth, and gathered its subjects from those that received the truth. John 18:36-37, *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."*

*Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?"*

*Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."* The jaded mind of Pilate confessed "What is truth?" They could not hide from him the nobility of soul of the Holy One who stood before him. He declared publicly, "I find no fault in this man," and thereafter sought means of saving Him, at least of shifting the responsibility of His condemnation from himself to others.

(1) Jesus Sent to Herod: Pilate's first consideration was to send Jesus to Herod, after he heard from the clamor around the judgment seat that Jesus was a Galilean. Pilate remembered that Herod Antipas, who had jurisdiction in Galilee, was in the city, so Pilate sent Jesus to be examined by him. This act of courtesy had the effect of making Herod and Pilate friends again, otherwise its object failed. Herod was pleased enough to see One he had heard about so often. Herod even thought, in his flippancy that a miracle might be performed by Jesus. Herod, with his soldiers, turned the matter into jest when Jesus refused to open His mouth in answer to the accusations heaped upon Him. They first clothed Jesus in gorgeous apparel, and sent Him back as a mock king to Pilate! Luke 23:6-12, *When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.*

(2) Not This Man, but Barabbas: Pilate's next thought was to release Jesus in pursuance of a Jewish custom of setting free a prisoner at the feast. To this end, Pilate offered the people the choice between Jesus and a notorious robber and murderer called Barabbas, who was then in prison. Again he protested that no fault had been found in Jesus. Just as he sat on the judgment seat, a message from his wife regarding a dream she had must have strongly influenced his superstitious mind. Matthew 27:19, *While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."* Pilate could hardly have conceived that the multitude would prefer a murderer to One so good and pure. However, the multitude was stirred up by the priests, and carried out this abomination, as they shouted for the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus.

(3) Behold the Man, Ecce Homo!: Pilate's weakness now began to reveal itself. He proposed to chastise (scourge) Jesus then release Him. But this compromise, as was to be anticipated, only whetted the eagerness for blood, and the cries grew ever louder, "Crucify him." However, as if yielding to the storm, Pilate did deliver Jesus to be scourged. The cruelty was aggravated by the maltreatment of the soldiers, who put on His head a crown of thorns, arrayed Him in a purple robe, and rained blows upon His bleeding face and form. It seems to have been a design of Pilate to awaken pity. Once again he brought Jesus forth, with new testimony of His innocence, presented Him to the people in the words, "Behold, the man!" John 19:1-6, *So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands.*

*Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"*

*Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"* How hideous the mockery to declare of such a One, "I find no crime in Him," and to exhibit Him to the crowd thus shamefully abused! No pity dwelt in these hearts, however, and the shouts became still angrier, "Crucify him." Matthew 27:20-23, *But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.*

*The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"*

*They said, "Barabbas!"*

*Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"*

*They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"*

*Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"*

*But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"*

(4) A Last Appeal and Pilate Yields: The words of the leaders, "He made himself the Son of God," spoken as a reason for putting Jesus to death, struck a new fear into the heart of Pilate. John 19:7, *The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."* It led him again to enter the Praetorium, and inquire of this strange prisoner, unlike any he had ever seen, "Where are you from?" Jesus was silent. John 19:8-9, *Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. "Do You not know,"* asked Pilate, *"I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?"*

Jesus answered only that he, Pilate, had no power over Him at all save what was given him by God. Therefore, greater was the crime of those who had subjected Him to this abuse of Divinely given power. John 19:10-11, *Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that*

*I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?"*

*Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."* Again Pilate went out and sought to release Him, but was met by the fierce cries that foretold a complaint to Caesar. Pilate yielded to the crowd as a riot seemed imminent. The washing of Pilate's hands should be placed here, though possibly after the mob chose Barabbas. This was Pilate's vain disclaimer of his responsibility in the matter. Matthew 27:24, *When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."* The awful answer of the people is the reply: Matthew 27:25, *And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."* Pilate now ascends the judgment seat, and, fully conscious of the iniquity of his procedure, pronounces the formal sentence that dooms Jesus to the cross.

The trial over, Jesus is led again into the Praetorium, where the cruel mockery of the soldiers is resumed in intensified form. The Holy One is placed at the mercy of the whole band. The soldiers bow the knee in ridicule before Him saying: "Hail, King of the Jews"; spit upon Him in contempt; and hit Him on the head with the reed. Then, stripped of the robe, His own garments are put on Him, in preparation for the end. Matthew 27:27-31 *Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.* Mark 15:16-20, *Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.*

c.) The Attitude of Jesus: Jesus is the absolute calmness, dignity and meekness in all this hideous scene of cruelty, injustice, and undeserved suffering. He endures the heaviest wrongs and insults put upon Him. The picture in Isaiah 53 is startling in its fidelity: Isaiah 53:7-8, *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken.* There is no return of the upheaval of spirit Jesus felt at Gethsemane. He won a strength there that had raised Him into a peace nothing could shake. He passed through the frightful physical exhaustion, mental strain, agony of scourging, suffering from wounds and blows of that terrible night and morning, with unbroken fortitude and unembittered spirit. Not a word of complaint passed His lips. He made no reply to accusations when scorned. He did not return their scorn. He took all with submission, as part of the cup the Father had given Him to drink. It is a spectacle to move the stoniest heart. We should all remember that it was the world's sin, in which we all share, that God placed on Jesus to bear! That is the cup Jesus asked the Father to remove the night before!

c. The Crucifixion and Burial: Crucifixion was the form of punishment reserved by the Romans for slaves, foreigners and the vilest criminals, and could not be inflicted on a Roman citizen.

1. The Crucifixion: With its prolonged and excruciating torture, it was the most agonizing and disgraceful death that the depravity of a cruel age could devise. Jewish law knew nothing of it, yet

Jewish leaders hounded Pilate to crucify their Messiah. The cross was no doubt of the usual Roman shape. The site of Golgotha, the place of a skull, is quite uncertain. It may have been a slight mound resembling a skull (see Meyer,<sup>189</sup> Luthardt,<sup>190</sup> Godet<sup>191</sup>), but this is not known. It is only plain that it was outside the wall, in the immediate vicinity of the city. The time of the crucifixion was about 9 a.m. The day was the preparation for the Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread week. This Sabbath is the high holy Sabbath on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and not the weekly sabbath on Saturday. This Sabbath would be on the 15th of Nisan. Matthew 27:32-56, *Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink. Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him:*

**THIS IS JESUS  
THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

*Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."*

*Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.*

*Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"*

*Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.*

*The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*

*So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!" And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.*

*Mark 15:21-41, Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross. And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. Then they gave Him*

<sup>189</sup> Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, op. cit.

<sup>190</sup> Christoph Ernst Luthardt, op. cit.

<sup>191</sup> Frederic Louis Godet, op. cit.



wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it. And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take. Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. And the inscription of His accusation was written above:

### THE KING OF THE JEWS.

With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."

And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!"

Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Some of those who stood by, when they heard that, said, "Look, He is calling for Elijah!"

Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink, saying, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down."

And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!" There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, who also followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem

Luke 23:26-49, Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus. And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him.

But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us! and to the hills, Cover us!' For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?" There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. And the people stood looking on.

But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God."

The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself." And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

*THIS IS THE KING  
OF THE JEWS.*

*Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."*

*But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."*

*And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."*

*Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last.*

*So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!" And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.*

*John 19:17-37, And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center. Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was:*

*JESUS OF NAZARETH,  
THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

*Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, I am the King of the Jews.'"*

*Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.*

*They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.*

*Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.*

*After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

*Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and*

*immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."*

a.) On the Way: It was part of the torment of Jesus that he had to bear his own cross (according to some only the patibulum, or transverse beam) to the place of execution. Staggering and possibly fainting under His burden, Jesus passed out of the gate just as a stranger was coming from the country. Simon, a man of Cyrene, was pulled aside and compelled to carry the cross (such a person would not be observant of rabbinical rules of travel, especially as it was not the regular sabbath). Jesus, however, was not wholly unpitied. Some women of Jerusalem, who bewailed and lamented Him, followed in the crowd. The Lord turned and instructed these women not to weep for Him, but for themselves and their children.

b.) Between the Thieves, The Superscription and The Seamless Robe: Golgotha was reached and the crucifixion at once took place under the care of a centurion and a quaternion of soldiers. With ruthless blows Jesus' hands and feet were nailed to the wood, then the cross was reared (the perpendicular part may, as some think, have first been placed in position). As if to emphasize the irony of the proceedings, two robbers were crucified with Jesus, one on the right and one on the left: an undesigned fulfilment of prophecy. It was doubtless when being raised upon the cross that Jesus uttered this touching prayer. His first words spoken after being condemned to death, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Above His head, according to custom, was placed a tablet with His accusation, written in three languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The chief priests took offence at the form, "This is the King of the Jews," and wished the words changed to, "He said, I am King," but Pilate curtly dismissed their complaint: "What I have written I have written." Whether Jesus still wore the crown of thorns is doubtful. The garments of the Crucified were divided among the soldiers, but they cast lots for His inner garment, woven without seam. A drink of wine mingled with an opiate, intended to dull the senses, was offered, but refused.

c.) The Mocking, The Penitent Thief and Jesus and His Mother: The triumph of Christ's enemies now seemed complete, and their glee was correspondingly unrestrained. Their victim's helplessness was to them a disproof of His claims. Railing, and wagging their heads, they taunted Him, "If thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross"; "He saved others; himself he cannot save." At first the robbers who were crucified with Him joined in this reproach, but it wasn't long before there was a change. The heart of one of the malefactors opened to the impression of the holiness and meekness of Jesus, and faith took the place of scorn. He rebuked his neighbor for reviling One who had done nothing wrong. At this time he then addressed Jesus and prayed: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." The reply of Jesus, His 2nd word on the cross, surpassed what even the repentant thief in these strange circumstances could have anticipated "Today you shalt be with me in Paradise." Another incident happened about the same time as this rescue of a soul in its last extremity. Standing near the cross was a group of holy women, one of them the mother of Jesus. Mary, whose anguish of spirit may be imagined, was supported by the disciple John. Beholding them, Jesus spoke His 3rd statement from the cross. He tenderly commended His mother to the care of John. To Mary He said, "Woman, behold, your son." Then speaking to John He said, "Behold, your mother." From that time Mary dwelt with John.

Three hours passed, and at noon mocking was hushed in the presence of a startling natural change. The sun's light failed, and a deep darkness lasting for 3 hours settled over the land. The darkness was unnatural in its time and occasion, whatever natural agencies may have been concerned in it. The earthquake a little later would be due to the same causes. It was as if nature veiled itself, and shuddered at the enormity of the crime that was being committed.

d.) The Great Darkness and The Cry of Desertion: The outer gloom was only the symbol of a yet more awful darkness that, toward the close of this period, overspread the soul of Jesus Himself. Who can grasp the depths of agony that lay in that awful cry, the 4th from the cross, that burst loudly from the lips of Jesus, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,” “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me!” It was remarked before that death was not a natural event to Jesus. However, He had in mind its significance as a judgment of God on sin. Here it was not simply death that He experienced in its most cruel form, but death without the sensible comforts of the Father’s presence. His character as Sin-Bearer may be felt to have in it the element of atonement! Even at that moment in the depths of His loneliness He continues to have an unbroken trust that clings to God: His calling of: “My God!”

e.) Last Words and Death of Jesus: The end was now very near. The victim of crucifixion sometimes lingers on in his agony for days. The unexampled strain of body and mind Jesus had undergone since the preceding day brought an earlier termination to His sufferings. Light was returning, and with it peace. There was a consciousness that all things were now finished. Jesus spoke again, the 5th word, “I thirst.” A sponge filled with vinegar was raised on a reed to His lips. Some who had heard His earlier words thought He called for Elijah and said, “Let us see whether Elijah cometh to save him.” With a last effort, Jesus cried aloud, 6th, the memorable word, “It is finished.” Then the 7th and final utterance commended His spirit to God: “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.” After these words Jesus bowed His head and surrendered Himself to death. It will be seen that of the 7 phrases spoken from the cross, 3 are preserved by Luke alone (1st, 2nd, 7th), 3 by John alone (3rd, 5th, 6th), while the 4th cry (“Eli, Eli”) occurs only in the first 2 gospel writers (Matthew and Mark, however, speak of Jesus “crying with a loud voice” at the close).

f.) The Spear Thrust, Earthquake and Tearing of the Veil: Jesus had died. The evildoers still lived. It was now 3 o’clock in the afternoon, and it was desired that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the approaching Sabbath. Permission was therefore obtained from Pilate for the soldiers to break the legs of the crucified to hasten death. When it was discovered that Jesus was already dead, a soldier, possibly to make sure, pierced His side with a spear, and John, who was present, notices as a special fact that *there came out blood and water*. Whether this means, as Stroud<sup>192</sup> and others have contended, that Jesus literally died of a rupture of His heart, or some other physiological explanation it is unknown. Let us look at Stroud’s writing for just a moment. Stroud penned his work in 1847 and makes a profound statement:

Stroud provided an elegant simile to sum up what he was doing. Should his attempt to use modern medical knowledge to explain how Christ died be successful, it will furnish a fresh proof of the value of inductive reasoning; which, like a sounding line let down into the ocean of time, has thus, from the depth of 1800 years, brought up to the surface a pearl of great price.

Stroud’s detailed examination of the text of the gospels in the light of his medical knowledge brought him to the conclusion that: Neither the ordinary sufferings of crucifixion, nor the wound inflicted by the soldier’s spear, nor an unusual degree of weakness, nor the interposition of supernatural influence, was the immediate cause of the Savior’s death. The first of these conditions was inadequate, the second followed instead of preceding the event, the third and fourth had no existence. What then, it will be asked, was the real cause? It must have been a known power in nature, possessing the requisite efficacy, agreeing with all the circumstances of the case, and by suitable tests proved to be present



<sup>192</sup> William A. Stroud, MD, 1789-1858, *Treatise on the Physical Death of Jesus Christ* (1847) London: Hamilton and Adams. *Treatise on the Physical Death of Jesus Christ and its Relation to the Principles and Practice of Christianity*, 2nd Ed., pp 28-156, 489-494. (1871) London: Hamilton and Adams.

without counteraction. It will be the object of the ensuing observations to show that the power in which these characters perfectly and exclusively concurred, was AGONY OF THE MIND, PRODUCING RUPTURE OF THE HEART.


Stroud goes on to demonstrate this conclusion in light of the evidence. He might have ended his treatise here, having used the light of his scientific knowledge to illuminate the events of the gospels. Yet for Stroud, this would have been idle curiosity, leaving his readers asking, "So what?" He therefore proceeds to address the theological implications of his conclusion: The sudden occurrence, the peculiar manner, and all the affecting circumstances of Christ's death admit of no other explanation, than that it was the death of an atoning victim vicariously enduring the divine malediction, for which purpose no other mode of death would have been adapted. An incompetent or sinful being would have perished by some of the remote consequences of this malediction; but an adequate and innocent victim must have been destroyed by the malediction itself, and in the manner here represented. The demonstration of the immediate or physical cause of the death of Christ which has now been given serves, therefore, to illustrate and confirm the scriptural doctrine of atonement, which, when rightly understood, is worthy of universal acceptance, demanding alike the homage of the understanding, and the adoration of the heart.

This, however, was not the only startling and symbolically significant fact attending the death of Jesus. A great darkness had precluded the death. Now, at the hour of His death, the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom, surely a sign that the way into the holiest of all was now opened for mankind and a great earthquake shook the city. Matthew connects with this the statement that from the tombs now opened "*many bodies of the saints .... were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many.*" There is nothing in itself improbable in such an early demonstration being given of what the Lord's death and resurrection meant for believers, though none of the other gospel writers mention it. The power of the cross was revealed in other ways. A dying robber had been won to penitence. The centurion who commanded the soldiers was brought to the avowal, "*Truly this was the Son of God.*" The mood of the crowd, too, was changed since the morning; they "*returned, smiting their breasts.*" At a distance, speechless with sorrow, stood the women who had followed Jesus from Galilee, with other friends and disciples. The gospel writers name Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Joses, Salome, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward.

2.) The Burial: Jesus had conquered hearts on His cross. Now His death revealed friends from the wealthier classes, who up to this time had been kept back by fear. They now charge themselves with His honorable burial. John 19:38-42, *After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.* One was Joseph of Arimathea, a just man, "*waiting for the kingdom of God,*" of whom the interesting fact is recorded that, though a member of the Sanhedrin, he had not consented to their counsel and deed. Another, also as a member of the Sanhedrin, was Nicodemus, who had also spoken up for Jesus. It was this Nicodemus who had come to Jesus by night that Jesus told he had to be born again.




a.) The New Tomb: Joseph of Arimathea takes the lead. Having dared, as Mark says, he begged the body of Jesus from Pilate. Mark 15:42-47, *Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph observed where He was laid.* Having obtained the body of Jesus, he bought linen cloth to wrap the body, and reverently buried it in a new rock tomb of his own. Matthew 27:57-60, *Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.*



Luke adds to the description that the tomb had not been previously used. Luke 23:50-56, *Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.*

Once again, we must remember that this sabbath that John, Mark and Luke speak about **is** the high holy day Sabbath on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and **is not** the weekly sabbath. John furnishes the further particulars that the tomb was in a garden, near where Jesus was crucified. He tells also of the generosity of Nicodemus, who brought as much as 100 pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes, to wrap the body of Jesus. This is not to be thought of as an anointing: rather, the spices formed a powder strewn between the folds of the linen bandages (compare Luthardt,<sup>193</sup> Commentary on John 19:40). The body, thus prepared, was then placed in the tomb, and a great stone rolled to the entrance. The burial was a very hurried one, and the women who witnessed it, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph are specifically mentioned (Matthew, Mark), as they intended to supplement this by anointing Jesus' body when the Sabbaths were past.



Notice I said sabbaths, plural, and the reason is this. Text indicates that the women did not return back to the tomb until the morning of the first day of the week. Matthew 28:1, *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.* Jesus said He had to spend three days and three nights in the tomb. Wednesday was His crucifixion, Thursday was the high holy Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Friday could be a day the women came back to further prepare the body, but that does not meet with text. Saturday is the weekly sabbath and the day Jesus arose in the afternoon to match and complete His three days in the tomb. When the women came on Sunday, the first day of the week, they found an empty tomb. Therefore, there are two sabbaths between Jesus' death and the first day of the week.

<sup>193</sup> Christoph Ernst Luthardt, op. cit.

b.) The Guard of Soldiers: Though Jesus was dead, the chief priests and Pharisees were far from easy in their minds about Him. Mysterious words of His had been quoted about His building of the temple in three days. Possibly Judas had told something about His sayings regarding His death and rising again on the 3rd day. In any case, His body was in the hands of His disciples, and they might remove it, and create the idea that He had risen. With this plea they went to Pilate, and asked from him a watch of soldiers to guard the tomb. To make the assurance doubly sure, they sealed the tomb with the official seal. The result of their efforts was only, under Divine providence, to provide new evidence of the reality of the resurrection! Matthew 27:62-66, *On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first."*

*Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.*

This passage of scripture gives proof of what I am trying to get you, the reader, to understand. Let us take this step by step and look at what the passage says: The discussions have been made that the crucifixion of Jesus was on the preparation day, now here it is the next day. That would make it the day of the high holy Sabbath, a day when no work will be conducted by the Jews' own rules. The Jews charged Jesus with violating the sabbath on many occasions. Now, they themselves are working, all be it politically, to have the tomb sealed and guarded. Look at the last sentence of this passage, they went and made the tomb secure! Next, look at the statements pertaining to the amount of time they desired the tomb to be guarded. The Jews tell Pilate that Jesus would rise in three days and they wanted the tomb guarded for three days. By that request alone we should understand that the Jews understood what Jesus meant about the length of time He would spend in the grave and **it was not from Friday to Sunday**. Besides the first opportunity that the high priest, scribes and Pharisees could even make this a reasonable request without violating their own rules would be on Friday, the day in between the high holy Sabbath, on Thursday, and the weekly sabbath, on Saturday.

The uncertainty attached to the site of Golgotha also attaches itself to the site of Joseph's rock tomb. Opinion is about equally divided in favor of, and against, the traditional site, where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands. A principal ground of uncertainty is whether that site originally lay within or without the second wall of the city (compare Stanley,<sup>194</sup> and G. A. Smith,<sup>195</sup> a good summarization of the different opinions, with the authorities, as given in Andrews<sup>196</sup>).

F. The Resurrection and Ascension: The resurrection of Jesus may be called in a true sense the corner stone of Christianity. It held completion in the ascension, set the seal of the Father's acceptance on His finished work on earth, and marked the decisive change from His state of humiliation to that of exaltation.

1. The Resurrection, a Fundamental Fact: The Christian church was founded on the preaching of Christ crucified and risen. That fact was the basis for the Apostles to preach the Good News. It was the proud task of Paul to take the Good News message to the Gentile world. We follow the spread of the Christian faith through Roman persecution onward. Along the way there have been many sermons and writings concerning the life of Christ and the impact of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. For certain Martin Luther<sup>197</sup> carried that

<sup>194</sup> Arthur Penrhym Stanley, op. cit., *Sinai and Palestine*, 457.

<sup>195</sup> George Adam Smith, op. cit., *Jerusalem*, II, 576.

<sup>196</sup> Samuel James Andrews, op. cit., Part VII

<sup>197</sup> Martin Luther, Op. Cit.

foundation even further. Following Luther's lead and resulting denomination was Carl Gustav Adolf von Harnack,<sup>198</sup> a German Lutheran theologian and prominent church historian who published many writings between 1873 and 1912. One view of Professor Harnack will be looked at in the following:

The difference between, the Easter faith (that Jesus lives with God) and the Easter message. The church never had any Easter faith apart from the Easter message. The subversion of the fact of the resurrection is therefore a first task to which unbelief addresses itself. The modern spirit rules it out a priori as miraculous. The historical fact is denied, and innumerable theories (imposture, theories of swoon, of hallucination, mythical theories, spiritualistic theories, etc.) are invented to explain the belief. None of these theories can stand calm examination. The objections are but small dust of the balance compared with the strength of the evidence for the fact. From the standpoint of faith, the resurrection of Jesus is the most credible of events. If Jesus was indeed such a One as the gospel history declares Him to be, it was impossible that death should hold Him. The resurrection, in turn, confirms His claim to be the Son of God.

We must also view the opinion of an individual with that of scripture. First, Professor Harnack had accepted the myth of the church when he expressed either an Easter faith or an Easter message. Let every Christian know beyond any doubt, there is no such thing as Easter! We are speaking about a divine occurrence and not about little chickens and bunny rabbits and the giving of candy to our kids in the form of eggs, rabbits or anything else. Easter is named for a goddess of fertility, therefore the paganistic concept of baby chicks and rabbits. We should be discussing Resurrection Day, the 17th of Nisan, and three days and three nights after the crucifixion of Jesus. It is these two events in the month of Nisan that establish the foundation for Christianity. It is the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus that assures everyone of God's free gift of eternal life. Now, look at text itself for further proof. Matthew 28:11-15, *Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying, "Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure." So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.* I do not know what the Jews would have to do to convince Pilate that his soldiers did nothing wrong while on duty. My experience of twenty-seven years of military service indicates that these guards would have been court martialed and most likely executed for failing to perform their assigned duty.

There is one other item that must be addressed concerning this term Easter. Can you reasonably explain why the date changes over the months of March and April? Why does this misnomer date called Easter occur sometimes in March and sometimes in April? Here are the facts that will answer those questions. Constantine, the Roman Emperor for the Eastern half of the empire called a meeting of Bishops to gather for a Council at Nicaea in 325 CE. One subject settled at this meeting was one universal date for the Resurrection of Jesus, not necessarily a biblical date. The bishops at Alexandria were assigned the task and determined that the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox was to be the date now called Easter. That is why the date may change over a lunar month and be any date between the 22nd of March to the 19th of April.

<sup>198</sup> Prof Carl Gustav Adolf von Harnack, 1851-1930, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (1902) English trans. *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* (1904/5) Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.



a. The Resurrection: The narratives of the resurrection are here included as inseparably connected, and they represent the appearances of Jesus in Jerusalem and Galilee. The accounts will show that the body of Jesus was a true body, identical with the one that suffered on the cross. It could be seen, touched, and handled! It also exhibited attributes which showed that Jesus had entered a new phase of existence: one where some of the ordinary limitations of the body were transcended. Its condition in the interval between the resurrection and the ascension was an intermediate one, no longer simply natural, yet not fully entered into the state of glorification. *“I have not yet ascended . . . I am ascending.”* John 20:17, *Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”* The mystery of the resurrection body is comprised in these two parts of the one saying. See my book, *The Spirit World*,<sup>199</sup> for more understanding of the various states of the body, as spoken of by Paul, terrestrial, celestial, and the other created beings of God.

1.) Sunday, the First Day of the Week: The Open Tomb: The main facts in the resurrection narratives stand out clearly. “According to all the Gospels,” the arch-skeptic Strauss<sup>200</sup> concedes, “Jesus, after having been buried on the Friday evening, and had lain during the Sabbath in the grave, came out of it restored to life at daybreak on Sunday” Unfortunately, Strauss was wrong on all accounts. The Holy Roman church is the source of most of the misunderstanding of dates and events pertaining to the life of Jesus. They did not understand the date of His birth, they did not understand the moving star that guided the wise men to Bethlehem, and they most certainly did not understand the events that made up Passion Week at the death and resurrection of Christ. You have the current mess of misunderstanding still today since these were allowed to become traditions and passed down through time for 2000 years. There is no wonder it is necessary to include material of skeptics, atheists and others in a work such as this, so that a writer can even attempt to overcome tradition and allow the truth to be viewed. Discrepancies are alleged in detail as to the time, number, the names of the women, and number of angels at Jesus’ empty tomb. However, most of these vanish upon careful examination of text. The Synoptic Gospel writers group their material on the resurrection events, while John gives a more detailed account of particular events.

a.) The Angel and the Guards: No eye beheld the actual resurrection. It was quite dark in a sealed tomb on Saturday, the sabbath. Jesus arose, just as He said would happen. Jesus had shown on three different occasions that He had authority to restore life, even His own. He also fortold the story of Jonah and how God, the Father, raised Jonah from the belly of the great fish. In the next forty days Jesus will appear and disappear without the aid of opening a door. Think about that, if He had the same capability of angels to appear inside of a room He most likely could transform Himself outside of a sealed tomb. There would have been no need for the stone to be rolled away for Jesus to come out. The stone was moved so people could see in and not for Jesus to get out. Matthew records that there was a great earthquake, and tells of the descent of an angel of the Lord, who rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. Before his dazzling aspect the guards became as dead men, and afterward fled. Matthew 28:2-4, *And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.* We have already seen that the chief priests bribed the guards to conceal the facts, and say the body had been stolen. Refer back to the previous page and read Matthew 28:11-15.

b.) Visit of the Women: The first clue of the resurrection to the Apostles was the discovery of the empty tomb by the women who had come at dawn with spices, prepared to anoint the

<sup>199</sup> Charles E. Darnell, op. cit., *The Spirit World* (2001/2015) Campbellville: VisionQuest Publishing, Inc.

<sup>200</sup> David Friedrich Strauss, op.cit.


body of Jesus. Matthew 28:1, *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.* Mark 16:1-2, *Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.* Luke 24:1, *Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.*

*Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’” And they remembered His words. Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. John 20:1, *Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.**

Apparently ignorant of the posted guard, the women were concerned on their way as to who should roll away the stone from the door of the tomb. They were much surprised to find the stone rolled away, and the tomb open. There is no need for supposing that all the women mentioned came to the tomb together as a group. It is much more probable that they came in different groups or companies, perhaps Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, or these with Salome, came first (Matthew, Mark; compare the “we” of John 20:2). Then possibly Joanna and other members of the Galilean group came (Luke). On the appearance of Jesus to Mary, see below. For now, what more can we expect than to have Jesus’ wife and mother to appear at the tomb early in the morning to anoint the body of their beloved. Recall earlier in this work: at the first miracle, the wedding was that of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Now, notice who all four gospel writers name as being at the tomb first. Every one names Mary Magdalene first! Why not, she is the wife of Jesus! Then they name Mary, Jesus’ mother in odd ways. They no longer call her the mother of Jesus, they call her the other Mary or Mary the mother of James. To show this we need to look at certain passages.

First, Jesus had half-brothers: Matthew 13:55, *Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?* Mark 6:3, *“Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” And they were offended at Him.*

Both Matthew and Mark show us this fact and name James as a brother of Jesus. Compare these names with the following verse from Matthew: Matthew 27:56, *Among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and (a third woman) the mother of Zebedee’s sons.* Notice that there are three women named in this verse: Mary Magdalene, Jesus’ wife; Mary the mother of James and Joses, identifying Jesus’ mother and using two half-brothers as the identifiers; and the mother of Zebedee’s sons. It is important to understand this final person. James and John, the Apostles, are Zebedee’s sons. Now, there are those who want to identify this woman as someone named Mary and that this other woman is not the mother of Jesus. This really cannot be the case. There are three women identified with one being the mother of James and Joses, Jesus’ mother. The other mother identified is the wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John, Zebedee’s sons, the Apostles. Furthermore, there are some who disagree over who the leader of the Jerusalem church is during the ministry of Paul. Some say this is James, the brother



of John, both the sons of Zebedee. Others say this is James, the brother of Jesus. Observing text, this second James would have to be correct as the leader of the Jerusalem church. Here is the reason why. Acts 12:1-2, *Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.* This James would have to be the Apostle, son of Zebedee. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles confirms this for us by virtue of two verses. Acts 21:18, *On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.* Galatians 1:19, *But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.* The journeys of Paul are a later event and by the time they begin the apostle James had already been killed by Herod. Therefore the James that Paul was meeting was James the half-brother of Jesus. To finish this discussion pertaining to the women who were at the tomb on the first day of the week we need to understand who Luke called *they* in Luke 24:1. Matthew provides the answer. Matthew 27:61, *And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.* This is the verse just after Joseph and Nicodemus have prepared the body and placed Jesus in the tomb, and then left.

c.) The Angelic Message: As the women stood, perplexed and frightened, at the tomb, they received a visitation of angels (Matthew and Mark speak only of one angel; Luke and John mention two; all allude to the dazzling brightness), who announced to them that Jesus had risen *“He is not here; for He is risen; . . . come, see the place where the Lord lay,”* and instruct them to tell His Apostles that He went before them to Galilee, where they should see Him. The women departed with *“trembling and astonishment”* (Mark), yet *“with great joy”* (Matthew). Matthew 28:5-8, *But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.* Mark 16:4-8, *But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.” So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.*

2.) Visit of Peter and John and Appearance to Mary: The narrative in John enlarges in important respects those recorded in the Synoptics. From it we learn that Mary Magdalene (no companion is named, but one at least is implied in the we of verse 2), concluded from the empty tomb that the body of Jesus had been moved and at once ran to carry the news to Peter and John. These Apostles lost no time in hastening to the spot. John, who arrived first, stooped down, saw the linen cloths lying there, while Peter entered and beheld also the napkin for the head folded up in a place by itself. After John likewise entered, saw, believed and they returned to their home. John 20:1-10, *Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there,*

*and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.* Strange! Here are the two Apostles that I assume would understand what Jesus had taught them. Jesus told them the truth, that He had to die, that He would spend three days and three nights in the tomb and that He would rise again from the dead to defeat death, for He was the Son of God, the Lord of lords and the Messiah! Now, the statement *For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.* Of course not! They did not have the training of the scribes, nor believe as the Pharisees. They had not read and reread the words of the Prophets to fully understand the prophecies pertaining to the Messiah. They did not have the Gospels because they hadn't written them yet. They had to believe in pure faith that what Jesus told them He was going to do, it would be done! Now, as Jesus had said, "*Oh ye of little faith,*" they returned home!

Even in this event Jesus is still teaching the Apostles. Here we have Peter and John at the empty tomb and they both observed the condition of the linen cloths and the napkin (KJV) (or as stated here in the NKJV version, a handkerchief) inside the tomb. Look at the details of this observation. It says this cloth was *folded together in a place by itself.* That by itself may not say anything to you and most likely it didn't say too much to Peter and John at that moment. Here is what I believe Jesus taught by the placing of the napkin folded and away from the rest of the body cloths. If you are dining and you get up to leave the table, etiquette indicates that you leave your napkin lightly folded on the chair, meaning that you are going to return. On the other hand if you are finished with dinner you fold your napkin and leave it on the left of the plate or where the plate was, meaning that you have left. What does that mean to this situation? Jesus has risen from the state of death and death is now defeated. He will shortly ascend to return to the Father. However, He had attempted to teach the Apostles that He would return to usher in His kingdom on Earth. Jesus is reassuring the Apostles that He will return by leaving the napkin folded and by itself in another place. If He had simply lightly folded the napkin and left it with the rest of the cloths He was saying "Goodby" and had left them. This was not the case of our Risen Lord! He boldly proclaimed by the simple placing of that napkin that "I will return!"

Meanwhile Mary had come back sorrowful and weeping to the tomb. When she looked in she, too, saw a vision of two angels, like the other women. It was then that Jesus addressed her, "Why weepest thou?" At first she thought it was the gardener, but on Jesus tenderly naming her, "Mary," she recognized who it was. She exclaimed, "Rabboni" (Teacher), and would have embraced Him. He forbid her: "Touch me not. Do not wait, but hasten to tell my disciples that I am risen, and ascend to my Father." John 20:11-18, *But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.*

*Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"*

*She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.*

*Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"*

*She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."*

*Jesus said to her, "Mary!"*

*She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).*

*Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.* I highlighted six words and will attempt to give them the full meaning that my heart tells me is there. Tradition says that Jesus was never married and I say differently. I have already shown you my comprehension of the first miracle and the wedding in John, chapter 2. I have given you other information through the gospel records of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Just now I want you to see something. In this passage from John we have seen that Peter and John left and went home. Here is Mary Magdalene, the wife of Jesus, crying, alone and now the first person that Jesus comes to since He arose. Tenderly Jesus asks why she is weeping and her reply should move mountains with the love that is expressed. She tells One, whom she believes to be the gardener, that if He would only tell her where they have moved the body of Jesus that she, alone, by herself, out of love and respect would go and ***take Him away!*** What else could you expect from a loving wife? Now she becomes the bearer of the truth and goes to tell the Apostles that she has seen and spoken to Jesus.

John gives us these details, but we need to see the limited narrative of the other gospel writers. Mark 16:9-10, *Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.* Jesus rose on the sabbath, Saturday! Not on Sunday, the first day of the week. Once again, I must say that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath, Saturday: Matthew 12:8, *"For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."* Mark 2:28, *"Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."* Luke 6:5, *And He said to them, "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."* There is no verse in the Bible that says Jesus is the lord of the first day of the week, Sunday. Why would Jesus say He was the Lord of the Sabbath and the Synoptic writer so record His words in this manner (Mark 2:28)? Then Mark turns around and says that He rose on the first day of the week (Mark 16:9). Was this a part of Satan's deception to mess with Jesus' church?

Luke 24:12, 23-24, *But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened. . . . "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."*

3.) Appearances on this Day: The appearance of Jesus to the other women is referred to below. It is probable that Mary Magdalene rejoined the other women, and together they made their report to the disciples, or to those that could be found. Their report was received with disbelief (Luke 24:11; Mark 16:11). The visit of Peter referred to in Luke 24:12 is doubtless that recorded more precisely in John. Ten appearances of Jesus altogether after His resurrection are referred to, or are recorded; of these five were on the day of resurrection. They are the following:

a.) The first is the appearance to Mary Magdalene described above.  
b.) The second is an appearance to the women as they returned from the tomb, Matthew 28:9-10, *And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."* Some regard this as only a generalization of the appearance to Mary Magdalene, but it seems distinct.

c.) An Appearance to Peter: Recorded by both Luke and Paul. This must have been early in the day, probably soon after Peter's visit to the tomb. No particulars are given of this interview

marked as an act of grace of the risen Lord to His repentant apostle. The news that it happened excited the Apostles. Luke 24:34, *Saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"* 1 Corinthians 15:5, *And that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.*

d.) The fourth was an appearance to two disciples on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a village about two hours from Jerusalem. They were conversing on the sad events of the last few days, and on the strange tidings of the women's vision of angels, when Jesus overtook them, and entered into conversation with them. At first they did not recognize Him. This was a token of change in His appearance, as in Mary's case. Their hearts burned within them as He opened to them the Scriptures about Christ's sufferings and glory. As the day was closing, Jesus stayed with them for the evening meal; then, as He blessed and broke the bread, *"Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight."* Luke 24:13-35, *Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. And*

*He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"*

*Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"*

*And He said to them, "What things?"*

*So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."*

*Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

*Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.*

*And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together; saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. They hastily arose, and returned to the company of disciples at Jerusalem. According to Mark, their testimony like that of the women, was not believed at first. Mark 16:12-13, *After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either.**

e.) The fifth appearance was to the gathered Apostles and others: In the evening, there was an appearance recorded by Luke, and John, and alluded to by Paul. Ten of the Apostles must have been there, Thomas was not! The disciples from Emmaus had just come in, and found the group thrilled with excitement at the news that the Lord had appeared to Simon (Luke). The doors were closed for fear of the Jews, when suddenly Jesus appeared in their midst with the salutation, *"Peace to you."* The disciples were frightened, they thought they had seen a spirit. To remove their fears, Jesus showed them His hands and His feet, and ate before them. He then breathed on them, saying, *"Receive the Holy Spirit,"* and renewed the commission formerly given of repentance and remission of sins. The breathing was earlier in advance of the later baptism by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The authority delegated depends on its validity and the possession of that Spirit, and its exercise according to the mind of Christ. The incident strikingly illustrates at once the reality of Christ's risen body, and the changed conditions under which that body now existed.

Luke 24:36-53, *Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence.*

*Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

*And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen. John 20:19-23, Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." 1 Corinthians 15:5, And that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. Thomas was told these things afterwards and doubted.*

4.) The Second Appearance to the Apostles: The second appearance of Jesus to the Apostles took place in the same chamber and under similar conditions with the doors shut. This meeting was eight days after the first on Monday the 26th of Nisan. The peculiar feature of this second meeting was the removal of the doubt of Thomas who, it is related, had not been present on the former occasion. Thomas, was devoted to the discipleship of Jesus. John 11:16, *Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."* However, Thomas had a

naturally questioning temperament. John 14:5, *Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"* Thomas refused to believe on the mere report of others that the Lord had risen, and demanded indisputable evidence for himself. Jesus, at the second appearance, after a salutation as before, graciously gave the doubting apostle the evidence he sought. John 20:24-27, *Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them.*

*Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."*

As the event proved, the sign was not needed. The faith and love of Thomas surged forth at once in adoring confession: *"My Lord and my God."* It was well, but Jesus reminded him that the highest faith is not that which waits on the evidence of sense. John 20:28-31, *And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"*

*Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

John reveals the reason for his writing of a gospel with the following words: John 20:30-31, *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

5.) The Galilean Appearances: The scene now shifts to Galilee. Jesus had instructed His Apostles to meet Him in Galilee.

a.) At the Sea of Galilee, The Catch of Fishes and Peter's Restoration. The chapter that narrates this appearance of Jesus at the Sea of Galilee (Lake of Tiberias) is chapter 21 of the Gospel of John. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)<sup>201</sup> indicates this chapter is a supplement to the gospel of John. However the New English Translation,<sup>202</sup> with its enormous number of translator notes does not indicate this. ISBE continues and states that chapter 21 is so evidently Johannine in character that it may safely be accepted as from the pen of the beloved disciple (Lightfoot,<sup>203</sup> Meyer,<sup>204</sup> Godet,<sup>205</sup> Alford<sup>206</sup>). The appearance itself is described as the third to the Apostles. John 21:1-25, *After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."*

*They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.*

*Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?"*

*They answered Him, "No."*

*And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.*

<sup>201</sup> International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE), op. cit.

<sup>202</sup> The New English Translation (NET) Bible, op. cit.

<sup>203</sup> John Lightfoot, DD, 1602-1675, *The Works of the Reverend and Learned John Lightfoot*, 13 vols, (1822/25) London: J. R. Pitman.

<sup>204</sup> Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, ThD, op. cit.

<sup>205</sup> Frederic Louis Godet, op. cit.

<sup>206</sup> Henry Alford, DD, 1810-1871, *The New Testament for English Readers*, 4 Vols (1872) Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Company



Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread.

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught." Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast."

Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.

So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?"



And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?"

Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me." Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?" This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

b.) On the Mountain, The Great Commission and Baptism: The fact there was an appointment at a definite time and place, the mountain, suggests a collective gathering, though only the eleven apostles are named in Matthew's account. The group was assembled, and Jesus appeared with that element of mystery in His appearance, that led some to doubt. Such doubt would speedily vanish when the Lord announced Himself as clothed with all authority in heaven and earth. Jesus then gave to the Apostles the supreme commission to *make disciples of all the nations*. Discipleship was to be shown by baptism *in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* (one name, yet threefold). Baptism was to be followed by instruction in Christ's commands. The word of never-failing encouragement, "*Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age,*" stands behind the commission, worldwide in its scope, and binding on every age. Matthew 28:16-20, *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven*



*and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. This incident is probably to be identified with the appearance of *over five hundred brethren at once* mentioned by Paul. 1 Corinthians 15:6, *After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.**

It will be noticed that the Lord’s Supper and Baptism are the only sacraments instituted by Jesus in His church.

c.) Appearance to James: Paul records, as subsequent to the above, an appearance of Jesus to James, known as *the Lord’s brother*. 1 Corinthians 15:7, *After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles*. Galatians 1:19, *But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother*. No particulars are given of this appearance, that may have occurred either in Galilee or Jerusalem. James, so far as known, was not a believer in Jesus before the crucifixion. John 7:5, *For even His brothers did not believe in Him*. James and the other brothers of Jesus are found in the company of the disciples after the ascension of Jesus. Acts 1:14, *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers*. Sometime later James became a chief *pillar* of the church at Jerusalem. Galatians 2:9, *And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised*. This appearance may have marked the turning point for James and his brothers.

b. The Ascension: (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-14; compare Mark 16:19): Jesus had declared, “I ascend unto my Father.” John 20:17, *Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”* Acts chapter 1 narrates the circumstances of that departure. Acts 1:6-14, *Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”*

*And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

*Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*

*Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey. And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers*. Jesus might simply have *vanished* from the sight of His disciples but it was His will to leave them in a way that would visibly mark the final close of His association with them. They are found *assembled* with Him at Jerusalem, where His final instructions are given. The scene then changes to Mount Olivet where the ascension is located. The disciples inquire regarding the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, but Jesus tells them that it is not for them to know times and seasons that the Father set within His own authority. Far more important was it for them to know that within the next days they should receive

power from the Holy Spirit to be witnesses for Him to the uttermost parts of the earth. He was taken up, even as He spoke, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. It was then, two heavenly messengers appeared, as the apostles stood gazing upward. The angels comforted them with the assurance that as they had seen Jesus ascend into heaven, so also, He would come again. The church must still pray and wait for that return. Revelation 22:20, *He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*

The Apostles returned to Jerusalem and joined the larger company of disciples in the *upper room* where their meetings had been held. There, purposefully, gathered about 120 followers. Acts 1:15, *And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said.* They all continued steadfastly in prayer until "*the Promise of the Father*" was bestowed upon them, at Pentecost. Acts 1:4-5, *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."* Acts 2:1-4, *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

1.) The Last Appearance of Jesus: I must move us away from the Apostles for just a moment. We know from the narratives that after Jesus was arrested Judas went and hung himself. That reduced the Apostles by one and the narratives we have been viewing concern only the eleven. Yes! The eleven gathered and chose another to replace Judas. However, I strongly believe the superior choice was made by Jesus and not by the eleven. In the book of Acts we are introduced to Saul of Tarsus and we find him killing the disciples of Jesus. He went to the extreme and asked for a letter granting him authority to kill members of this new sect as far away as Damascus. There on the road to Damascus we find Jesus making a choice for an Apostle to the Gentiles, and He also changed his name from Saul to Paul. Acts 9:3-9 NIV, *As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"*

*"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.*

*"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," He replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."*

*The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.*

Part IV Epilogue and The Apostolic Teaching: The earthly life of Jesus is finished.

A. After the Ascension: With His resurrection and ascension a new age begins. Yet the work of Christ continues. As Luke expressively phrases it the Gospels are but the records of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up. Acts 1:1-2, *The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen.* It is beyond the scope of this work to trace the succeeding developments of Christ's activity through His church (Ekklesia, see page 111) and by His Spirit. However, to bring this task to a proper close, it is necessary to glance at the light thrown back by the Spirit's teachings. After the ascension we should see the enlargement of the apostles' concepts about Christ as seen in the Epistles and the Apocalypse.

B. Revelation through the Spirit: It was the promise of Jesus that the Spirit would be given to His disciples after His departure. The Spirit would teach them all things, and bring to their remembrance all that He had said to them. John 14:26, *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.* It was not a new revelation they were to receive, but illumination and guidance of their minds to understand the meaning of what they had already received. John 16:13-15, *“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”* This promise of the Spirit was fulfilled at Pentecost. Acts 2:4, *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Only a few personal manifestations of Jesus are recorded after that event. The primary two were the appearance to Paul on the way to Damascus, and the appearance in a vision to John on the Isle of Patmos. Christ’s parting instructions were already apparent in Peter’s discourses at Pentecost. It is not to be supposed though that no room was left for further development. Growth in knowledge and deepened insight into the connection of truths continued. Peter had to be instructed as to the acceptance and admission of the Gentiles into the fold. The apostles had to gradually learn the relationship of the law. Paul received revelations vastly widening the doctrinal horizon. Both John and Paul show progressive apprehension in the truth about Christ.

C. Gospels and Epistles: It is therefore a question of much interest just how the apostolic concepts gained ground in relationship to the picture of Jesus we have been studying in the Gospels. It is the contention of the so-called historical (anti-supernaturalistic) school of the day that the two pictures do not correspond. The transcendental Christ of Paul and John has little in common, it is affirmed, with the Man of Nazareth of the Synoptic Gospels. Theories of the origins of Christianity are concocted proceeding on this assumption (compare Pfleiderer,<sup>207</sup> Weizsacker,<sup>208</sup> Bousset,<sup>209</sup> Wernle<sup>210</sup>). Such speculations ignore the first conditions of the problem in not accepting the self-testimony of Jesus as to who He was, and the ends of His mission in the world. The alleged contradictions between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith largely disappear when Jesus is taken at His own valuation, and the great fact of His resurrection is admitted.

D. Fact of Christ’s Lordship: There was a great change of concept that is forgotten in Christ’s person and work. The concept was: Jesus was born a babe placed in a manger but destined to be a king. However, the man taught us love of one another, love of the Father and that His destiny was not of this world. Jesus’ life is not ignored, far from it. The facts concerning Christ’s death, resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of God show His Lordship. Its influence breathes in every page of Paul’s epistles, for example. The weakness, limitations, and self-suppression have now been left behind, or what Paul calls the emptying of the earthly life. Philippians 2:7-9, *But made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name.* The rejected and crucified One has now been vindicated, exalted, and has entered into His glory. This is the burden of

<sup>207</sup> Otto Pfleiderer, 1839-1908, *The Early Christian Conception of Christ* (1905) New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons.

<sup>208</sup> Carl Friederich Freiherr von Weizsacker, 1912-2007, Introduction to: *The Biological Basis of Religion and Genius* by Gopi Krishna (1971) New York: NC Press.

<sup>209</sup> Wilhelm Bousset, op. cit.

<sup>210</sup> Prof Paul Wernle, 1872-1939, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (1903/04) translated by G.A. Bienemann, New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons.

Peter's first address at Pentecost. Acts 2:36, *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."* Could anything look quite the same after that? The change is seen in the growing substitution of the name Christ for Jesus, and in the habitual speaking of Jesus as Lord.

E. Significance of Christ's Person: Acceptance of and belief in the lordship of Jesus greatly increased ones concept of the significance of His person. The elements were all there in what the Apostles had seen and known of Jesus while on earth. However His exaltation not only threw light upon His claims while on earth, they were confirmed, and completed in the full Divine dignity of His person: He was raised to the throne of Divine dominion! Worshipped with honors due to God only! Joined, with Father and Holy Spirit as the source of grace and blessing. Therefore He must in the fullest sense be Divine. There is no such thing as an honorary Godhead. Everything taught about Jesus in the epistles could be said: His preexistence; His share in Divine attributes: in Divine works; in Divine worship; and in Divine names and titles. It is an extension of the same concept when Jesus is represented at the end of time, the Head in whom all things are finally to be epitomized. These high views, of the person of Christ in the Epistles, are everywhere assumed to be the possession of the readers.



Jesus' Messianic vocation had furnished His Apostles with the means of understanding His death as a necessity endured for the salvation of the world. However, it was the resurrection and exaltation that shed light on the Divine meaning of this. Jesus died, but it was for sins. He was the atoning sacrifice for the sin of the world. He was made sin for us!

F. Significance of the Cross and Resurrection: The thought of Isaiah 53 runs through the New Testament teaching on this theme. Jesus' own word *ransom* is repeated by Paul. The song of the redeemed is, *"Thou didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe."* Is it wonderful, in view of this, that in the apostolic writings, not of Paul only, but in Peter, John, Hebrews, and Revelation, equally that the cross should assume the decisive importance it does? However, only Paul works out the full relationship to the law and the sinner's justification of truth shared by all. He himself declares it to be the common doctrine of the churches.

G. Hope of the Advent: The newer tendency is to read an apocalyptic character into almost all of the teaching of Jesus (compare Schweitzer,<sup>211</sup> *Quest of the Historical Jesus*). Jesus taught His disciples to look for His coming again, and connected that with the coming perfection of His kingdom. The apostolic church retained this feature of the teaching of Jesus. In accordance with the promise in Acts, it looked for the glorious reappearing of its Lord. Acts 1:11, *Who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."* The Epistles are full of this hope. Even John gives it prominence. 1 John 2:28; 3:2, *And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. . . . Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

In looking for the Second Coming as something immediately at hand, the early believers went even beyond what had been revealed, and Paul had to rebuke harmful tendencies in this direction. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, *Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

<sup>211</sup> Schweitzer, op. cit., *Quest of the Historical Jesus*



The hope might be cherished that the coming of the Kingdom would not be delayed long. Jesus declared that no one, not even the angels, not even the Son, knew of that day and hour that the Father had set these things by His own authority. The Advent was not so near as many thought, as time has proven even in the apostolic age. 2 Peter 3:1-4, *Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."* In part, perhaps, the church itself may be to blame for the delay. The Advent remains the great fixed event of the future. It is the event that overshadows all others. In that sense it is ever near; the focus of the church's confidence that righteousness shall triumph; the dead shall be raised; sin shall be judged; and the kingdom of God shall come.

Now, as we turn on the television on a daily basis we see the outcome of evil and wonder why? What is going on? Why is there such devastation around the world? Maybe mankind as a whole should look inside of themselves to find the cause. Mankind has continued to defame the name of God and His Son! We would much rather worship our house, our car, our sports team or our money. Maybe those should be in the opposite order with money and our sports team as primary idols. The presence of evil is all around us and appears to be growing stronger and bolder with each passing day. It just may be the time for every living person to pray and ask to be forgiven their sins and return to worshipping God in the manner that Jesus taught and not in the manner of mankind's traditions. With Satan in the lead deceiving the minds of men to form religion we now find the masses of humanity engrossed in the rites and rituals of false religion and false teaching. Jesus instructed the Apostles, and God had Luke to record His instruction in Luke 21:8-9 NIV, *He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away."*

The time is coming, and may be nearer than most people think, when the prophecies of the End Times will begin and all that is recorded in the Revelation (of John) will unfold across the stage of mankind's existence upon the Earth. At that time God, the Father, will make one last plea to His children to come out of the Great Whore (false religion). Revelation 18:4-5, *And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. 5 For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."*

If you do not feel that we are near that time and the events of the Great Tribulation read the following: 2 Timothy 3:1-17, *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was. But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors*

will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Turn on your television and watch the evening news to see all that is happening. Go and ask your grandparents, or a senior friend over the age of 70 how often they heard of such tragedies as are now happening on an almost daily basis. They will most likely tell you that it would be months or even years between similar events taking place. They may also cry when they tell you these things because they most likely understand all that has been written in this book. It is unsettling to say the least. May God bless you, be with you, and lead you in His will for your life.

Finally, if you are doing a study of Jesus there is the all important question of how does He fulfill the Old Testament prophecies pertaining to the Messiah? There is information presented in this book that explains the difference between the geneology accounts in Matthew and Luke. The important part that we all must remember is that Jesus had to be a descendant of king David and that Joseph is not his biological father. The Holy Spirit is Jesus' biological father and His ancestor David must be in His mother's family tree. I present here a graphic chart of how the Old Covenant prophecies are fulfilled in the New Covenant? It seems appropriate to include that information at this point. Here is why Jesus is the Messiah.

## Jesus the Christ

### What makes Jesus the anointed one of God?

Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p><b>Would be the "Offspring of a woman"</b></p> <p>Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, <i>and between thy seed and her seed</i>; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, <i>made of a woman</i>, made under the law,</p> <p>Luke 2:7 And <i>she brought forth her firstborn son</i>, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.</p> <p>Revelation 12:5 And <i>she brought forth a man child</i>, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.</p>
<p><b>Promised Offspring of Abraham</b></p> <p>Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: <i>and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed</i>.</p> <p>Genesis 18:18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, <i>and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?</i></p>	<p>Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, <i>And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed</i>. Matthew 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, <i>the son of Abraham</i>. Luke 3:34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the <i>son of Abraham</i>, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor.</p>
<p><b>Promised Offspring of Isaac</b></p> <p>Genesis 17:19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: <i>and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him</i>.</p>	<p>Matthew 1:2 <i>Abraham begat Isaac</i>; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;</p> <p>Luke 3:34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the <i>son of Isaac</i>, which was the son of Abraham,</p>



Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Promised Offspring of Jacob</b></p> <p>Numbers 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: <i>there shall come a Star out of Jacob</i>, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.</p> <p>Genesis 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and <i>in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed</i>.</p>	<p>Matthew 1:2 Abraham begat Isaac; <i>and Isaac begat Jacob</i>; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;</p> <p>Luke 3:34 Which was the <i>son of Jacob</i>, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Will descend from the tribe of Judah</b></p> <p>Genesis 49:10 The <i>sceptre shall not depart from Judah</i>, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.</p>	<p>Luke 3:33 Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, <i>which was the son of Juda</i>.</p> <p>Matthew 1:2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; <i>and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren</i>.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Heir to the throne of David</b></p> <p>Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, <i>upon the throne of David</i>, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.</p>	<p>Matthew 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, <i>the son of David</i>, the son of Abraham.</p> <p>Matthew 1:6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Will be born in Bethlehem</b></p> <p>Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, <i>yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel</i>; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.</p>	<p>Matthew 2:1 Now when Jesus was <i>born in Bethlehem</i> of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,</p> <p>Luke 2:4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, <i>unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem</i>; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) {5} To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. {6} And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. {7} And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.</p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Would be born of a virgin</b></p> <p>Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; <i>Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.</i></p>	<p>Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, <i>she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.</i> Luke 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, {27} <i>To a virgin</i> espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. {28} And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. {29} And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. {30} And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. {31} And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. {32} He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: {33} And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. {34} Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? {35} And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>There would be a slaughter of infants</b></p> <p>Jeremiah 31:15 Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; <i>Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.</i></p>	<p>Matthew 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and <i>slew all the children that were in Bethlehem,</i> and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. {17} Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, {18} In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, <i>Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.</i></p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jesus and his parents would escape into Egypt</b></p> <p>Hosea 11:1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and <i>called my son out of Egypt.</i></p>	<p>Matthew 2:14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: {15} And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, <i>Out of Egypt have I called my son.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Would be called a Nazarene</b></p> <p>Cannot find any reference in the Old Testament to meet a statement made by the Prophets.</p>	<p>Matthew 2:23 and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jesus would have a ministry in Galilee</b></p> <p>Isaiah 9:1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, <i>in Galilee of the nations.</i> {2} The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, <i>upon them hath the light shined.</i></p>	<p>Matthew 4:12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; {13} And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: {14} That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, {15} The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, <i>Galilee of the Gentiles;</i> {16} The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death <i>light is sprung up.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jesus would be called a Prophet</b></p> <p>Deuteronomy 18:15 The LORD thy God <i>will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee,</i> of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;</p>	<p>John 6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, <i>This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.</i> John 1:45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, <i>of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write,</i> Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; {20} And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: {21} Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, <i>which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.</i> {22} For Moses truly said unto the fathers, <i>A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren,</i> like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. {23} And it shall come to pass, that every soul, <i>which will not hear that prophet,</i> shall be</p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
	<p>destroyed from among the people. {24} Yea, and <i>all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after</i>, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. {25} <i>Ye are the children of the prophets</i>, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. {26} Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.</p>
<p><b>Jesus would be called a Priest in the order of Melchizedek</b></p> <p>Psalms 110:4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, <i>Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.</i></p>	<p>Hebrews 6:20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, <i>made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.</i></p> <p>Hebrews 5:5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. {6} As he saith also in another place, <i>Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.</i> Hebrews 7:15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, {16} Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. {17} For he testifieth, <i>Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.</i></p>
<p><b>Would be rejected by the Jews</b></p> <p>Isaiah 53:3 <i>He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.</i></p> <p>Psalms 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, <i>and against his anointed</i>, saying,</p>	<p>John 1:11 He came unto his own, <i>and his own received him not.</i></p> <p>John 5:43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye <i>receive me not</i>: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.</p> <p>Luke 17:25 But first must he suffer many things, and <i>be rejected of this generation.</i></p> <p>Luke 23:18 And they cried out all at once, saying, <i>Away with this man</i>, and release unto us Barabbas:</p>
<p><b>Would have a high moral character</b></p> <p>Isaiah 11:2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;</p> <p>Psalms 45:7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest</p>	<p>Luke 2:52 And <i>Jesus increased in wisdom and stature</i>, and in favour with God and man. Luke 4:18 <i>The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,</i></p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p>wickedness: therefore God, thy God, <i>hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.</i>  Isaiah 11:3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and <i>he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:</i> {4} <i>But with righteousness shall he judge the poor; and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.</i></p>	
<p><b>He would enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey</b>  Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, <i>and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.</i> Isaiah 62:11 Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.</p>	<p>John 12:13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. {14} And Jesus, <i>when he had found a young ass, sat thereon;</i> as it is written,  Matthew 21:1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, {2} Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. {3} And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. {4} All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, {5} Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, <i>and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.</i> {6} And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, {7} And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, <i>and they set him thereon.</i> {8} And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed them in the way. {9} And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. {10} And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? {11} And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.</p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Would be betrayed by a friend</b></p> <p>Psalms 41:9 <i>Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.</i></p>	<p>Mark 14:10 And Judas Iscariot, <i>one of the twelve</i>, went unto the chief priests, <i>to betray him unto them.</i> Matthew 26:14 Then <i>one of the twelve</i>, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, {15} And said unto them, <i>What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?</i> And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. {16} And from that time he <i>sought opportunity to betray him.</i> Mark 14:43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, <i>one of the twelve</i>, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. {44} And <i>he that betrayed him</i> had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. {45} And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Betrayed by thirty pieces of silver</b></p> <p>Zechariah 11:12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.</p>	<p>Matthew 26:15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for <i>thirty pieces of silver.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Betrayal money to be returned for a potter's field</b></p> <p>Zechariah 11:13 And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And <i>I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.</i></p>	<p>Matthew 27:3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, {4} Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. {5} <i>And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple</i>, and departed, and went and hanged himself. {6} And the <i>chief priests took the silver pieces</i>, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. {7} And <i>they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field</i>, to bury strangers in. {8} Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. {9} Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And <i>they took the thirty pieces of silver</i>, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; {10} And <i>gave them for the potter's field</i>, as the Lord appointed me.</p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p><b>Judas's position to be taken by another</b></p> <p>Psalms 109:7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. {8} Let his days be few; <i>and let another take his office.</i></p>	<p>Acts 1:18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. {19} And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. {20} For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: <i>and his bishopric let another take.</i></p> <p>Acts 1:16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. {17} For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.</p>
<p><b>False witnesses accuse him</b></p> <p>Psalms 27:12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: <i>for false witnesses are risen up against me</i>, and such as breathe out cruelty. Psalms 35:11 <i>False witnesses did rise up</i>; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.</p>	<p>Matthew 26:60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. <i>At the last came two false witnesses</i>, {61} And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.</p>
<p><b>Would be silent when accused</b></p> <p>Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet <i>he opened not his mouth</i>: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.</p> <p>Psalms 38:13 But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. {14} Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.</p>	<p>Matthew 26:62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? {63} But <i>Jesus held his peace</i>. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.</p> <p>Matthew 27:12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, <i>he answered nothing</i>. {13} Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? {14} And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.</p>
<p><b>Would be struck and spit on</b></p> <p>Isaiah 50:6 <i>I gave my back to the smiters</i>, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: <i>I hid not my face from shame and spitting.</i></p>	<p>Mark 14:65 And <i>some began to spit on him</i>, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did <i>strike him</i> with the palms of their hands.</p> <p>John 19:1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and <i>scourged him</i>. {2} And the soldiers platted a crown</p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
	<p>of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, {3} And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they <i>smote him</i> with their hands.</p> <p>John 18:22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck <i>Jesus with the palm of his hand</i>, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?</p>
<p><b>Would be hated without cause</b></p> <p>Psalms 69:4 They that <i>hate me without a cause</i> are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.</p> <p>Psalms 109:3 They <i>compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.</i> {4} For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer. {5} And they have rewarded me evil for good, and <i>hatred for my love.</i></p>	<p>John 15:23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also. {24} If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. {25} But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, <i>They hated me without a cause.</i></p>
<p><b>Would suffer vicariously</b></p> <p>Isaiah 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. {5} But he was wounded <i>for our transgressions</i>, he was bruised <i>for our iniquities</i>: the <i>chastisement of our peace was upon him</i>; and <i>with his stripes we are healed.</i> {6} All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; <i>But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.</i></p>	<p>Matthew 8:16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: {17} That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, <i>Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.</i> Romans 4:25 Who was <i>delivered for our offences</i>, and was raised again for our justification. 1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that <i>Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;</i></p>
<p><b>Would be crucified with sinners</b></p> <p>Isaiah 53:12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and <i>he was numbered with the transgressors</i>; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.</p>	<p>Matthew 27:38 At that time <i>two robbers were crucified with Him</i>, one on the right and one on the left.</p> <p>Mark 15:27 And they <i>crucified two robbers with Him</i>, one on His right and one on His left. {28} And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “<i>And He was numbered with transgressors.</i>”</p> <p>Luke 23:33 And when they came to the place called The Skull, there they <i>crucified Him and the criminals</i>, one on the right and the other on the left.</p>



Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hands and feet to be pierced</b></p> <p>Psalms 22:16 For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; <i>They pierced my hands and my feet.</i></p> <p>Zechariah 12:10 “And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me <i>whom they have pierced</i>; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.</p>	<p>John 20:27 Then He said to Thomas, “<i>Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side</i>; and be not unbelieving, but believing.”</p> <p>John 19:37 And again another Scripture says, “THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM <i>WHOM THEY PIERCED.</i>”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>To be mocked and insulted</b></p> <p>Psalms 22:6 But I am a worm, and not a man, A reproach of men, and despised by the people. {7} <i>All who see me sneer at me</i>; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, {8} “Commit yourself to the LORD; <i>let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.</i>”</p>	<p>Matthew 27:39 And <i>those passing by were hurling abuse at Him</i>, wagging their heads, {40} and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” {41} In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, <i>were mocking Him</i>, and saying, {42} “He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. {43} HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET HIM DELIVER Him now, IF HE TAKES PLEASURE IN HIM; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” {44} And the robbers also who had been crucified with Him <i>were casting the same insult at Him.</i></p> <p>Mark 15:29 And those passing by <i>were hurling abuse at Him</i>, wagging their heads, and saying, “Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, {30} save Yourself, and come down from the cross!” {31} In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, <i>were mocking Him</i> among themselves and saying, “He saved others; He cannot save Himself. {32} Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!” And those who were crucified with Him <i>were casting the same insult at Him.</i></p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Would be given gall and vinegar</b></p> <p>Psalms 69:21 <i>They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.</i></p>	<p>John 19:29 A jar full of <i>sour wine</i> was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the <i>sour wine</i> upon a branch of hyssop, and brought it up to His mouth.</p> <p>Matthew 27:34 they gave Him <i>wine to drink mingled with gall</i>; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.</p> <p>Matthew 27:48 And immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with <i>sour wine</i>, and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Would hear prophetic words repeated in mockery</b></p> <p>Psalms 22:8 <i>“Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.”</i></p>	<p>Matthew 27:43 <i>“HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET HIM DELIVER Him now, IF HE TAKES PLEASURE IN HIM; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Would pray for his enemies</b></p> <p>Psalms 109:4 In return for my love they act as my accusers; But <i>I am in prayer</i>.</p> <p>Isaiah 53:12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And <i>interceded for the transgressors</i>.</p>	<p>Luke 23:34 But Jesus was saying, <i>“Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”</i></p> <p>And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>His side would be pierced</b></p> <p>Zechariah 12:10 <i>“And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.</i></p>	<p>John 19:34 but one of the soldiers <i>pierced His side with a spear</i>, and immediately there came out blood and water.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Soldiers would cast lots for his clothes</b></p> <p>Psalms 22:18 <i>They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.</i></p>	<p>Mark 15:24 And they crucified Him, and <i>divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them</i>, to decide what each should take.</p> <p>John 19:24 They said therefore to one another, <i>“Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be”</i>; that the Scripture might be fulfilled, <i>“THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG</i></p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
	<p><i>THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS.”</i></p> <p>Luke 23:34 But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” And <i>they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.</i></p>
<p><b>Not a bone would be broken</b></p> <p>Psalms 34:20 He keeps all his bones; <i>Not one of them is broken.</i></p>	<p>John 19:33 but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, <i>they did not break His legs;</i></p>
<p><b>Would be buried with the rich</b></p> <p>Isaiah 53:9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet <i>He was with a rich man in His death,</i> Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.</p>	<p>Matthew 27:57 And when it was evening, <i>there came a rich man</i> from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. {58} This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given over to him. {59} And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, {60} and <i>laid it in his own new tomb,</i> which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.</p>
<p><b>Would arise</b></p> <p>Psalms 16:10 For Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Sheol; <i>Neither wilt Thou allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.</i></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> This is the prophecy that make all the difference in the world. I can go to Istanbul and see the arm bones of Muhammad, I can go to other parts of the world and see other bones of Muhammad; however, I cannot go to <u>any point on earth</u> to view the bones of Jesus for the simple reason they are not on the earth; instead, in heaven with the Father.</p> <p>There is a statement made that, “What you don’t know can’t hurt you.” The truth is, what you don’t know can hurt you. Ignorance will not be blessed before the throne of God!</p>	<p>Matthew 28:9 And behold, <i>Jesus met them and greeted them.</i> And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.</p> <p>Luke 24:36 And while they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst. {37} But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. {38} And He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? {39} See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, <i>for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.</i>” {40} And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. {41} And while they still could not believe it for joy and were marveling, He said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” {42} And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; {43} and He took it and ate it before them. {44} Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” {45} Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, {46} and He said to</p>

Prophecies	Fulfillment
	them, "Thus it is written, that <i>the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day;</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Would ascend into Heaven</b></p> <p>Psalms 68:18 Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captive Thy captives; Thou hast received gifts among men, Even among the rebellious also, that the LORD God may dwell there.</p>	<p>Luke 24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. {51} And it came about that while He was blessing them, <i>He parted from them.</i></p> <p>Acts 1:9 And after He had said these things, <i>He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>His rejection would be shown to the Jews</b></p> <p>Psalms 118:22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.</p>	<p>Acts 4:10-11 {10} Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. {11} This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rebellion against God and "the Word"</b></p> <p>Psalms 2:1-2 {1} Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? {2} The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,</p>	<p>John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.</p> <p>Acts 4:25-28 {25} Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? {26} The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. {27} For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, {28} For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.</p>

These verses are taken from the Kings James (or Authorized) translation of the Bible. In reading these verses you may find errors and words that do not make sense. Before you cast all these verses away please try another source, such as the New International Version.

I have traveled the world from the island of Japan and through the Orient to the shores of my ancestors in Europe and into the Middle East. In that journey I have always tried to understand the thought, character and creed of the host country and its people. I have read, with interest, the life of Buddha, the naturalist view of the American Indians, the history of the Christian Church and the thoughts of Muhammad as presented in the Qurán. In all the searching I found only one man who was called the "Son of God," and of this one man was it ever said that God spoke concerning Him. Not only did God speak about Him, but

it was done on three separate occasions. While Jesus may be the son of Mary and the Holy Spirit, He still remains as Lord of lords and King of kings and no other may make that claim.

There is one other thing I've noticed in doing this work. Isn't it strange in all the teachings of Jesus during His ministry, he never taught anyone was to be of any particular religion, not even Jewish. He did teach we were to love one another and were to believe in Him and who He was. Jesus did not come to teach religion. In fact, it was for that very reason (the adherence to the law) Jesus came to restore mankind to the position of grace that mankind held in the garden.

In the section that gives the summary of Jesus' life and ministry, I found this to be of value even to myself. Over my life I never considered certain things occurring at specific times. In writing this book I learned ever so much about Jesus. But, I must make one statement. Do I believe everything written in the references used? The answer must be an emphatic, NO! I believe the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God. I didn't say it was the infallable word of God, because even inspired men have the tendency to insert their own mannerisms into what they write. Thus, the Bible is truly stated (from the words of men), but not necessarily a statement of truth (because of man's inability to know the mind of God). Additionally, errors have been introduced in the translation from original text when adapting scripture into different languages and different versions of those translations.

## Chapter 5

### Where Does All This Lead?

I have taken time to pass on some of what I've learned over many years of study. Along the way I learned that there are different views and different concepts among people. Each of us as an individual makes up our own mind what it is we choose to believe. However, it seems that mankind desires to be the center of things, to control the will of others and to influence by fear, intimidation or by the sword. If mankind actually worshiped in total obedience to God's will, there would be no need to worry as we turn on our television or pick up the newspaper.

Christians as a whole do not follow the teachings of Christ. We do not adhere to the Golden Rule of doing unto others as we would want to be treated. We do not love one another as Jesus instructed us to do. John 13:34-35, *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

We now call a person who manipulates the meanings of words a spin doctor and we see this all over the political arena. But is the political arena the only place we can find a center of power and influence? I somehow believe the arena of religion also contains spin doctors and truth is not the goal. Control over others is the principal occupation. The modern day spin doctors in religion seem to seek a larger mass to influence, demand more money from that mass, and have little time to tend to the needs of the people. That is left to an assistant. Is that really what the words of the Bible taught?

I am not the prophet Jeremiah but I certainly feel as he must have felt when he voiced the instructions from God concerning the people of Jerusalem. God has a purpose and all things are moving toward that conclusion. My works, even this work, are all a part of that action. God has spoken through His Word, through His Son and through the prophets. What God has given to me I have given to you, the reader. Not everything I've written will be acceptable to you and some things will even offend you. Stop for a moment and look around at the happenings that are occurring all over the world. We have terrorist killing, raping, looting and destroying old world relics. We see forest fires, mud slides, floods, droughts, sever storms, earth quakes and volcanoes. We have murders, mass shootings and road rage in our cities and on our roads. Why? Why are we seeing all these things? The answer is very simple. We are not doing God's will! As Americans we don't even understand who we are as a nation and the part this nation must play within the will of God. Greed is the overpowering force that is now driving this nation. Not love and not obedience to God. Greed alone seems to be in control! This nation must understand that they now represent the tribe of Manasseh as a portion of the northern kingdom of Israel. Every prophecy in the Bible that pertains to Israel, not Judah, also pertains to America. God's plan is that He will use His people Israel to vindicate His Holy Name and He will do this by and through His people. I am not speaking about the present day country now named Israel. I'm speaking about the ten tribe confederation known as the northern kingdom, or the House of Israel. Here is what God instructed Ezekiel to say to Israel. Ezekiel 36:22-32, *"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord," says the Lord God, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the*

*nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. Not for your sake do I do this,” says the Lord God, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!”*

Where does all this lead? It leads to the completion of God’s plan. The battle lines were drawn long ago, along with the choices of mankind. Choices were made between Ishmael and Isaac, between Esau and Jacob, between Israel and the rest of the world, and between Jesus and the prince of this world. Mankind has set their thoughts, set their hearts, made their choices and there is no way, except one, by which this is going to change. That change is very near, nearer than some may believe and you can rest assured, it will come. There is no way to stop the inevitable. What is the one thing that will cause this to change? It’s the one thing so many have stated doesn’t exist, has not occurred, or will be at the final resurrection. It’s the return coming of the clouds with someone like a *Son of Man* who will be riding upon those clouds. All kidding aside, the next step in God’s Holy plan is the return of His son, Jesus the Christ, the anointed one of God, to take control of all things and bring peace to this world of chaos.

Within yourself, you have made your choices. All that can be done now is wait. Your belief is your belief, for whatever reason, and I doubt anything in these pages will change your mind. You may be Christian, you may be Jewish, or you may be Muslim, and your mind is set in a choice you have made based on your environment, your parents or your traditions and other lifetime influences. Most probably nothing said in this work is going to change your mind, other than to possibly make you angrier over perceived issues. It’s one of those things, “don’t confuse me with facts; my mind is already made up.” Those things that will make you angry are already recorded in this work. The strange thing to me is that very few followers of any one group will read to see what is really in the Bible. To all who may find this work, I pray God’s blessing upon you. May you have the courage to read the entire Bible to see what it says.

Here is the truth! It takes study to understand the Bible and if you are not willing to invest the time, all you are doing is listening to other people’s views that may be leading you down a path upon which you don’t want to be .

**There is a billboard out there which says:**

“Will the path that you are on lead you to my house?”

— God

## Addendum in 2019

Everything written in this work up to this point was finalized in 2015 and put to rest. Now, here we are four short years later in 2019 and I've felt the push to insert the information pertaining to the Marriage at Cana and to double check all the references placed in this work. I stopped and re-read chapter five and lost control of my emotions. How could I have seen the amount of destruction, fake news, and poor judgement having been made by the citizens of America to such an extent that is now so prevalent in this nation.

Look around you to see all that has transpired in these four short years. The Supreme Court has now ruled that it is okay for same sex marriages. Sorry! That is against what God says! We've also seen the White House lite up in the colors of the rainbow to praise this decision. Sorry! That is strike two against this nation. Strike one was when you enacted Roe v. Wade and allowed the murder of unborn children to be a law of the land. That is also against God's word. Now we see this taken even further and some states have made it a law that you can now birth the child and then decide if you want it or not. Once again that is murder!

Strike two mentioned above indicates that there are those in this land under the influence of Satan who have decided that they are better than God. They assume they know better than God what He did when He created them. God created you either male or female and there are NO MORE GENDERS other than that! He also instilled in you the desire for a mate of the opposite sex and not the same sex. When you make bad decisions and have the council of judges to enact a law that allows same sex marriage you slap God in the face and are telling Him that He doesn't know what He is doing. When you take the house of our nation's principle leader and light it up in the colors of the rainbow you slapped God again and gave Him cause to be upset with our entire nation. First off you were a thief and stole the symbol of God's covenant with the people of earth. Recall that God said He would not destroy the earth again by a supernatural flood. But those who have this altered mindset on who they are, took this symbol and made it the flag bearer symbol of the PRIDE movement. Once again that's the wrong answer! I'll tell you how bad it has gotten. On the first of July, 2019 there were new laws which went into enactment in the state of Kentucky. One such law that is now on the books is that it is unlawful for a person to forcefully rape an animal. How perverted have we become? Who in their right mind would have thought even four years ago that there was a need for such a law? We now see the strength of the PRIDE movement to be of such magnitude that they are holding PRIDE parades around the world and there is even a PRIDE month. If I went out into my front yard and put up a large sign saying I was a proudful Christian the LBGQTQ community would be up in arms over my perceived hate and intolerance of their wellbeing and self motivated pride. I would be the one labeled with sinful actions because of my perceived intolerance. The Bible teaches love of our neighbors, not the stupidity of self defined characteristics that are called an abomination by God.

Strike three against this nation took place when one of our principle cities lite up the side of a significate building with the image of Kali, a Hindu god. That is idolotry and the main reason that God has made corrections toward His people before. Those corrections are recorded as periods of captivity and wars. People of this nation who call themselves Christians had better stand up and address the situation. God has removed His hand from off this nation and the prince of the air has placed his hand upon us. Once again I am going to state that I am not a prophet, but I will tell you this. If this nation does not have a revival, and repent of our current sins the destruction of this land will only increase. Watch out for increased weather patterns of wind, water and fire. **Wake up people and praise God!**



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The Renaissance paintings mentioned and illustrated on pages 67-69 are all listed and shown on Wikipedia under the title Marriage at Cana except painting numbered seven (7). Painting seven is owned by the J.B. Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky and they will not permit the use in any publication.



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