IN THE STEPS OF THE MESSIAH

The orated ministry of Jesus begins after His baptism (Matt. 3:13-17, Mk. 1:9-11, Lk. 3:21, Jn. 1:29-34). It was in the fresh countryside of Judea and Transjordan ending in the city of Jerusalem where the great teachings of the Messiah take root.

The Lord’s ministry starts at the age of thirty lasting for three and a half years. Most date this chronology around 27 to 29 A.D. for His beginning and 30 to 36 for the ending.

The Lord’s first ministry is in Galilee. It is often called **the first Galilean ministry**. After His baptism he returns to Galilee from his time spent in the Judean desert. During this period, he preaches around Galilee where He recruits His first disciples.

**The Major Galilean ministry** begins in Matthew chapter eight which included the commissioning of the twelve. This period covers most of the ministry in Galilee.

The **final Galilean ministry** begins after the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:3-12, Lk. 3:19, 20, Mk. 17:17-29). It is during this time that Jesus prepares to take His journey to Jerusalem.

The beginning journey to the Holy city is the Messiah’s trek through Judea often called the **Later Judean ministry** (Mark 10:1-52; Luke 10:1-13:21; Jn. 7:11-10:39). And His final journey is termed the **Later Perean Ministry** (Matt. 19:1-20:34; Lk. 13:2-18:17; Jn. 10:40-12:1, 9-11). He returns to the area where He was baptized and where He first began His mission of peace.

The **Lord’s final ministry** is recorded in the city of Jerusalem (Matthew 21-27, Mark 11-15, Luke 19-23, and John 12-19). More details and information are recorded during this period than all others combined. Nearly one third of the gospels are devoted to the last week of the life of Jesus.

THE PROLOGUE

Two writers gives us prologues concerning the coming of the Messiah. First, Luke writes*, “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed” (Luke 1:1-4).*

Second, John exclaims, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  The same was in the beginning with God.  All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.  In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.  There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.  The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.  That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.  He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.  He came unto his own, and his own received him not.  But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.  And the Word was made 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.  John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.  And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him (Jn. 1:1-18).*

Luke’s prologue is meant to accentuate the identity and mission of Christ. Whereas John begins his gospel with submitting the identity of the Messiah as being God.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When did the mission of Christ begin?
2. Of the six recorded ministries of Christ, which one has the most information recorded?
3. What is the difference between Luke’s prologue and John’s?

THE BIRTH OF JOHN AND JESUS

**Birth of John the Baptist Foretold**

**(3 B.C)**

*“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia:* *and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.  And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.  And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.  And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.  And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.  And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord 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 unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.  And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.  And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.  And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, 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 unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.  And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.  And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.  And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.  And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.  And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.  And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men” (Lk. 1:5-25).*

*“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.”* Luke introduces the parents of John. The father was Zacharias, a priest that was of the 8th course of priests who performed their duties in the temple.

During the reign of David, the priest became so numerous that he divided the priest into 24 courses who took turns administering their duties. Each one was scheduled for one week during their cycle (1 Chron. 24:6-19).

His specific tasks on the day that the angel appeared to him in the temple was to burn incense. The incense was made of stacte, onycha, and galbanum (Exodus 30:34), and was to be lit twice a day (Exodus 30:7).

Concerning Elizabeth, Luke writes, “*and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.”* This is mentioned to show that Zacharias and his wife were descendants of Aaron. This meant that John would have taken his place among the ranks of the priests. Jesus, who would be from the tribe of Judah, had a kingly ancestry, but not priestly.

“*And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”* Both parents are defined as being “righteous” and “blameless.” They were not only literate concerning their obligations and duties under the Mosaic Law, but they followed them precisely.

“*And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.”* Now we are introduced to the providential formula so often found in the Bible. We see it in the life of Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 17, 18), as well as Hannah and Elkanah (1 Sam. 1). Age has no bearing on the bringing forth of great men and women to complete God’s divine plan of redemption.

*And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.  And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.  And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.  And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.”* Fifteen months before the birth of Christ, the angel Gabriel appears before Zacharias. It was no accident that the angel appeared to the elderly priest during the performance of his sacred duties. For Joseph, he received his divine instructions in a dream, but for Zacharias, his communication took place in a solemn location, under the most solemn of occasions. At a time of prayer and meditation.

“*And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.  But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.”*

How often had John begged the Lord for an heir? He was probably at the point in his life where hope was lost. Now, before the altar his prayer is answered. He will have an heir, and that heir will be male. Howbeit, his name is not what you wished for, but what God desires. The name John in Hebrew means “gracious.”

*“And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.  For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, 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”*(Luke 1 :14-17).

Seven amazing statements are made about this promised child. ***First***, he will bring joy to Zacharias and the many people who will meet him. And ***second***, he will be great in the eyes of God. As Noah found grace, and Job was praised by Jehovah; John will be greater still. Jesus said of John, “*Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he”* (Matt. 11:11; Lk, 7:28).

**Third**, he will not drink alcohol. This was one of the required laws of the Nazarites (Num. 6:1-21). In fact, there were two other requirements besides abstaining from strong drink for the one who takes a Nazarite vow. First, He shall not defile himself. Second, he shall not allow any razor to shave his head until the day the vow is completed.

**Fourth**, the child shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother’s womb*.* This does not refer to John’s eternal destiny but to the mission ordained by God for him.

**Fifth**, “*And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.”*  John had an impact on the people throughout the region. His brass and direct tactics led many to the waters of baptism.

**Sixth,** “*And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.”* This was the prophesy from Isaiah and Malachi (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 4:5, 6).

**Seventh, “T***o make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”* John was not the Messiah, but prepared the minds and hearts for the entering of the Christ.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who were the parents of John the Baptist?
2. How does the ages of John’s parents coincide with Abraham and Sarah?
3. Can you cite three of the seven statements made of John the Baptist?

**THE BIRTH OF CHRIST FORETOLD**

**(Luke 1:26-38)**

**(1 B.C.)**

**“***And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 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. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.**And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 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: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.  Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?  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. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her”* (Lk. 1:26-38).

Six months after Elizabeth conceived, the angel Gabriel appears to Mary. She is from the little town of Nazareth, a city of Galilee. This area was one of the three parts that divided Palestine. Galilee, in the north; Samaria, in the middle; and Judea, on the south. The governor presiding over Galilee was Herod Antipas as the biblical record records.

Concerning Nazareth, Jesus throughout his ministry would be identified by that location (Matt. 2:23, 4:13, 21:11). Nathanael, when informed of the Messiah coming forth from Nazareth, he replied, “*Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see”* (Jn. 1:46). This indicates that the city was not a reputable area, and the inhabitants of that place where shunned by many.

“*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”* (Lk. 1:28). In the Genesis record it was Rachel who was well favoured (Gen. 29:17), and Joseph is termed well favoured (Gen. 39:6); howbeit Mary is “highly favoured.” None before or after will receive the honor bestowed upon Mary.

“*And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be*” (Lk. 1:29). The proclamation from Gabriel brought distress and confusion*.* As a young and innocent girl, she tried to comprehend what was said.

“*And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 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: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end”* (Luke 1:30-33). The fulfillment of prophesy had entered the ears of Mary (Isa. 7:14, 9:6, 7; Dan. 2:44, 7:19). The Messiah promised by Jehovah was now about to enter the world of sinners through the womb of a virgin girl from Nazareth.

“*Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?”* Her inquiry is innocent and gracious. She did not question the angel, nor the event that was going to take place. She simply wanted some understanding on how this would come to be.

*“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”* (Lk. 1:34, 35). All three of the Trinity are present in this statement: The Holy Ghost, God the Father, and the Son. The theological implications of the incarnate Messiah being placed in the womb of a young virgin is far beyond human comprehension. God, for the first and only time, will come to understand mortality.

“*And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her”* (Luke 1:36-38). It is at this point that the reader finds the connection between Mary and Elizabeth. John’s mother was the elder cousin to the young virgin girl from Nazareth.

“*Nothing is impossible with God”* is a statement of fact. The God who created all things in six days can create, altar, or change scientific laws. Why? Because He established them. He can regenerate cells on a corpse as He would do for Lazarus (John 11:17-27) or cause the sun to stand still as He did for Joshua (Joshua 10:12-14). And now, from the womb of a young virgin the Messiah would be brought forth.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How many months after Elizabeth conceived did the angel appear to Mary?
2. What town was Mary from?
3. What were the first words spoken to Mary by the angel?
4. What was to take place according to Lk. 1:34, 35?

***Mary Visits Elizabeth in Judea* (Lk. 1:39-45)**

**“***And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.  And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:**And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.  And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord”* (Lk. 1:39-45).

**“***And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth”* (Lk. 1:39, 40). Mary travels to the hill country outside of Jerusalem to visit her cousin and no doubt rejoice in union over the great blessing bestowed upon both.

“*And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost”* (Lk. 1:41). Upon hearing Mary, the response turns spiritual. As the baby leaps in the womb of Elizabeth, she is filled with the Holy Ghost. Some authors had scribed that the event happened naturally on account of Elizabeth’s excitement. However, the commentary of being “filled with the Holy Ghost” speaks otherwise.

“*And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.  And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord”* (Lk. 1:42-45). The same heralded out message from the angel Gabriel now flows from the lips of Elizabeth. She prophecies of Mary’s acceptance and belief in what she was told by the angel and now confirmed by her cousin was true. Mary would be the mother of Jesus, and Elizabeth the mother of the greatest of all the prophets.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When did the Baby leap in the womb of Elizabeth?
2. Elizabeth’s Holy Spirit spoken exaltation matches the proclamation of what other character in the birth announcement narrative?

***The Birth of John in Judea*** (Lk. 1:57-80) *(***6 months Before the Birth of Christ***)*

***The Birth***(Lk. 1:57-66)

“*Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.   And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.  And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.  And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.  And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.   And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.  And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.  And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.  And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.  And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him”* (Lk. 1:57-66).

The birth of John the Baptist was celebrated by relatives and friends. This was special not only because she gave birth to a son, but because of her age. The child was circumcised according to Jewish tradition (Gen. 21:3, 4). The name was most often given at the time of circumcision.

*“And they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father”* (Lk. 1:59). The friends and family believed that the child would bear the name of his father, but Elizabeth responded by insisting that the child’s name would be John.

In disbelief, the gathering turned to the father to reveal the name of the child. This was a time when patriarchal law ruled the land. Hence, what Zacharias proclaimed would be the name of the child. As we note, the elderly priest was muted by the angel when he questioned the child’s name being John. As the family and friends passed a writing tablet to Zacharias, he wrote the name, John.

The Bible records, “*And they marvelled all.  And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.  And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.  And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.”* “They marveled,” “They feared,” and all this was “laid in their hearts.” This was a miraculous event pointing to God’s design to bring forth the forerunner for His Son.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. On what day was the child of Elizabeth named?
2. What name did the people herald out for the child born to Elizabeth and Zacharias?
3. On the writing tablet what name did Zacharias write for the child?
4. After writing the name what happened to Zacharias?

***Zechariah’s Prophecy***(Lk. 1:67-80)

*“And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.  And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.  And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.”*

The Holy Spirit came upon Elizabeth when Mary visited her (Lk. 1:41). After the birth of John, the Holy Spirit speaks through Zacharias. The prophecy refers to Isaiah’s oration concerning the coming of this forerunner (Isa. 40:3) and Malachi’s pronouncement (Mal. 4:4, 5).

The words are of the utNmost importance: redeemed, saved, mercy, remember, delivered, knowledge, light. These are words that sum up the mission of John and Jesus. John paved the way for the Messiah to perform His duties.

John would reside in the hill country of Hebron until he was thirty years old. His mission, purpose, and preaching would be obscure until he begins his ministry in Matthew 3.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What two prophecies does the Holy Spirit speaks through Zacharias concerning John? Isa. 40:3, Mal. 4:4, 5

***Mary’s Pregnancy Revealed to Joseph in Nazareth***(Matt. 1:18-25)

“*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.  Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.  But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.  And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.  Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.  Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS*” (Matt. 1:18-25).

The shocking news to a young carpenter caused him to react protectively of Mary. Albert Barnes writes:

“To expose her to public shame or infamy. Adultery has always been considered a crime of a very heinous nature. In Egypt, it was punished by cutting off the nose of the adulteress; in Persia, the nose and ears were cut off; in Judea, the punishment was death by stoning, Lev\_20:10; Eze\_16:38, Eze\_16:40; Joh\_8:5. This punishment was also inflicted where the person was not married, but betrothed, Deu\_21:23-24. In this case, therefore, the regular punishment would have been death in this painful and ignominious manner. Yet Joseph was a religious man - mild and tender; and he was not willing to complain of her to the magistrate, and expose her to death, but sought to avoid the shame, and to put her away privately” (**Albert Barnes**, *Commentary on Matthew*).

Once again, the angel of Jehovah intercedes and informs Joseph of this magnificent event. Did he comprehend the meaning of Emmanuel from the prophecy of Isaiah (Isa. 7:14)? Without hesitation he raises from his sleep and marries Mary in a private ceremony.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why was Joseph going to put away his wife?
2. Who interceded and how?

***Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem*** (Lk. 2:1-20) **(3-5 B.C.)**

***The Birth (Luke 2:1-7)***

  “*And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)  And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.  And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.  And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.  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”* (Lk. 2:1-7).

The emperor ruling the Roman empire during the time of our Lord’s birth was Caius Caesar Octavianus Augustus. He took the throne in the 29th year before our Lord and died in A.D. 14. During his rule, before the birth of Christ, he decreed that a census be made of the taxable inhabitants throughout his empire.

Concerning this tax some difficulties arise. Cyrenius did not become governor until twelve to fourteen years after the birth of Christ. To make sense of this most scholars believe that the Greek word πρωτος (protos) should be interpreted “before.” Hence, the census for taxing took place BEFORE Cyrenius took office.

Joseph traveling with his pregnant wife returned to Bethlehem for the census. It was at this time that her labor pains began, and Jesus was born. She cut the cord, washed the child, rubbed salt on him, and then wrapped him in swaddling clothes (Ezek. 16:4). These clothes were several blankets that confined the limbs. Once wrapped warmly, Jesus was placed in a manger. This was a crib from which animals were fed. These feeding bends were kept in the lower level of the house to supply warmth for the inhabitants above, and to make it easier for the livestock to be fed in the winter.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was the emperor of Rome at the time Christ was born?
2. Why, and in what city did Joseph travel to where the Messiah would be born?

***The Shepherds and the Angels (Lk. 2:8-20)***

*“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.  And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.* *And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.  For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* *And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men.  And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.  And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.  And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.  And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.  But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.  And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them”* (Lk. 2:8-20).

*“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.”* Two points are presented in this verse. First, the time of the Lord’s birth was at night. Second, the birth of Christ did not happen in the winter months. Barnes writes, “*It is also a fact that the Jews sent out their flocks into the mountainous and desert regions during the summer months, and took them up in the latter part of October or the first of November, when the cold weather commenced”* (Albert Barnes, *Barnes Notes*, the Gospel of Luke).

*“And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.”* It would be a mere assumption to believe the angel was Gabriel. Yet, it would be possible since he delivered the good news to Elizabeth and Mary. The “glory of the Lord” equates to a “great shining light” (1 Cor. 15:41; Luke 9:31; Acts 22:11). This caused the shepherds to fear. A typical response to the celestial interacting with the physical.

“*And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.  For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”* These good tidings were extended to all people. Yet, so many like Herod, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Herodians would not find pleasure in the coming of the Messiah.

It is no accident that God selected shepherds to pronounce His son into the world. For Christ Himself would be termed “the Good Shepherd” (Jn. 10:11, 14).

“*And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”* The place where the Christ child would be found was hid from Herod, but given to the shepherds.

*“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, good will toward men.”* The choir of angels appeared to escalate the message of the angel. No greater praise has ever been heralded.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What details are given concerning the birth of Jesus by the calling of the shepherds?
2. What was the sign given to the shepherds concerning the Messiah?

***Circumcision of Jesus in Bethlehem* (Lk. 2:21) (8 days after birth)**

***“****And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb”* (Lk. 2:21).

Eight days after a male child was born, he was to be circumcised (Gen. 17:12). And like John, it was on this particular day that the child would be named. Concerning John and Jesus their names had been given before they were conceived in the wombs.

***Jesus Presented in the Temple at Jerusalem*** (Lk. 2:22-39) (**40 days old)**

***“****And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.  And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.  And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.  And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.  And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth”* (Lk. 2:22-39).

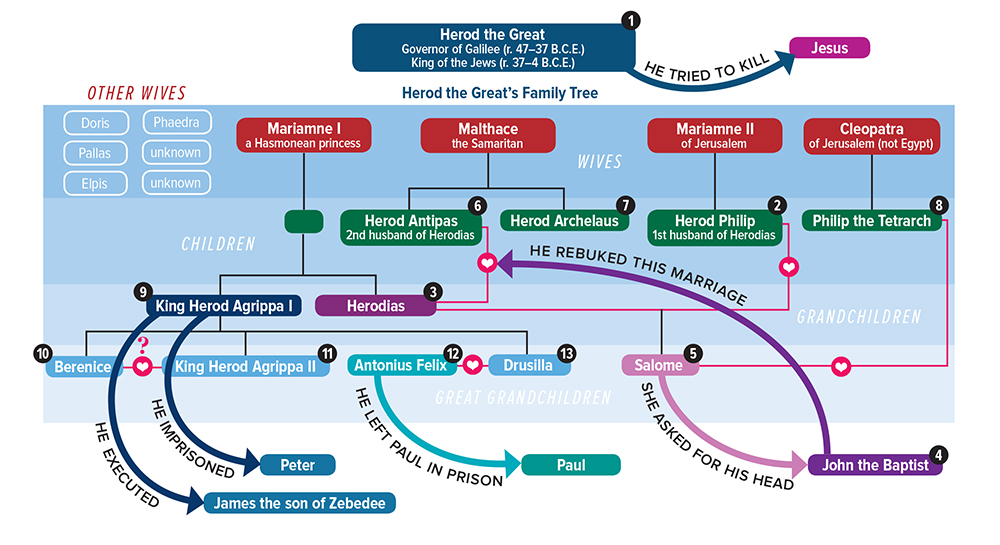
The Mosaic Law was specific concerning purification after childbirth, *“And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled”* (Lev. 12:4).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How many days after the Messiah’s birth was, he circumcised?
2. How many days after the Messiah’s birth was, he presented in the temple?

***The Visit of the Wise Men*** (Matt. 2:1-12)

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.  When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.  And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.  And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.  Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.  And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.  And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way”* (Matt. 2:1-12)



Concerning Herod, the Great John Gill writes:

“This was Herod the great, the first of that name: the Jewish chronologer (s) gives an account of him in the following manner. "Herod the first, called Herod the Ascalonite, was the son of Antipater, a friend of king Hyrcanus and his deputy; him the senate of Rome made king in the room of Hyrcanus his master. This Herod whilst he was a servant of king Hyrcanus (so in the (t) Talmud Herod is said to be עבדא דבית חשמונא a servant of the family of the Asmonaeans) king Hyrcanus saved from death, to which he was sentenced by the sanhedrim of Shammai; that they might not slay him for the murder of one Hezekiah, as is related by Josephus, l. 6. c. 44. and Herod took to him for wife Miriam, the daughter of Alexander the son of Aristobulus, who was the daughter's daughter of king Hyrcanus” (John Gill, *Commentary of Matthew*).

The New Testaments speaks of four Herods. The first, mentioned here in Matthew two, was called Herod the Ascalonite. He was the son of Antipater, a friend and deputy of King Hyrcanus. He was made king in the room of Hyrcanus his master by the senate of Rome.

The next Herod was the son of Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, who was referred to as Herod the tetrarch ([Matthew 14:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2014.1); [Luke 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%203.1)). The word *tetrarch* signifies an action taken by his father when he divided his kingdom into four parts appointing his sons to rule each areas separately. This Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee, the part of the kingdom assigned to him. He is the one Jesus was sent to during His trials and eventual crucifixion ([Luke 23](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2023)). This same Herod Antipas was the Herod who had John the Baptist murdered ([Matthew 14](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2014)).

Third, [Herod Agrippa I](https://www.gotquestions.org/Herod-Agrippa-I.html), the grandson of Herod the Great ([Acts 12](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2012)), was appointed to the position. It was he who persecuted the church in Jerusalem and had the apostle James, the brother of John and son of Zebedee, put to death by the sword. By the hand of Herod Agrippa I, James became the first apostle to be martyred. Two of Agrippa I’s daughters were Bernice and [Drusilla](https://www.gotquestions.org/Drusilla-in-the-Bible.html), mentioned in [Acts 24](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2024) and [Acts 25](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2025).

Lastly, Agrippa’s son, [Herod Agrippa II](https://www.gotquestions.org/Herod-Agrippa-II.html), would rule. He had a more compassionate heart and was instrumental in saving Paul from being tried and imprisoned in Jerusalem by the Jews who despised his teachings about Christ. King Agrippa, out of consideration for Paul being a Roman citizen, allowed Paul to defend himself, thereby giving Paul the opportunity to preach the gospel to all who were assembled ([Acts 25, 26](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2025%E2%80%9426)). Agrippa II was the last of the line of Herods. After him, the family fell out of favor with Rome.

During the time of Christ’s birth, Herod the Great was cautious of his position. He needed no turmoil or conflict to arise to raise the eyebrows of Caesar. The arrival of the wisemen and their asking of the Messiah, as well as telling Herod of the star that guided them, cast great fear in the heart of the king. Hence, the plot to kill the Christ child is set in motion by Herod. First, he inquires of the Jews to where the child was to be born. Then he asks the wisemen to take their journey and report back their findings concerning Jesus.

The star rested above the place where the Messiah was laid. The wisemen rejoiced and enter the house. They immediately fell to their knees and worshiped Christ. Then they offered gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Isaiah prophesied that gold and frankincense would be laid before the Savior (Isa. 60:6). These costly items would easily supply enough income for Joseph to provide for his family during his flight to Egypt. No doubt God’s providence was at the center of this visit by the wisemen.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What Herod did the wisemen converse with?
2. What gifts did the wisemen bring to Christ?
3. Why didn’t the wisemen return to Herod and tell him the location of the child?

***Flight to Egypt*** (Matt. 2:13-15)

*“And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee 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 into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son”* (Matt. 2:13-15).

Once again, the angel appears to Joseph in his dreams. He instructs the young carpenter to leave Bethlehem and travel to Egypt about sixty miles away. There was a large gathering of Jews in that area with a temple and synagogues for worship. It was also a Roman Province making it easy to cross the border into that region.

“*And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son”* (Matt. 2:15). The prophecy is found in Hosea 11:1. The wicked king Herod thought he was in control of the situation. How little did he understand the concept of providence? God had ordained a day, hour, and time for the death of Jesus. His purpose had to be accomplished before His end would come.

***Massacre of Infant Boys in Bethlehem*** (Matt. 2:16-18)

*“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. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not”* (Matt. 2:16-18).

Once the wise men did not return to Herod, he felt himself to have been tricked. In his rage, he commanded his soldiers to kill every male child two years and under in Bethlehem and the surrounding coasts. This fulfilled a prophesy made by Jeremiah made six hundred years earlier (Jer. 31:15).

***Return to Nazareth*** (Matt. 2:19-23) **(5 or 4 B.C.)**

***“****But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: 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”* (Matt. 2:19-23).

The angel appeared to Joseph after the death of Herod. Before Herod died, he put to death his own son Antipater who most probably would had been a threat to Joseph and his family. That would allow the plural “they” to make more sense.

Once they arrived in Israel, the divided kingdom was still ruled by the Herod’s. Archelaus reigned in Judaea which swayed Joseph to go elsewhere. This fear was affirmed when Joseph received a message from God in a dream. Hence, the carpenter and family traveled to the area of Galilee and resided in a town called Nazareth. This was a small-town west of Capernaum and close to Cana.

Once again you have the fulfillment of prophecy concerning the Messiah. Several propose that this prophesy was a combination of Judges 13:5 and Isaiah 11:1.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Joseph travel to Egypt?
2. What was the reaction of Herod concerning the betrayal of the wisemen?
3. When did Joseph and his family return to Nazareth?

***Jesus Early Childhood*** (Lk. 2:40-52) (**A.D**. **8)**

*“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.  And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.  But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.  And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.  And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.* *And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.   And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.  And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?  And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.* *And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.  And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”* (Lk. 2:40-52).

This is the only reference we have concerning Jesus as a young adolescent. His parent being faithful Jews went up every year to the Passover. All the men and children were commanded to make their appearance in Jerusalem three times a year (Exodus 34:23). The three public festivals that were required were the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. And according to the Jewish canons, the age of twelve was the age when a child would begin to learn a trade.

After eight days in the city, one day for the Passover, and seven days of the unleavened bread, the parents begin their journey back to Nazareth. They came to realize that Jesus was not with them. This was not carelessness on their part for the way the people traveled. The men and women walked separately. Therefore, Joseph might had thought the child was walking with some of the kinfolk.

As frightened parents, Mary and Joseph returned to Jerusalem. It took them three days to find Jesus who had stationed himself in the temple conversing with the learned men of Israel.

“*And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.”* Though it was not time for the Messiah to begin His ministry, His questions and answers proved Him to be someone extraordinary.

*“And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.”* Frightened parents in a frantic are under a great deal of stress. In her concern she asked the Lord why he separated from them? His reply points to His mission, *“I must be about my Father’s business*.”

As the scriptures imply, Mary and Joseph had no clue what the Lord meant by such a statement. The child was far brighter than any adult. This was God in the body of a child.

“*And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.  And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”* It was the Lord’s law to be obedient to parents (Exodus 20:12). Thus, Jesus returned with His parents to Nazareth showing obedience and respect to them.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the last recorded age of the child Jesus?
2. Why did they travel to Jerusalem?
3. How many days did it take for the parents of Jesus to find Him, and where was He found?
4. What is important in the statement, “*And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them?”*

**THE BEGINNING OF JOHN’S AND JESUS’ MINISTRY**

***John Preaching by the River Jordan***(Matt. 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18) **(30 A.D.)**

*In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.  For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.  But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?  Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.  And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.  I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire”* (Matt. 3:1-12).

*“As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.   The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.  John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.  And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.  I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost”* (Mark 1:2-8).

*“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.  Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?  Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?  And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.  And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.  And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people”* (Lk. 3:1-18).

Matthew and Luke introduce John using Isaiah 40:3*.* Mark uses Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 41:3 when defining John. He is described by both Matthew and Mark as having “*his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey*.” Luke stands alone presenting the time of John’s ministry beginning*, “Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.”* John would had been born during the reign of Augustus Caesar and began his ministry during the reign of the adopted son of Augustus. The governor of Judea at the time was Pontus Pilate and the tetrarch or king over Galilee was Herod.

As has been discussed, after Herod the Great died the kingdom was broken into four sections. Hence, Philip rules Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias rules Abilene. The high priest at the time was Annas. Caiaphas was the father-in-law to Annas and is mentioned because he held the office before Annas.

The discourses in all three gospels are different. In Matthew’s gospel, John debates with the Pharisees. Yet, they all aim at the prophesying of the Messiah who is coming in whom John was not worthy to unlatch his sandals.

John’s preaching in Luke reveals this interaction between several groups of the Jews. Luke writes, “*.  Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?  Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?  And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.  And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages”* (Lk. 3:7-14).

First, to the multitude he pleaded with them to “*bring forth fruit worthy of repentance*.” And insists that they show benevolence to others (Lk. 3:8, 11). The second group, the publicans (tax collectors), who came to be baptized asked John what they needed to do. John replied, “*Exact no more than that which is appointed you”* (Lk. 3:13). And to the soldiers, asking the same question, John states, “*Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages”* (Lk. 3:14). By his logical responses, the people pondered on whether John was the coming Messiah. That is when John exclaimed that he was not even worthy to loosen the sandals of the Christ.

“H*e shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people*” (Lk. 3:16-18). All three gospel writers speak of the Lord’s mission to baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire. For some the baptism with the Holy Spirit is accompanied by the baptism of fire, which they interpret as speaking in tongues. This is not the case. The Holy Ghost baptism accentuates salvation in Christ, whereas the baptism of fire aims at God’s retribution against the unbelievers.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When did John begin his ministry?
2. What did John tell the multitude to bring?
3. According to John, what did the publicans need to do?
4. According to John, what did the soldiers need to do?
5. In Luke 3:16-18, what did John say about the Messiah?

***Baptism of Jesus*** (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23; Jn. 1:32-34)

*“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.   But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?   And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.* *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”* (Matt. 3:13-17).

*“And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”* (Mark 1:9-11).

*“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:  And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli”* (Lk. 3:21-23)*.*

*“And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.  And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God”* (Jn. 1:32-34).

All four of the gospels record the baptism of Jesus. What is stressed is three points. First, since baptism is the means to wash away sins, John was hesitant in baptizing the Lord because He had no sin.

Second, Jesus gives the reason for His baptism. “*Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”* Jesus knew that if He was not baptized people would follow in His steps and refuse it. He did it as an example for others to follow.

Third, baptism is immersion. “*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up* ***straightway out of the water****,”* Water was not sprinkled or poured upon Jesus. He was immersed. In fact, the Greek word *Baptizo* means “to immerse.”

*“And, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* There should be no challenge to this verse. All three of the Godhead are viewed in this scene. You have Christ (God) being baptized. The Father (God) speaking from His throne in heaven. And the Holy Spirit (God) descending LIKE a dove and landing upon Christ.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In what gospels is the baptism of Jesus recorded?
2. What are some significant facts does Jesus prove about baptism?
3. Does the Lord’s baptism prove the Godhead?

***Temptation of Jesus*** (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-13)

“*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.  And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights,* *he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.  But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.  Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.  Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him”* (Matt. 4:1-11).

*“And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.  And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him”* (Mark 1:12, 13).

*“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.  And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.  And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.  And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.  And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season”* (Lk. 4:1-13).

It is Matthew and Luke who give greater commentary on this event. Mark gives a general description. Jesus was in the wilderness without food for forty days and nights. We should not believe that He was abstaining from liquid. Most often a fasting included water but no solids which is proven from the first temptation delivered to Jesus from the devil.

“H*e was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.  But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”* (Matt. 4:3, 4). John tells us that Satan has the same *modus operandi* when he tempts. John writes, *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world”* (1 John 2:16).  Even in the case of Jesus, Satan does not change his tactics. He tempts Jesus with the lust of the flesh.

Jesus, without hesitation, quotes scripture, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*” (Deut. 8:3). It so necessary to ingest the manner and means by which Satan is defeated in this dramatic event.

“*Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone*” (Matt. 4:5, 6). The second temptation centers on the pride of life. Satan appeals to Christ relationship to God, and His trust in the Father. Satan mutilates a quote from David to entice Jesus (Psalms 91:11) to jump off the pinnacle of the temple to see if God would save Him.

Jesus responds correctly with scripture, “*It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”* This was taken from Deuteronomy 6:16*.*

“*Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*” (Matt. 4:8, 9). Imagine the devil tempting God to bow down and worship him. He was appealing to what was visual before Christ, the lust of the eyes. Without a doubt, Jesus wanted to save the kingdoms of the world for He knew that they belonged to Satan (2 Cor. 4:4).

Jesus responds, “*Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve”* (Matt. 4:10). The quotation is taken from Deuteronomy 6:13. The Lord’s reply this time was not only utilizing scripture but commanding Satan to leave Him. Even Satan comprehended the authority of the Messiah.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How did the first temptation by Satan apply to the Lord’s fasting?
2. Out of what book from the Old Testament did Jesus’ quote from to rebuke Satan?
3. What did Satan offer Jesus if He would bow down and worship him?

***The Message of John in Bethany*** (Jn. 1:19-28) (**30 A.D.)**

***“****And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.  And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.  And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?  John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing*” (Jn. 1:19-28).

The Bible records that many came to hear the preaching of John (Matt. 3:5). There were those who presumed that John may be the Messiah (Lk. 3:15). The Jews (the Sanhedrin) sends out priest and Levites, men who were knowledgeable of the prophecies, to question John. After relaying to them that he was not the Messiah, they asked, “*Are you Elias*?” The Jews believed that the prophet would herald in the Messiah. Howbeit, John was a type of Elijah who had been predicted by Malachi (Mal. 4:5).

Next, they asked, “*Are you the prophet*?” It was Moses who predicted that Jeremiah would come before the Messiah (Deut. 18:15). John quickly responds, “No!”

Their final question, “*Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?”* John’s answer had to be startling. John replies with a quotation from Isaiah of being a voice of one crying in the wilderness (Isa. 40:3). They would had taken this to mean that he was indeed the forerunner of the Messiah.

*“And they which were sent were of the Pharisees”* (John 1:24). The Jews first mentioned in verse 1 were the Sanhedrin, but in verse 24 the Pharisees are named specifically. As we note from Matthew 3:7 that many of the Sadducees attended the baptisms of John but seldom confronted him. Whereas the Pharisees being more stringent on ceremony and laws became the main antagonists against John and Jesus.

“*And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?”* (Jn. 1:25). It was customary to baptize pagans, but never a Jew. And with John baptizing everyone, and his proclamation that he was not the Messiah, they wanted to know who gave him the authority to perform this ritual.

*“John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose”* (John 1:26, 27).  John professes that the Messiah had come. And he was not even worthy to unlatch the Messiah’s sandals.

“*These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing”* (Jn. 1:28). Bethabara should be more properly rendered Bethany. This was indicating that John baptized on the eastside of Jordan.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who did the Jews send from Jerusalem to asks John if he was the Messiah?
2. What two prophets are named in asking John who he was?
3. What passage does John quote concerning his identity?

***John Preaches Jesus*** (Jn. 1:29-34) **(The Next Day)**

**“***The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God”* (Jn. 1:29-34).

On the next day after the questioning from the priests and Levites, John is visited by Jesus. For the populace around John, he identifies Jesus as the “*Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world*.” Then he reveals his finding through the prophecy of seeing the dove descending upon Jesus during His baptism. He proclaims that as he baptized with water, the Lord would baptize with the Holy Spirit. He then states that he was an eyewitness visually and verbally confessing Jesus being the Messiah.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What proclamation does John make when seeing Jesus?
2. What does John bare record concerning Christ?

***Jesus Calls Andrew & Peter*** (Jn. 1:35-42) (**30 A.D.)**

***“****Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?  He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.  One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 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, which is by interpretation, A stone”* (John 1:35-42).

Here we find the first disciples to follow Jesus. It was through the proclamation of John which allowed some of his own disciples to follow the Messiah. The mission of John was to point the people to the Savior.

*“Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?  He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour”* (Jn. 1:38, 39). Jesus seeing the two disciples of John following behind, turned, and asked what they sought? Their response of asking where Jesus was staying was their pleading to be under His guidance. The personal invite of Jesus allowed these men to sit at his feet an entire day until four PM (the tenth hour). Ample time for them to come to the realization that this truly was the Messiah.

*“One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 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, which is by interpretation, A stone”* (Jn. 1:40-42). Andrew eagerly ran and told his brother Simon that he had found the Messiah. Andrew’s character is magnified in this statement, “*And he brought him to Jesus*.” The sharing of Jesus with others is the true mission of every Christian.

Upon Peter’s arrival, the Lord tells Simon that his name shall be “Peter” (Cephas) which is interpreted in the Greek as “a stone” or “pebble.”

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who were the first two disciples called?
2. What does the name “Peter” mean?

***Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael*** (Jn. 1:43-51)

*“The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.  Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man”* (John. 1:43-51).

The day after being introduced to Simon, Jesus is walking in Judea near Galilee which would have been the same place where He had been baptized by John. He finds Philip and asks him to follow. Keep in mind that this is not the appointing of the apostles for that would take place on a mountain near Capernaum (Matt. 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-21).

Like Andrew, Philip seeks out Nathanael in the city of Bethsaida. This was the hometown of Peter and Andrew. It was a town located on the lake of Gennesaret where they fished with their father.

Philip relays to Nathanael, “*We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth.”* As a Galilean, Nathanael knew the region and the reputation of each city. Concerning Nazareth, it was looked upon in disgust by other Galileans.

*“Come and see!”* is the pivotal response to forcing and inquiry. It implies for man to put away his suspicions, opinions, or even objections and let truth be your guide.

Jesus seeing Nathanael coming says, “*Behold and Israelite, in whom is no guile*!” The future disciple inquired of Jesus how he knew him. The Lord replies with His ability to see what others could not. This convinces Nathanael that Jesus was the Messiah and thus he proclaims, “*Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.”*

*“Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”* How little did Nathanael and the rest of the apostles know what was in store for them. They would see the heavens opened and the great many things accomplished by the Messiah. From storms calmed to the dead raised, these men were privileged above all.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who does Philip tell about the Messiah?
2. What was Nathanael’s response about Jesus being from Nazareth?

***Jesus Changes Water into Wine in Cana of Galilee*** (Jn. 2:1-11) (**3 days after calling first**

**disciples**)

*“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 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. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (**but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days”* (John 2:1-12).

Jesus and five of His disciples were invited to a wedding in a town called Cana. The village was located about 15 miles northwest of Tiberias and 6 miles northeast of Nazareth. Without a doubt, Mary, and Jesus both were familiar with either the bride or groom for weddings during that period were of personal invite.

While attending, Mary approaches Jesus with a dilemma. The wine was near gone and no doubt many guests were gathered for the festivities. The Lord knew that the time of revealing Himself as the Messiah through the performance of miracles was futuristic. Thus, His response to Mary concerning his plea.

Jesus had brought to Him six waterpots of stone. These were used for purification. In other words, washing before and after the meal. These pots some have said held about twenty to thirty gallons a piece (*Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the New Testament*, **the Gospel of John**).

It was at that celebration that Jesus performed His first recorded miracle in the flesh by turning the water into wine. And as the governor of the feast tasted the wine, he was surprised, and called the bridegroom to asks how he was able to save the good wine until lasts. He is left without an answer. Yet, the bible says, “*but the servants which drew the water knew.”* This tells the reader that only a few people were witness to the miracle. Hence, His identity would be kept secret until He was willing to reveal Himself.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where and what was the first miracle performed by Jesus?
2. Who requested the miracle?
3. Who knew about the miracle?

***Jesus Travels to Capernaum*** (John 2:12)

*“After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days”* (Jn. 2:12). After the miracle at Cana, Jesus traveled to Capernaum. This was a city on the northwest corner of the Sea of Tiberias. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, but it was a prominent place during the days of Christ.

***Jesus First Passover & Jesus Clears the Temple*** (John 2:13-25) **(April 30 A.D.)**

*The Temple Cleansing* (Jn. 2:13-22)

“*And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.**Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.  When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said”* (Jn. 2:13-22).

As a Jew, Jesus obeyed the law of Moses that required every male to travel to Jerusalem during this period of celebration. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the second cleansing of the temple later in the ministry of Jesus (Matt. 21:12-17; Mark 11:12-19; Luke 19:45-49). This first cleansing is recorded only by John.

Upon entering the temple area, Jesus saw the corruption. Since Roman money was not allowed to buy livestock in the temple area, the money had to be exchanged into Jewish currency. Hence, improper exchange and blemished animals drove Jesus to making a whip out of cords and driving out these merchants. He said, “*Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.”* Upon seeing this, the disciples remembered a prophesy concerning this event from the book of Psalms (Psa. 69:9).

“*Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.  When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said”* (Jn. 2:18-22). The request was made by the Jews to see if Jesus was a prophet chosen by God. Hence, they asked for a miracle to be performed.

Jesus replied, “*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*.” In their miscomprehension, the Jews thought Jesus spoke of destroying the temple in Jerusalem. This prompted them to declare how it had taken Herod forty-six years to build this second temple. That reconstruction happened sixteen years before the birth of Jesus. Herod would begin this rebuilding in the 18th year of his reign.

The disciples who heard the conversation would remember these words after Jesus had arisen from the dead. For the prophesy was not about the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, but about His crucifixion and resurrection.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus get upset in the temple?
2. What did Jesus mean by **“**“*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*?”

***Jesus Knew What Was in Men*** (John 2:23-25)

“*Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man”* (John 2:23-25). The value and teachings of this passage is often overlooked. The verse implies that Jesus had been performing miracles while at the Passover. And though many believed in Jesus, the Lord did not need their testimony for proof that He was the Messiah. Even then He realized that some followed Him because of the miracles not equating them to His true identity as the Messiah.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did John mean that Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew all men?

***Jesus Teaches Nicodemus*** (John 3:1-21)

*“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him,* *Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?**Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.  Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?**Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.  And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:**That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.  For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.  For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.  He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.  But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God”* (Jn. 3:1-21).

Unlike many of the Pharisees, Nicodemus was a believer. Two other times Nicodemus is noted by John to aid Jesus. Once before the Sanhedrin defending the Lord’s teachings (Jn. 7:50), and second assisting in the embalming of Christ (Jn. 19:39).

As a member of the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus was careful in associating with Jesus. In this first confrontation, he comes to Jesus at night.

“*Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.”* Nicodemus had observed the miracles performed by Jesus. Unlike his colleagues, he realized that Jesus was a prophet of God and not Beelzebub.

“*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* This amazing proclamation has been the subject of much controversy and confusion. It prompts the questioning of Nicodemus, “*Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?”*

*“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”* (John 3:5, 6). Without any doubt Jesus speaks of baptism. It would be the Divine formula for one to be added to the Kingdom and to put on Christ (Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 3:27).

What does it mean to be born of the Spirit? For some, this statement represents Holy Spirit baptism for all believers. Yet, the baptism of the Spirit would only be given twice in the scriptures. First to the apostles (Acts 2), and second to the household of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11).

When Peter speaks of being born again in his epistle, he writes, “*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever”* (1 Pet. 1:23). This I believe is the key. Being born of the Spirit is the transformation that takes place when one becomes obedient to the word (Rom. 12:1, 2).

“*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit”* (Jn. 3:7, 8). John’s incomprehension leads Jesus to teach an amazingly simple example. Understanding being born of the Spirit is like the wind that blows, and though we may not see it, we feel its effects. The effects of the Spirit in the lives of the believers are seen in their changed lives.

“*Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?”* (Jn. 3:10). Even with the Lord’s example, John was confused. The Lord’s reply hit a chord in the heart of Nicodemus. For His teachings were nothing new but were presented by the prophets on several occasions. Not only of His Messiahship, but His bringing forth the Spirit of God into the world (Joel 2:28, 29).

“*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.  And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life”* (John 3:11-15). Jesus uses divine wisdom to express the thought that what He speaks must had come from an eyewitness account. And He was that eyewitness who had descended from heaven. He alludes to the salvation that came through gazing upon the brass serpent on a pole when the people were bitten by the fiery poison serpents sent by God (Num. 21:8, 9). In that past age, Christ was the brass serpent on the pole from which man would find salvation.

“*That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.  For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.  For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved”* (Jn. 3:15-17). Here is the pinnacle reasoning behind the coming of Christ. His mission was to save the lost (Lk. 19:10). Though that salvation was offered to everyone, the forgiveness of sins can only be granted to the obedient.

“*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.  But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God”* (Jn. 3:18-21). The true reality of John one is brought forth from the Messiah. The unbelievers have no hope outside of Christ. For those who come to the light will find peace and security. Sadly, for the unbeliever, he hates the light and lives in darkness.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How was Nicodemus different from other Pharisees?
2. Why was Nicodemus confused by the teachings of Christ?
3. What does it mean to be born of the water and the Spirit?

***John &*** ***Jesus Baptize*** (John 3:22-24)

*“After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.  And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison”* (Jn. 3:22-24).

Jesus did not administer the ordinance of baptism but commanded His disciples to do so (Jn. 4:2). Jesus leaves the city of Jerusalem and travels around the Judean countryside preaching the gospel and having His disciples baptize the believers.

The location where John was baptizing, John Gill records, “The Syriac and Persic versions call it "Ain", or "In you", the fountain of the dove; and the Arabic version reads it, the fountain of "Nun": and whether it was a town, or river, it seems to have its name from a fountain near it, or that itself was one, where was an abundance of water, as the text shows” (John Gill, *New Testament Commentary*, the Gospel of John).

Most important is the phrase, “*Because there was much water there.”* This shows that immersion was the mode of baptism. Sprinkling and pouring have never, nor will ever be an acceptable mode of baptism.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did John the Baptist baptize?
2. Why did he baptize in that location?

***John Explains Jesus*** (John 3:25-36)

*“Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.  John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.  Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.  He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.  He must increase, but I must decrease.  He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.  And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.  He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.  For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.  The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him”* (Jn. 3:25-36).

The situation arises before John was imprisoned concerning certain Jews who questioned John’s disciples wondering why people were now going to Jesus to be baptized. He relayed to them that he was merely a guest invited to the wedding. It was Jesus who was the bridegroom and deserves all the praise and glory.

He promotes the fact that Jesus was not created but came down from His throne in heaven.

Then John says, “*He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.  For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.”* John was not the Messiah. The Lord gave John the Spirit in a small degree, and Jesus fully.

“*The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.  He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”* There are those who attribute this statement coming from Christ, and He would make this statement in John 5:30. Howbeit, the first to make this proclamation was John.

“*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”* Believe is at the center of salvation. To be truly saved, one must believe in all that Jesus taught. On the other hand, disbelief leads to eternal damnation.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How did John describe his role along with the Lord’s?
2. John said who would have life and how?

***Herod Imprisons John*** (Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 3:19, 20; John 3:24) (**December 30 A.D.)**

**“***Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee*” (Matt. 4:12)

“*Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God”* (Mark 1:14).

*“But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison”* (Luke 3:19, 20).

“*For John was not yet cast into prison”* (Jn. 3:24).

It is Matthew who records the reasoning behind the imprisonment and death of John the Baptist in chapter fourteen. All four gospels refer to John’s imprisonment.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When Jesus heard that John was arrested where did he travel to?
2. Who imprisoned John, and why?

***Jesus Leaves for Galilee*** (John 4:1-3)

*“When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria*” (Jn. 4:1-4).

The Lord came to the knowledge, either by omniscience or by mouth, that the Pharisees had heard of the many baptisms performed by the Lord’s disciples, even more so than John’s. This prompted Jesus to leave the area. His trek was to go through Galilee crossing Samaria. For Galilee was further from Jerusalem and distant from the control of the Pharisees. Plus, it was there that He performed His first miracle at Cana. The same area where the apostles had been raised.

***The Samaritan Woman*** (Jn. 4:4-42) (Jesus stays here for 2 days in Sychar of Samaria)

*Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.**Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.  And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world”* (Jn. 4:4-42).

Crossing through Samaria, Jesus enters the city of Sychar. Albert Barnes comments:

“This city stood about eight miles southeast of the city called Samaria, between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. It was one of the oldest cities of Palestine, and was formerly known by the name of “Shechem,” or Sichem, Gen\_33:18; Gen\_12:6. The city was in the tribe of Ephraim, Jos\_21:21. It was at this place that Joshua assembled the people before his death, and here they renewed their covenant with the Lord, Josh. 24. After the death of Gideon it became a place of idolatrous worship, the people worshipping Baal-berith, Jdg\_9:46. It was destroyed by Abimelech, who beat down the city and sowed it with salt, Jdg\_9:45. It was afterward rebuilt, and became the residence of Jeroboam, the King of Israel, 1Ki\_12:25. It was called by the Romans “Flavia Neapolis,” and this has been corrupted by the Arabs into “Nablus,” its present name. It is still a considerable place, and its site is remarkably pleasant and productive” (Albert Barnes, *Barnes Notes*, the Gospel of John).

John makes it known that this place was where Jacob purchased a piece of ground near to Shalem, a city of Shechem, from the children of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of silver (Gen. 33:18-20). It was here where the bones of Joseph were buried when they were brought up from Egypt (Josh. 24:32).

“*Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour”* (Jn. 4:6). There is no mention of this particular well in the biblical record. It was either named because it was near the burial site, or one that was used by the patriarch when the land was bought. The Lord had traveled a great distance and was exhausted. It was noon and the blazing sun would cause the Lord to want to hydrate.

*“There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)”*(Jn. 4:7, 8). This simple request from the Master’s lips would lead into one of the most significant doctrines of the New Testament church. The disciples had gone into the city to buy meats leaving Jesus alone at the well.

“*Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans”* (John 4:9). Concerning the Samaritans, Adam Clarke writes:

“The history of the Samaritans is sufficiently known from the Old Testament. Properly speaking, the inhabitants of the city of Samaria should be termed Samaritans; but this epithet belongs chiefly to the people sent into that part of the promised land by Salmanezer, king of Assyria, in the year of the world 3283, when he carried the Israelites that dwelt there captives beyond the Euphrates, and sent a mixed people, principally Cuthites, to dwell in their place. These were altogether heathens at first; but they afterwards incorporated the worship of the true God with that of their idols. See the whole account, 2 Kings 17:5, etc. From this time they feared Jehovah, and served other gods till after the Babylonish captivity. From Alexander the Great, Sanballat, their governor, obtained permission to build a temple upon Mount Gerizim, which the Jews conceiving to be in opposition to their temple at Jerusalem, hated them with a perfect hatred, and would have no fellowship with them. The Samaritans acknowledge the Divine authority of the law of Moses, and carefully preserve it in their own characters, which are probably the genuine ancient Hebrew; the character which is now called Hebrew being that of the Chaldeans. The Samaritan Pentateuch is printed in the London Polyglott, and is an undeniable record. A poor remnant of this people is found still at Naplouse, the ancient Shechem; but they exist in a state of very great poverty and distress, and probably will soon become extinct” (Adam Clarke, *Clarke’s Commentary on the New Testament*, the Gospel of Matthew).

Jesus would have anticipated such a response from the Samaritan woman knowing the history. There are four prominent parts to this narrative. First, **Jesus reveals Himself to be the “water” that gives life**. “*Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”*

*“The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?”* (Jn. 4:11, 12). The woman, like so many others, misinterpreted the message. Her question, “*Art thou greater than our father Jacob*?” signified her ignorance concerning the Messiah standing before her.

*Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”* This reply of profound importance solicits the interests of the Samaritan woman. The perplexity of Jesus offering her the water that alleviates one’s thirst, not for a moment, but forever.

Second, **Jesus unveils is omniscience***.* *“Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.”* Jesus requests is quickly answered with “*I have no husband*.” This woman may have been blinded to whom stood before her. She might have been dazed by a Jewish man willing to speak to a Samaritan woman. Yet, she was not deceptive. Her reply opened the door to Christ revealing His heavenly abilities.

Third*,* **Jesus will speak on the meaning of true worship.** “*The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”* (Jn. 4:19-24). Though she perceived Him to be a prophet at this point, she expressed the fact that the Samaritans worshipped separately from the Jews. It was on Mount Gerizim that the Samaritans had built a temple like the one in Jerusalem for the people to worship Jehovah.

Jesus brings forth an important theological deduction that God is the author who decides the ways and means to worship Him. For the perverted worship of those in Jerusalem and the perceived worship of those on Mt. Gerizim will not be the places where proper worship will be performed. The true worshipers will worship God in spirit and in truth. This is visible by accepting the fact that God is a Spirit. And with that in mind, He demands to be worshiped in spirit.

At this point comes the fourth revelation in the confrontation. **Jesus openly reveals His Messiahship.** “*The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.”* Christ hiding His identity from the Jews is revealed to the adulterous woman. Her limited understanding of the Messiah, her honesty, and her inquisitive questions prompted the Lord to unveil Himself.

“*And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?”* (John 4:27). The apostles return and marvel that Jesus communicated with a Samaritan, especially a woman no less. Yet out of respect and reverence none questioned Him nor made remarks.

*“The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him”* (Jn. 4:28-30). In this brief interlude between verses 27 and 31, the Samaritan woman tells the men of the city about her conversation with the stranger at the well claiming to be the Messiah. Their interests aroused prompted them to seek out this stranger who knew all about the woman’s past and present situation.

*“In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.  But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work”* (Jn. 4:31-34). The disciples pleading with the Lord to eat receive a declarative response by Jesus, “*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”*

*“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours”* (John 4:35-38). In Palestine, the harvest did not come until four months after the Passover. The first part of the harvest was taken to the temple and given to the Lord (Lev. 23:11). Howbeit, Jesus was not speaking of the harvest of grain and wheat but of men. The proverb was taught throughout the Old Testament (Lev. 26:16; Isa. 65:21-22; Micah 6:15; Hos. 7:9).

*“And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world”* (Jn. 4:39-42). The Pharisees would accuse Him, and the Jewish people would crucify Him, but the Samaritans believed Him to be the Messiah. Their belief was not based on the testimony of an adulterous woman but on hearing the words of Jesus.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why was it unusual for Jesus to talk to a Samaritan woman?
2. What did Jesus say about the true worshippers of God?
3. How was the Lord’s reception by the Samaritans?

**THE GREAT GALILEAN MINISTRY**

**(A.D. 30-32)**

***Jesus Arrival in Galilee*** (Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 4:14, 15; John 4:43-45)

*“Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee*” (Matt. 4:12).

“*Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God*” (Mark 1:14).

“*And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all*” (Lk. 4:14, 15).

“*Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast”* (Jn. 4:43-45).

According to Matthew and Mark’s gospels, Jesus entered Galilee and began His ministry during the period that John had been thrown in prison by Herod. Luke records that the Lord’s fame followed Him into Galilee. And John cites that the Lord did not return to His own region because He was not accepted. Hence, Galilee was filled with believers who had seen the miracles He performed in Jerusalem during the feast’s days.

***Jesus Heals an Official’s Son in Cana*** (Jn. 4:46-54)

*“So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.  When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.  Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.  The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.  Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.  And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.  Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.  So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.  This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee”*(Jn. 4:46-54).

The second miracle that Jesus performs is in the same area where Jesus turned the water into wine. Howbeit, that was a miracle were only a few knew about. The miracle of the nobleman’s son would not be held in secrecy.

Concerning a nobleman, Adam Clarke pens, “An officer of the king’s court: for this is the meaning of the original word, βασιλικος, which the Vulgate translates regulus, a little king” (Adam Clarke, *Clarke’s Commentary on the New Testament*, the Gospel of John). No matter what position he held, the man was willing to seek out the Messiah for the hope of his son being healed. Quite often people came to Jesus out of desperation and hope.

“*Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.”* Jesus is speaking to the crowd as well as to the nobleman. In Samaria, the people believed without seeing any miracles performed. Now in Galilee, among His own people, they needed miracles to believe.

“*The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.”* Here we see faith mixed with unbelief. He believed the Lord could heal his son, but felt He had to be near his son to do so.

“*Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.  And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.  Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.  So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.  This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee”* (Jn. 4:50-54). It is so important to underline the details to this miraculous event. The moment the Lord spoke the words, the son was healed. The servant confirms the hour to his master. Then it is written, “*the father knew*!” Faith is centered on knowledge (Rom. 10:17). It is gained in this episode by inductive and deductive reasoning. The deductive was seen when the nobleman believed what he heard, whereas inductive reasoning occurred when the healing of his son was confirmed.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did the nobleman find Jesus to plea for his son?
2. Jesus said that the people needed to see what in order to believe.

***Jesus Settle in Capernaum & Preaches the Kingdom*** (Matt. 4:13-17; Mark 1:14, 15) **(30 A.D**.)

*“And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”* (Matt. 4:13-17).

“*Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel”* (Mark 1:14, 15).

The location where Jesus settled was at the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim. These were two tribes of the children of Israel which were located in this part of the land of Canaan, and constituted in the time of Christ as a part of Galilee. Matthew points out that this was according to the prophecy of Isaiah (Isa. 9:1, 2).

It is at this location and during this period that Jesus begins preaching concerning His coming Kingdom. It was not a kingdom that had already been established, nor would it come during the life of John the Baptist; this kingdom was built on the day of Pentecost in AD 33 in Jerusalem after Jesus was resurrected and ascended.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. After leaving Nazareth, where did Jesus’ travel to?
2. What prophet, and where in the Old Testament, is recorded this prophesy of the light coming to this region?

***Jesus Rejected at Nazareth*** (Lk. 4:16-30)

*“And 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 for to read.  And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. 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 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, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.  And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.  And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.  And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?* *And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.* *And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way”* (Lk. 4:16-30).

In this scene, Jesus has traveled back to Nazareth, the place of His upbringing. His entrance into the village led Him into the synagogue. The minister of the synagogue hands Jesus the scroll containing the writings of Isaiah. Jesus reads Isaiah 61:1 and adds to it Isaiah 42:7. He then hands the scroll back to the minister, sits down, and informs them that He was the fulfillment of that prophesy.

“*And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?”* This rejection would happen again on the Lord’s second visit to Nazareth in Mark 6:1-6. In which Jesus will use a similar statement about the Nazarites.

*“And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian”* (Lk. 4:23-27). In the first part of His defense, He speaks a Jewish proverb aiming at their unacceptance and their wanting proof by His miracles.

His second defense tells the story of Elijah found in 1 Kings 17:8-24. A time when God shut up the heavens from raining for three years and six months (1 Kings 18:1, 45). During that period, God sent Elijah to aid a widow in Sarepta, who was not Jewish, but Sidonian (a Gentile).

Third, during the days of Elisha, the prophet was sent to heal Naaman the leper. Once again, a Gentile and not a Jew. Both stories point to the unbelief of the Jewish community and the turning of Gentiles to Jehovah.

“*And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way”* (Lk. 4:28-30). Jesus confirming the acceptance of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews to the Lord infuriated the people. The populace rose and cast Him out of the city and had every intention of throwing Jesus over the cliffs to kill Him. This intent to kill Jesus would happen once again in John 8:59. However, Jesus miraculously passed through the crowd and left peacefully.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why and where did Jesus go to teach in Nazareth?
2. How was Jesus received by the people?
3. What two Old Testament examples did Jesus tell pointing to their rejection?

***Official Call of Four Apostles at the Sea of Galilee*** (Matt. 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Lk. 5:1-11)

“*And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him*” (Matt. 4:18-22).

“*Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.  And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him*” (Mark 1:16-20).

“*And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.  And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, 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 was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.  And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him*” (Lk. 5:1-11).

In the gospels of Matthew and Mark, they record that Jesus was walking on the shore of the sea of Galilee and saw Simon and Andrew casting their nets. He said to them, “*Follow me and I will make you fishers of men*.” Then He travels a little further and sees James and John to which he gives the same invitation, and at once they follow Him leaving their father to mind the ships. Matthew states that only the father was left, while Mark records that the father and his hired servants stayed behind.

It is Luke that goes into great details about the event. First, he writes that Jesus entered Peter’s vessel and asked him to roll a little further from shore. He then preaches to the crowd on the shore. After He finished, Peter was instructed to row further out and cast his nets into the sea. In so doing, a substantial number of fishes were caught breaking the net. Peter and Andrew then call for their partners, John, and James, to come and aid them. The number of fishes caught were able to load both vessels to the point that they were near sinking. Peter falls at the feet of Jesus and says, “D*epart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”* Jesus said to Simon Peter, “*From henceforth you shall catch men*.” After returning to shore, all four men left their ships and nets and followed Jesus.

For Matthew and Mark, they chose to focus on the calling. Luke concentrates more on the miracle.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What four apostles were called by the sea of Galilee?
2. What was their professions?
3. What miracle did Jesus perform during this calling?
4. What was Peter’s response to the miracle?

***Man Healed of Unclean Spirit in Capernaum*** (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37) (**Sabbath**)

*“And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee*” (Mark 1:21-28).

*“And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power. And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about*” (Lk. 4:31-37).

Marks and Luke’s account of the man healed on the Sabbath day in Capernaum are almost identical. Mark adds the commentary, “*For he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes*.” Before His apostles knew and the people, the demons professed the identity of Jesus. He was the “Holy One of God.”

After the Lord cast out the demon, Mark records that the people questioned among themselves. They ask, “*What new doctrine is this*?” This astonishing doctrine so preached from the lips of the Messiah was confirmed by the miracle performed. It aided in His fame blossoming out into the communities.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When the people heard Jesus speak what conclusion did, they draw?
2. What did the demon profess before Jesus?
3. On what day was it when Jesus healed the one possessed?

***Peter’s Mother-in-law Healed in Capernaum (*A.D. 30)**(Matt. 8:14-17; Mark 1:29-34; Lk. 4:38-41)

*“And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them. 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: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses”* (Matt. 8:14-17).

“*And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him*” (Mark 1:29-34).

“*And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.  And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them. Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ”* (Lk. 4:38-41).

In the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law Matthew writes briefly. He does not mention leaving the synagogue and entering the home. Mark and Luke would make that reference. He does however quote the prophesy of Isaiah concerning the healing of the sick that were brought to the home (Isa. 53:4).

Mark’s account adds that Jesus entered the house where Peter and his brother both resided. He entered the home with James and John along with Peter and Andrew. After the healing in all three accounts, the people brought their loved ones to be healed. The devils that possessed some would cry out saying, “*Thou art the Christ,”* according to Luke and then be quickly rebuked by Christ. Mark writes that Jesus silenced them because “they knew Him.”

The significance of this event points to the fact that many of these men called into service were married and had families. We find later Peter and John would become elders in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:14; Gal. 2:9). This may have reference to their station as apostles. Howbeit, in 1 Peter 5:1, Peter confirms he was an elder in the Lord’s church.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Whose mother-in-law was healed in Galilee?
2. What did Jesus’ command the devils not to do as he cast them out?
3. Where and what prophet does Matthew quote from?

***Jesus in a Solitary Place for Prayer*** (**The Next Day**)(Mark 1:35-38; Lk. 4:42-44)

“*And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.  And Simon and they that were with him followed after him.  And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.  And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.  And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils”* (Mark 1:35-38)

*“And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.  And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.  And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee”* (Lk. 4:42-44).

Both Mark and Luke refer to Jesus leaving to a desert (solitary) place to pray. Simon with a small crowd followed Him. Mark states that when Simon found Him, he made mention that “*all men seek thee*.” Luke states that when the crowd came to Him and *“stayed him, that he should not depart from them*.” Since Peter was leading the crowd, his statement was more for the protection of Jesus wandering without support. For the crowd, they would have wanted to see more miracles and receive more of the corporate benefits of being with the Messiah.

***Jesus Travels Throughout Galilee* (A.D. 30)**(Matt. 4:23-25; Mark 1:38, 39; Lk. 4:44)

*“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.  And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.  And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan*” (Matt. 4:23-25).

“*And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.  And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils*” (Mark 1:38, 39).

“*And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee*” (Lk. 4:44).

In the Lord’s healing ministry throughout Galilee, Mark, and Luke states that Jesus entered the synagogues to perform miracles and preach the gospel. It is Matthew who refers to these healings but goes further to add that the Lord’s fame had expanded throughout Syria. And then speaks of the crowd that followed were from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea, and beyond the Jordan which would be the area of Peraea.

***A Leper Healed in Galilee*** (Matt. 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45; Lk. 5:12-16)

“*When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them*” (Matt. 8:1-4).

“*And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.  And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.  And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.* *But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter*” (Mark 1:40-45)

“*And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing* *Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.  And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.  And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.  But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.   And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed*” (Lk. 5:12-16.

Matthew tells of Jesus coming down from the mountain being greeted by the pleading leper worshiping Him. Mark says the Leper kneeled down, and Luke wrote that he fell to his face. It is Mark’s account however that uses the phrase, “*moved with compassion*.” This would be an iconic phrase describing Christ throughout the gospels (Matt. 15:32, 20:34; Mark 8:2; Lk. 7:13).

Once healed, all three gospel accounts record Jesus telling the cleansed leper to show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice according to the law of Moses. This was in accordance with Leviticus 14:1. Concerning the gift, it was to be two living, clean birds, some cedar wood, with scarlet and hyssop (Lev. 14:4), which were to be brought for his cleansing. Once clean, two he lambs, one ewe lamb, three tenth deals of flour, and one log of oil would be offered (Lev. 14:10). If the person was poor, then he was to bring one lamb, one tenth deal of flour, one log of oil and two turtle doves, or young pigeons (Lev. 14:21, 22).

We have no way of telling if the leper did all the law required. Luke writes, “*But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city.”* The Lord’s request was not honored by the healed leper. Yet, one should not fault him for doing what was inevitable. Sadly, because of the advertisement of the miracle, Jesus withdrew Himself into the wilderness to pray to His Father.

***A Paralytic Healed in Capernaum*** (Matt. 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Lk. 5:17-26)

“*And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.  And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.  And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?  For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?  But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men*” (Matt. 9:1-8).

*“And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?  Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?  But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion*” (Mark 2:1-12).

*“And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.  And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him.  And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?  But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.  And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.  And they were all amazed, and* *they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day”* (Lk. 5:17-26).

Reading all three accounts of this healing, one gains an accurate picture of what took place. Matthew states that Jesus entered a ship and passed over into His own country. Mark inserts that he entered into Capernaum and was teaching in a house. Luke says that doctors of the Law and the Pharisees had come from Galilee, Judaea, and Jerusalem no doubt to try to entrap Jesus.

The house had been so crowded that the roof was removed to lift down a man sickened with palsy. Upon seeing his faith, Jesus exclaimed, “*Thy sins be forgiven thee*.” The statement caused the Pharisees to murmur to themselves saying, “*Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?”* They were whispering these thoughts. Hence, the statement is expressed about the Lord, “*But when Jesus perceived their thoughts.”*

Jesus replied to their murmuring, “*What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?  But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins.”* Two questions ending with a statement of fact infuriated the Pharisees. They had no explanation how Jesus performed these miracles. They would even propose that Jesus did all this through the power of Satan.

After His unacknowledged answer, He turned to the man sick of palsy and said, “*Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.”* The Bible reads that the man got up, proceeded to his house, and glorified God.

Note the reaction of the crowd who saw the healing. Matthew proclaims, “T*hey marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.”* Mark records, “T*hey were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.”* And Luke writes, “T*hey glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where was the leper healed?
2. What did the leper do that stopped Jesus from preaching in that area?
3. Where was the paralytic healed?
4. What did Jesus say to the paralytic that irritated the Pharisees?

***The Disciples of John Ask About Fasting*** (Matt. 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22; Lk. 5:33-39)

“*Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?  And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.  No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.  Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved”* (Matt. 9:14-17).

“*And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?  And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles”* (Mark 2:18-22).

“*And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.  But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better*” (Luke 5:33-39).

The question asked by the disciples of John focused on the practice of fasting. They, along with the Pharisees, fasted on many occasions. And the disciples that once followed John and now are attached to Jesus practiced this earlier, but not during the period that they walked with Christ.

Jesus in all three gospels used three examples explaining why fasting was not practiced by His disciples. First, the example of the bridegroom and His entourage. John had called Jesus the bridegroom in John 3:29. As such, it would not be appropriate in the preparation of a wedding to do such.

Second, the Lord uses the illustration of new material sewn onto an old garment. Luke calls the story a parable. It unveils the reasonable conclusion of how utterly ridiculous such an act would be.

Third, Jesus speaks of putting new wine into old wineskins. After a period, the old wineskins would become brittle and rupture. Hence, in the production of new wine it would always be placed in new wineskins.

“*But the days will come*” predicts the calamity that will befall the disciples. Their Master will be taken away. No doubt pointing to His arrest, trial, and crucifixion. After that period, they would return to fasting.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question did John’s disciples ask Jesus?
2. What was the Lord’s reply?
3. What three illustrations did the Lord use?

**SECOND YEAR OF GALILEAN MINISTRY**

***The Second Passover***

***Paralytic Healed on Sabbath in Jerusalem at Pool of Bethesda*** (Jn. 5:1-47) (**April 31 A.D.)**

“*After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.  Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.  In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.  For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.  And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.  When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?  The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.  Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.  And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work”* (Jn. 5:1-17).

It had been four months since Jesus was in Samaria (Jn. 4:35), and now He had spent several months in Galilee. Jesus returns to Jerusalem during the feast of the Passover. John writes of the “sheep market” which more than likely was the “sheep’s gate.” This is the location of the bathing pool which was called “Bethesda,” which is interpreted as “House of mercy.” It had five covered porches in which the sick was laid.

The unique healing took place by an angel of the Lord who stirred the waters at certain times. At that moment, whoever stepped into the water was healed. For the less fortunate who were not quick enough or able enough to step into the pool sat waiting.

“*And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.  When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?  The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.  Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.  And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.”* There is no doubt that Jesus was aware of the story behind this man’s illness. Though this man did not know Christ, Jesus knew of his situation and the years of his sufferings.

The sadness of the event was in the man’s reply of having no one to aid him. And even in his attempts there was always someone stepping in before him. Then came the words flowing from the mouth of the Messiah, “*Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.”*

The healing was on the Sabbath. When the man was seen walking through the streets of Jerusalem, he is rebuked for carrying his bed on the Sabbath. The Jews were forbidden to carry any burdens on that day (Neh. 13:15). He tells them that he was healed but had no knowledge of the healer.

Jesus later seeks out the man and finds him in the temple. He tells the man to “sin no more.” Some presume that the man’s illness came because of sin, but that is far from the truth. This is the same remark He stated to the adulterous woman in John 8:11.

“*Lest a worse thing come unto thee.”* Jesus was informing the healed paralytic that there were worse things than sickness and disease. The worse being the loss of a soul because of sin.

“*The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them,* *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”* The people believed Jesus had allowed the man to violate the Sabbath and hence they began to taunt and persecute Him verbally. Even further, they sought to put Him to death.

How did Jesus react? By proclaiming, “*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”* His point is valid. God the Father does not rest His labors on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for man. Thus, if the Father never ceases laboring for His creation, why should Jesus?

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the name of the pool where many were healed in Jerusalem?
2. Who did Jesus heal by this pool?
3. How long did the crippled man have the infirmity?
4. Why was the healed man rebuked by others?

***Jesus Is Equal with God***

*“Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God”* (Jn. 5:18). A second charge is laid against Christ. His proclamation of God being His Father was seen as blasphemy. To call Himself the Son of God was to place Himself equal to God. Even later, the Lord would speak of His oneness with the Father receiving the same reaction from the Jews (John 10:29-33).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What two charges did the Jews accuse Jesus
2. Is Christ equal to God?

***The Authority of the Son***

*“Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation”* (Jn. 5:19-29).

The Jews questioned His authority. This caused Jesus to respond. First, Jesus states the reality of **not being able to do anything without the consent of the Father**. This leads Him to his second proof which points directly to the **miracles being performed**. Jesus said that He was loved by the Father. And these great works are manifested by the love given to Him by the Father.

Third, Jesus points to God’s ability to **raise the dead**. Howbeit, so has Christ raised several from the dead proving that this power came from the Father.

Fourth, The Lord speaks of His **ability to judge** in verses 22 thru 24. It was the Father who gave Jesus this authority. Hence, men should honor the Son as they do the Father.

Fifth, Jesus is **Lord of the dead**. *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation”* (Jn. 5:29, 30). The resurrection and judgment will take place at His command.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Jesus gives five proofs of His authority. Can you name two of them?

***Witnesses to Jesus***

*“I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.  There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not:* *if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?  Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.   For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he* *wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?”* (Jn. 5:30-47).

In this oration by Jesus, He cites five witnesses proving His Messiahship. First, John the Baptist testified of Jesus. If they accepted him as a prophet of God, they should believe his statements about the Lord.

Second, Jesus cites His works as proof of His authority. Even Nicodemus proclaimed, “*For no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him*” (Jn. 3:2).

Third, Jesus states that His Father bears witness. Twice in the scriptures, God shouts from the heavens. Once at His baptism, and another at the mount of transfiguration (Matt. 3; Matt. 17).

Fourth, the next witness cited as proving Jesus to be the Messiah were the scriptures themselves. Jesus rebukes them for their lack of understanding of the scriptures. If they would have searched them, they would have no doubt He was who He said He was.

Fifth, Jesus declares that Moses prophesied of His coming in Genesis 3:15, and through the promises given to Abraham in Genesis 12:3.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Jesus gives five proofs of the witnesses to His Messiahship. Can you name three of them?
2. Jesus proclaimed that if the unbelievers would have searched what, they would had believed was the Messiah?

***Disciples Pick Grain on Sabbath in Galilee*** (Matt. 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5) (**May**

**31 A.D.)**

***“****At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.  But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.  But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?  Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?  But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple.  But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.  For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day”* (Matt. 12:1-8).

*“And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.   And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?  And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?  How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath”* (Mark 2:23-28).

“*And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.  And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?  And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him; How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath*” (Lk. 6:1-5).

In this episode in the life of Christ, the Lord’s disciples are hungry and pass through a cornfield plucking several ears of corn. The Pharisees seeing this act of hunger question Jesus. All three gospels repeat the Lord’s dispute as he tells the story of David eating the shewbread in the temple when he was hungered (1 Sam. 21:1ff).

It is Matthew’s account that inserts the statement, “*But if ye had not known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice*.” Which is a quote from Hosea 6:6.

Moses had commanded the Hebrews to abstain from all servile work on the Sabbath, (Exod. 20:10, 35:2-3; Num. 15:32-36). The issue was not the eating of the corn from another’s field for this was clearly permitted by the Mosaic law (Deut. 23:25). The condemnation came because such an act was done on the Sabbath.

What angered the Pharisees was His simple answer with the added proclamation that He was also Lord of the Sabbath. In other words, the Pharisees were condemning the Lord who created the Sabbath.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did the disciples pick grain on the Sabbath?
2. What Old Testament event did Jesus cite?

***Jesus Heals on the Sabbath*** (Matt. 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Lk. 6:6-11)

“*And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.  And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?  How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.  Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him”* (Matt. 12:9-14).

*“And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.  And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.  And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.  And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.  And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.  And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him:* (Mark 3:1-6).

“*And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.  And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.  But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.  Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?  And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.  And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus”* (Lk. 6:6-11).

In this episode in the life of Jesus the three accounts given offer us a full picture of the event. It is Matthew where Jesus asks the question concerning a sheep falling into a ditch, while Mark adds, “*Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do evil, to save life, or to kill*?” Luke tells us that Jesus “*knew their thoughts*.”

Mark also says that after the incident, the Pharisees held their peace. And unveils that the Lord became angry and grieved because of the “*hardness of their hearts*.”

All three writers state that the Pharisees went out and held council against the Lord on how they might destroy Him. Yet, it is Mark that tells us that the Pharisees took counsel with the Herodians.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. The man with the withered hand was healed on what day?
2. What question did the Pharisees asks Jesus as He entered the temple?
3. What analogy did Jesus use to show their ignorance?
4. What does Mark add that is not told by the other gospel writers?

***The Choosing of the Twelve on a Mountain Near the Sea of Galilee*** (Mark 3:13-19; Lk. 6:12-

16)

***“****And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: And Simon he surnamed Peter; And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house”* (Mark 3:13-19).

*“And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.  And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor”* (Lk. 6:16-19).

Mark and Luke cover the choosing of the twelve. Both state that He went up into a mountain near Capernaum. Howbeit, Luke records that the Lord spent the night in prayer before calling forth the twelve and naming them.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What word is used to speak on the choosing of the twelve?
2. What four things are mentioned concerning what they were ordained to do?

***The Sermon on the Mount***

***The Gathering of the Crowd*** (Matt. 5:1; Luke 6:17-19)

*“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him*” (Matt. 5:1).

*“And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all”* (Lk. 6:17-19).

Matthew and Luke almost seem contradictory. Matthew records that the Lord went up into the mountain. And Luke states that He came down and stood in the plain. It is logical that He came down a little way and stood in a flat area to preach His message.

Luke makes it a point to define the crowd. He says that they came from Judaea, Jerusalem, and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon. The emphasis is made concerning the many miracles Jesus performed before beginning His speech.

“*For there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.”* This phrase is first used concerning the woman healed of an issue of blood in Mark 5:30 and Luke 6:19. She merely touched the hem of His garment and was made whole. Then it is stated, *“And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him”* (Mark 5:30).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the seeming contradiction between Matthew and Luke’s recording of Jesus on the mountain?
2. Where does Luke say the crowd came from?

***The Beatitudes*** (Matt. 5:1-12;Lk. 6:20-23)

*“And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.**Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.  Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.  Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.  Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.  Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.  Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you*” (Matt. 5:1-12).

*“And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.  Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.  Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.  Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets” (*Lk. 6:20-23).

Matthew mentions nine beatitudes, and Luke only four. They represent the moralistic and spiritual qualities of the righteous.

Each of the beatitudes begins with a blessing and concludes with a positive reward or response. The first is, “*Blessed are the poor (*πτωχοι) *in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”* Jesus is not addressing the monetary poor from which He speaks often (Luke 4:18; Matt. 11:5), but those impoverished in spirit. They are the ones so eager to accept the gospel. That is why “theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Not that they are deserving, but willing to admit their sins and convert.

“*Blessed are they that mourn (*πενθουντες)*: for they shall be comforted.”*Isaiah wrote, “*To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn”* (Isa. 61:2). It is one thing to mourn over the loss of physical possessions, it is another to mourn because of the sufferings of seeking to live a righteous life.

*“Blessed are the meek* (οἱ πραεῖς)***:*** *for they shall inherit the earth.”* This type of meekness speaks of an outward conduct. Jesus addressed this attribute when He proclaimed, “*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am* ***meek and lowly*** *in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls”* (Matt. 11:28).

*“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη)*: for they shall be filled.”* Throughout Bible times, godly men hungered (1 Cor. 4:11; 2 Cor. 11:27). Yet they are promised in the next life that *“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat”* (Rev. 7:16).

Howbeit, the hunger underlined in the beatitudes is spiritual. Men and women who live to bless the lives of others. They wake up each morning to a new dawn of good works thirsting and hungering to do what is pleasing to the Lord. Paul exclaimed, “*Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness”* (Rom. 6:18).

“*Blessed are the merciful (*ἐλεήμων)*: for they shall obtain mercy.”* Adam Clarke says that the word mercy, among the Jews, signified two things: the pardon of injuries, and almsgiving (Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible*, Matthew). The psalmist pointed out that the merciful will render mercy to others (Psa. 18:25).

*Blessed are the pure (*καθαροι) *in heart: for they shall see God.*Holy living is brought about by both internal and external factors. The willingness to live pleasing to God. That is why they shall “see God.”

*Blessed are the peacemakers (*ειρηνοποιοι)*: for they shall be called the children of God.* These are not only peaceable men, but those who look to share the gospel of peace with others. Keeping peace is one thing but the ability to bring peace to a world which lives in despair and wickedness.

*Blessed are they which are persecuted (*Δεδιωγμενοι) *for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*.  Jeremiah wrote*,* “*Our necks are under persecution: we labour, and have no rest*” (Lam. 5:5). The Christians in the early church understood persecution (Acts 8:1, 11:19, 13:50; Rom. 8:35; Gal. 5:11). Paul wrote, “*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*” (2 Tim. 3:12).

It is not hard to see the outcome of those who withstood persecution for the Lord’s sake. As John’s vision brings to light the righteous saints being avenged and blessed (Rev. 6:10, 14:13).

*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile (*ονειδισωσιν) *you, and persecute (*διωξωσιν) *you, and shall say (*ειπωσιν) *all manner of evil (* πονηρον) *against you falsely (*ψευδομενοι)*, for my sake.  Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you*” (Matt. 5:1-12). The Lord’s commentary on the persecuted saints shows the hatred of the righteous throughout the centuries.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How many beatitudes does Matthew lists?
2. How many beatitudes does Mark lists?
3. Theologically speaking, how do you feel that you measure up to these beatitudes?

***The Woes*** (Lk. 6:24-26)

*But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets*” (Lk. 6:24-26).

Luke includes four woes in his narrative concerning the mount sermon. They are in opposition to the blessed in the kingdom of Christ. Without a doubt they are aimed at the Jewish leaders who fed upon the poverty of others and refused to accept the Messiah. The thought is continued in Matthew twenty-three when the Lord addresses the sins of the Pharisees.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How many woes are given in Luke 6:24-26?
2. Name the woes.

***“You Are the Salt of the Earth”*** (Matt. 5:13)

“*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men”* (Matt. 5:13).

Albert Barnes writes:

“Salt renders food pleasant and palatable, and preserves from putrefaction. So Christians, by their lives and instructions, are to keep the world from entire moral corruption. By bringing down the blessing of God in answer to their prayers, and by their influence and example, they save the world from universal vice and crime. **Salt have lost its savour -** That is, if it has become tasteless, or has lost its preserving properties. The salt used in this country is a chemical compound - chloride of sodium - and if the saltness were lost, or it were to lose its savor, there would be nothing remaining. It enters into the very nature of the substance. In eastern countries, however, the salt used was impure, or mingled with vegetable or earthy substances, so that it might lose the whole of its saltness, and a considerable quantity of earthy matter remain. This was good for nothing, except that it was used to place in paths, or walks, as we use gravel. This kind of salt is common still in that country. It is found in the earth in veins or layers, and when exposed to the sun and rain, loses its saltness entirely” (*Barnes Notes, Commentary on Matthew*).

The expression, “Good for nothing” emphasizes the concept of labor and loyalty. One cannot be a procrastinator or lazy when serving Jesus. To be such would make us “good for nothing.”

**“*You are the Light of the World”*** (Matt. 5:14-16)

*“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matt. 5:14-16).

One of the beautiful depictions of a Christian is the concept of light. It is used 272 times in the KJV, and most often by Jesus and His apostles. John makes it clear that salvation is found in the light of Jesus (1 Jn. 1:5-10). Yet, sadly, He was rejected by so many (Jn. 1:7-11).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In Matthew 5:13-16, what two things are Christians compared to?

***The Fulfillment of the Law*** (Matt. 5:17-37)

*“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven”* (Matt. 5:17-20).

The morals and scriptural guidance the Law presented would never pass. It was not the Messiah’s intent to discredit or destroy the Law but to fulfill it. For the Law emphasized the need for redemption leading to the only person who could grant that petition, Jesus (Heb. 10:4).

“*But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”* Jesus is not teaching that the hypocrite will have a spot in His kingdom. In fact, He is teaching just the opposite. One’s disobedience, and then instructing others to follow, would exclude one from entering the Kingdom of heaven.

And with Messianic force He emphasizes that one’s righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees. Let’s make it clear that the Pharisees were very studious in their beliefs. Religion was their life though misdirected and hypocritical were their thoughts.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How was Jesus a fulfillment of the Law?
2. Are we under a law today?

***Anger***

***“****Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council**: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him;* *lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing*” (Matt. 5:21-26).

In this narrative, Jesus discusses the fruits of anger. The first killing was the product of anger in Genesis four. This condemnation was expressed by the prophets throughout the history of the Hebrew people.

It must be understood that Jesus is centering on “anger without cause.” There are times when anger, not leading to sin, is necessary. Jesus proved that when he purged the temple twice of the money changers. To angrily kill someone without cause leads one to the strictest punishment of the Law.

Secondly, the person who unjustly calls his brother “Raca” shall be in danger of the council.

Albert Barnes states that “Raca” is a Syriac word, expressive of great contempt. It comes from a verb signifying to be empty, vain; and hence, as a word of contempt, denotes senseless, stupid, shallow brains (*Barnes Notes*, The Gospel of Matthew). The council speaks of the Sanhedrin.

“*But whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”* The word “fool” points to a wicked and wretched man. And when one uses this title unjustly, he can bring great harm to the recipient. Jesus warns that in so doing one will face the ultimate penalty.

Next, comes one of the most important principals in the New Testament, **RECONCILIATION**. In this presentation the Lord speaks of a brother offending another and in Matthew 18:15-20, He aims at oneself being offended by another. In both cases there is confrontation, confession, and reconciliation. All this must be carried out before one can bring their prayers before God.

“*lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*” “*The last farthing*” stood for all that was due. The farthing itself was a small coin used in Judea, equal to two mites. This judgment could be avoided simply by coming to an agreement with the creditor.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Jesus puts anger in the same category of sin as what?
2. What is the most important principal Jesus taught in this area of forgiveness?

***Lust***

***“****Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell”* (Matt. 5:27-30).

There has been much written about this passage. The Law was explicitly stated in Exodus 20:14. The Jews treated the seventh commandment much like the sixth concerning murder. In other words, the literal act had to take place. Jesus, however, extended it to an internal act. Just the mere lusting over a person defined the actual meaning of the Law. It was Solomon who taught this fact in Proverbs, *“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee”* (Prov. 23:7).

“*And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.”*

The word “offend” **(**σκανδαλίξει) in the Greek speaks of something that provokes or is a stumbling block (*Vincent’s Word Studies*, “Offend”). The Lord is not instituting dismemberment or mutilation but simply avoiding and denying such thoughts from entering the heart.

QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus proclaims that looking on a woman with lusts is the same as committing what?
2. What is the meaning of plucking out and eye or cutting off a hand if it offends?

***Divorce***

*“It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery*” (Matt. 5:31, 32).

The above passage should be examined alongside Matthew 19:1-12. The Bible gives but two reasons for remarriage to take place. One is the death of a spouse (Rom. 7:2), and the other is for fornication (πορνείᾳ). A term that is defined as any illicit sexual sin. This could include adultery, homosexuality, beastiality, or any other sexual deviancy.

Be it known that this is a continual action. If the couple live in this situation, they are committing fornication. If one were to say that one could repent and stay in the relationship, he or she would be teaching that repentance does not ask for a changed behavior.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the only cause to divorce a spouse while both are still living?
2. What is the problem of one putting away a spouse, not for fornication, and marrying another, and then supposedly repenting and staying in the relationship?

***Oaths***

*“Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.  Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil”* (Matt. 5:33-36).

“*And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD*” (Lev. 19:12). “*That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth*” (Deut. 23:23). This was the Law referred to by Jesus. By these laws people were forbidden to perjure themselves or to swear falsely. This was a sin noted by the dishonesty of the Pharisees (Matthew 23:16-22). The condemnation is not in the act of taking an oath for this is performed quite often by the patriarchs and prophets (Gen. 21:23, 24; Gen. 25:33; Josh. 2:12; 1 Sam. 30:15; Isa. 45:23). The judgment is cast upon them that are willing to swear by all that is holy for the purpose of their own personal gain.

“*But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”* The saint must be a person of integrity and honesty. What he promises, he must keep. His word is his bond.

***An Eye for an Eye*** (Matt. 5:38-42; Lk. 6:27-31)

*“Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.  And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away”* (Matt. 5:38-42).

*“But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise”* (Lk. 6:27-31).

The law of retaliation is found in Exodus 21:24, Leviticus 2:20, and Deuteronomy 19:21. This command was the guideline upon which the judges ruled. The concept of equal justice so implied by Paul (Rom. 13:1-5). Jesus speaks against individual retaliation and vengeance upon one’s adversary. It is Matthew that cites the law. Luke focuses on the treatment of an enemy by loving him and doing good.

By compiling the actions of the *smite on the cheek* or the taking of one’s possessions, we find a full listing in viewing both accounts. It is Matthew, however, who speaks of going the second mile. And it is Luke who cites the golden rule, “*And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the condemnation when taken an oath?
2. How did Jesus address the subject of Old Testament vengeance?

***Love Your Enemies*** (Matt. 5:43-48; Lk. 6:32-36)

“*Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.  But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?  And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”* (Matt. 5:43-48).

“*For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.  And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.  And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.  But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful”* (Lk. 6:32-36).

The command to love one’s neighbor is found in Leviticus 19:18. To the Hebrews, they saw only their fellow Jew as a neighbor. So, it was common for them to cite hatred toward the Gentiles.

When asked to define the meaning of “neighbor,” the Lord told the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-36). In turn, the Lord concluded the parable by asking, “*Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?”* (vs. 36). The lawyer responded, “*And he said, He that shewed mercy on him”* (vs. 37). This prompted Jesus to say, “*Go, and do thou likewise.”*

Further, in Matthew’s account the Lord asks, “*For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?  And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”* Whereas Luke records, “*And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.  But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”* Two different questions emphasizing the same conclusion.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What are we to do for our enemies?
2. What is the meaning, “*What do you more than others?”*

***Alms*** (Matt. 6:1-4)

*“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.  Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.  But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly”* *(*Matt. 6:1-4*).*

Alms was the money collected for the purpose of giving to the poor and destitute. It is a necessary action by those who absolutely love the Lord and his neighbor (Gal. 2:10; Jas. 1:27).

The concern in the Lord’s presentation of giving alms is aimed at the purpose of the giver. The Pharisees were noted to give well, but they liked their offerings and prayers to be seen and heard by others. Whereas the Lord calls men of such nature hypocrites.

The true blessing that comes from giving is from the Father who rewards openly for those who give secretly. For the purpose of giving is not for bragging purposes or to give oneself the glory, but for the privilege of offering to the Lord a portion of what blessings He bestows upon the saint.

***Prayer*** (Matt. 6:5-8)

“*And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.  But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.  But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.  Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him”* (Matt. 6:5-8).

Like almsgiving, our personal prayers to God are to be done privately and secretly. In Luke 19:9-14, Jesus orates the parable of the two prayers, the one a Pharisee and the other a Publican. This demonstrates what is taught on prayer in Matthew six.

“*But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.  Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”* Two important necessities of prayer. **First**, when one prays do not use vain repetitions, which implies saying something often. Why? Because it implies a mistrust in God’s ability to hear. And **second**, God knows your needs.

***The Lord’s Example of Prayer*** (Matt. 6:9-15) (Also recorded in Lk. 11:1-4)

*“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.  Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.  Give us this day our daily bread.  And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”* (Matt. 6:9-15).

The Lord would repeat His example of prayer in Luke 11:1-4, when asked by His apostles how to pray. Matthew includes this prayer in the mount sermon. No doubt this prayer has been mistitled, “the Lord’s Prayer,” even though Jesus would have not prayed it. For the Lord would never have to confess or asks forgiveness since He never sinned.

Most importantly is the Lord’s commentary after the example of prayer, “*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”* How often has this principal been overlooked? Jesus shows that God’s forgiveness reflects on how you forgive. If you have an unforgiving spirit toward another, the halls of heaven are closed to you!

***Fasting*** ((Matt. 6:16-18)

“*Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.  But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly”* (Matt. 6:16-18).

The word “fast” is from the Greek word ***νηϚις****,* from ***νη***not, and ***εσθειν*** to eat, hence fast means, a total abstinence from food for a certain time. During this period, they did not abstain from water. This is shown when Jesus fasted for forty days and nights in Matthew 4.

The Jews fasted often. Their history records that they had four annual fasts. The first was in the commemoration of the capture of the holy city Jerusalem (Jer. 52:7). The second was centered on the burning of the temple (Zech. 7:3). Next, was the fast commemorating the death of Gedaliah (Jer. 31:4). And the last was in reference to the attack on Jerusalem (Zech. 8:19).

The Jews had many occasional fasts besides the four mentioned. Yet, for the Pharisees, they fasted twice a week (Lk. 18:12). No doubt parading their fasts for others to see. This is what Jesus condemned.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In Matthew 6:1-18, what three areas of worship does Jesus’ focus?
2. How should we apply these principals today?

***Treasure in Heaven*** (Matt. 6:19-21)

*“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:**For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also”* (Matt. 6:19-21).

The ignorance of man is shown in what he possesses. So often one’s diligent labors are aimed at supplying all things of physical wealth. Whether it be gold, silver, or costly ornaments, all will perish. Hence, the Messiah speaks of laying up treasures in heaven. For all things celestials are eternal.

“*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”* How crucial it is to grasp the meaning of this statement? A person who lusts for physical possessions and earthly fame most often lose their souls. They fight and war for things that are perishable. For those who set their sights on heaven and pleasing God are greatly blessed with peace and grace.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why lay-up treasure in heaven?
2. What treasures should one store up?

***The Lamp of the Body*** (Matt. 6:22, 23)

*“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”* (Matt. 6:22, 23).

This is an illustration of setting one’s affections on the things heavenly. The eye being “single” is from the Greek word ἁπλοῦς. *Vincent’s Word Studies* cites, “*The picture underlying this adjective is that of a piece of cloth or other material, neatly folded* once, *and without a variety of complicated folds. Hence the idea of* simplicity or singleness.” When one gazes and fixes his mind and soul on things holy, his heart will be led in that direction. Yet, if one allows the darkness to take hold, he or she will live in uncertainty, darkness, and despair.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the light of the body?
2. What does Jesus mean that our light can turn to darkness?

***Serving Two Masters*** (Matt. 6:24)

“*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon*” (Matt. 6:24).

Here is the conclusion to the matter at hand. One cannot serve the light and the darkness. One cannot station his eyes on both evil and good. Why? Because one would be serving two masters which is an impossibility.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who are the two masters?
2. Why can’t one serve both?

***Do Not Worry*** (Matt. 6:25-34)

“*Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?  Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?  Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith**?  Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?  (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.**But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof”* (Matt. 6:25-34).

So many people throughout time have lived in worry. This desperate concern of what we wear, or where are next meal will come from, leaves many in despair. The Lord draws our attention to nature itself. Whether it be the birds of the air or the grass of the fields, God provides. And if God supports the simplest of His creation, how much more will God support the pinnacle of His creation?

“*Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?  For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.”* Such thoughts should never enter the believer’s mind. For with such is the worry and anxiousness with those without God (the Gentiles).

“*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”* Two insights are brought forth. First, seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Why? For God supplies for those who recognize and serve Him. And second, take no thought concerning the events that will happen tomorrow for it is beyond one’s control.

**“*S****ufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*” (Αρκετον τη ἡμερα ἡ κακια αυτης). This is a proverb which is expressed in the Talmud, לצרה בשעתה, "sufficient for distress.” It unveils the ignorance of man for worrying about those things he has no control over. For the Christian faith allows us to be concerned about the saving of others in the present. Tomorrow makes no promises nor takes in account that one may not live to see it. That is why Paul proclaimed to the Corinthians, *“behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”* (2 Cor. 6:2).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What things should we not worry about?
2. Things necessary are supplied for the Christian when they do what?

***Judging Others*** (Matt. 7:1-5; Lk. 6:37-42)

*“Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?  Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye”* (Matt. 7:1-5).

*“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:  Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch? The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye”* (Lk. 6:37-42)

In Luke’s gospel, he adds the parable of the blind led into the ditch. Both speak of the hypocrisy so often found among us. This judgmental attitude of condemning a brother while leavened with sin was a common trait of the Pharisees as Jesus expressed in the woe chapter in the gospel of Matthew (Matt. 23). Before one can properly aid another, he or she must remove the beam that blocks their vision and condemns their souls.

Jesus is not enforcing His stand against judging others, but simply aims at the hypocrite who judges. He says in the gospel of John, *“Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgments*” (John 7:29).

Note Paul’s words to the brethren at Corinth, “*For what have I to do to* ***judge*** *them also that are without? do not ye* ***judge*** *them that are within?... Do ye not know that the saints shall* ***judge*** *the world? and if the world shall be* ***judged*** *by you, are ye unworthy to* ***judge*** *the smallest matters?  Know ye not that we shall* ***judge a****ngels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have* ***judgments*** *of things pertaining to this life, set them to* ***judge*** *who are least esteemed in the church*” (1 Cor. 5:12, 6:2-4).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Does “judge not” mean that a Christian should never judge another?
2. When one does judge, what book is to be used?

***Pearl Before Swines*** (Matt. 7:6)

*“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you”* (Matt. 7:6).

As a conclusion to the judgment narrative, Jesus says not to give that which is holy to the dogs or cast your pearls before swine. Evil men with beams in their eyes will not appreciate the loved shared in the gospel. As the Pharisees misinterpreted and judged Christ wrongly, so shall unholy men do to the saints.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the meaning of “*don’t cast your pearls before swine*?”
2. How can one apply this principal to his or her life?

**Ask (**Matt. 7:7-11) (Also spoken in Luke 11:5-13).

***“****Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.  Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?  Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?**If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”*(Matt. 7:7-11).

Here is the true meaning of walking in the light. The godly man seeks and knocks. It is in this forward motion where he finds God. David wrote, “*The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts”* (Psa. 10:4). And Paul proclaimed in his letter to the Hebrews, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”* (Heb. 11:6).

“*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”* This is a clear presentation unveiling God as one willing and able to give good gifts to the faithful. For no doubt, the one giving seeks through faith, and through obedience reveals His trust in God.

**QUESTION:**

1. Does God always give us what we ask for?

***The Golden Rule*** (Matt. 7:12)

“*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets”* (Matt. 7:12).

This is the epilogue, the conclusion to what had been spoken thus far in the sermon on the mount. This is what the prophets preached, believed in, and practiced. The ability to treat one better than himself is a trait not to be taken lightly. The ability to treat other men as you would have them treat you is a rarity in any decade. It is what separates the true Christians from the hypocrites.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the golden rule?
2. How does it different in the way worldly people live?

***The Two Gates*** (Matt. 7:13, 14) (Also presented in Lk. 13:23-30)

“*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it”* (Matt. 7:13, 14).

As there is a golden rule then there are choices. The word “strait” is different than “straight.” Something straight means “not crooked.” Whereas the word “strait” means “narrow.” In the comparison, many will choose to take the broad way and end up lost. Yet the few will find the narrow way which leads to everlasting life.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the two gates?
2. How many will follow the true path to heaven?

***The Tree & Its Fruit*** (Matt. 7:15-23; Luke 6:43-45)

*“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.  Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?  Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.  A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.  Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.  Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity”* (Matt. 7:15-23).

*“For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.  For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.  A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh”* (Lk. 6:43-45).

It is Luke who cites the principle and Matthew proves and expands upon the lesson being taught. With Matthew, he begins the discussion by warning against false teachers who are dressed like sheep but internally they are wolves.

Both writers emphasize that it is by their fruits that men are known. The general teaching is that it is impossible for a good tree to bring forth evil fruit, as well as an evil tree yielding good.

“*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”* Doing the will and professing of one’s goodness are two different things. There are many who honestly believe they are pleasing God through their beliefs and actions, but in reality, they are being insubordinate to the truth. One must never forget that believing in the existence of God, and obeying God are two different things.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is meant that a tree is known by its fruit?
2. Who are the ones who will access to heaven?

***The Wise & Foolish Builders*** (Matt. 7:24-27; Lk. 6:46-49)

“*Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:  And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.  And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it”* (Matt. 7:24-27).

“*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.  But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great”* (Lk. 6:46-49).

The simplicity and truth of this parable is amazing. The underlined clause, “*Therefore whosoever HEARS these sayings of mine, and DOES them*.” The word “obey” is found 223 times in the NIV and 114 times in the KJV.

The concept of the house built upon a firm foundation is the key to understanding the church. In one of the psalms written by Solomon, he exclaims, “*Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain”* (Psa. 127:1).

We in the Lord’s Kingdom believe that the church (singular) was laid upon the foundation of Christ (1 Cor. 3:10, 11). Yet not everyone who proclaims citizenship will see heaven. Our faith must be coupled with activity, sincerity, and endurance!

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How is the wise builder differing from the foolish?
2. The wise building must not listen to the Lord’s words, but also do what?

***The Crowd Amazed*** (Matt. 7:28, 29)

*“And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes*” (Matt. 7:28, 29).

As we continue in the 21st Century, we too are astonished at His doctrine. He taught as “one having authority” because He was the authority. He was the originator of the Law. It was His presence that spoke from the burning bush (Exodus 3:2-29). It was His presence that comforted Hagar in the wilderness (Gen. 16:7-11). And it was Jesus who promised a child to Manoah in Judges 13. Jesus was not silent in the Old Testament, but very much active preparing for His incarnation.

***Jesus Continues the Ministry in Galilee***

***The Centurion’s Slave Healed in Capernaum*** (Matt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10)

*“And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.  And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.  The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.  For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.   When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.  And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.  But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.  And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour”* (Matt. 8:5-13).

“*Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.  And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.  And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.  And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.   Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.  For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.  When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.  And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick”* (Lk. 7:1-10).

In Matthew’s gospel, the centurion speaks to Jesus directly. Whereas, in Luke, the Jewish elders in Capernaum approached Jesus over the dying servant of the centurion. No doubt Luke speaks of the first introduction of the centurion by the elders who were typically the greeters at the gates of the city. In that account, the elders speak of the centurion’s generosity and benevolence towards the Jews. The emphasis is on the love he had for the nation and the building of a synagogue.

Matthew focuses on the centurion’s humility. His faith so exemplified by his actions caused the Lord to marvel, and to say, “*I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel*.” And it is Matthew account that adds, “*And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.  But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who did the centurion send to plead with Jesus on his servant’s behalf?
2. What was a centurion?
3. What did Jesus tell the people about the centurion?

***Jesus Raises from the Dead a Widow’s Son in Nain*** (Lk. 7:11-17)

*And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.  Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.  And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.  And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still.* *And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.  And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother**.  And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.  And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about”* (Lk. 7:11-17).

The city of Nain was in Galilee, in the boundaries of the tribe of Issachar. It was about two miles south of Mount Tabor, and twelve miles from Capernaum. Luke refers to the entourage of followers being made up of the disciples and the people.

When entering the city, the Lord comes across a funeral procession. The corpse is identified as the son of a widow from that city. John Gill comments:

“behold: there was a dead man carried out; of the city; for they, used not to bury in cities, but in places without, and at some distance: the burying places of the Jews were not near, their cities; and they had different ways of carrying them out to be buried, according to their different ages: a child under a month old was carried out in the bosom of a person; if a full month old, in a little coffin, which they carried in their arms; one of a twelve month old was carried in a little coffin on the shoulder; and one of three years old on a bier or bed, and so upwards; and in this manner was this corpse carried out (John Gill, ***Exposition of the Bible****,* The Gospel of Luke).

There are clear accounts of resurrections in both the Old and New Testaments.  In the Old we read of the raising of the widowed Zarephath’s son by Elijah (1 Kings 17:17-24), the son of a Shunammite woman by Elisha (2 Kings 4:18-37), and the man thrown into the grave of Elisha (2 Kings 13:20, 21).

In the gospels four are recorded to have been resurrected by Christ: 1) The son of the widow at Nain (Lk. 7), (2) Jairus’ daughter (Lk. 8:49-56), (3) Lazarus (Jn. 11), and (4) the saints who were raised when Christ died (Matt. 27:52, 53).

There are also two who were raised in the book of Acts. The first was Dorcas, who was resurrected by Peter (Acts 9:36-41). And, secondly, Eutychus was raised by Paul (Acts 20:9, 10). No doubt many others were resurrected who are not recorded in the Holy Bible.

The raising of the widow’s son at Nain was unique. The episode centers around the word “compassion.” Jesus knew this widow, and her son. She had no husband, and no heir to continue his name. Most importantly, she was now in a place of loneliness and despair.

The touching of a dead body was forbidden in the Law (Num. 19:16), but nowhere is it said that it was a defilement to touch the bier. By so doing, He was able to stop the funeral procession and to perform the sacred act of raising the boy.

“*And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.”* Here is a prelude to the resurrection of all the saints. In this act of kindness, the command was specific to but one. However, one day the Lord will ascend from the heavens and command that all the dead rise from their tombs. What power, magnificence, majesty, and glory, we view in this simple act recorded by Luke.

*“And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.  And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.”* The crowd responded with a reverent fear for the person performing the act. Still, they only perceived Him as a great prophet and not as the Messiah. The reference made to “*God visiting his people*” would correlate with the prophecy made by Moses, “*The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken”* (Deut. 34:10).

“*And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.”* The miracles performed by Christ were undeniable and substantiated by many. They were not performed in a giant tent with a television crew. There was no interview before healing like many faith healers do today. What the people viewed was real, legitimate, and astonishing. Truth is revealed in action and echoed through the lips of the observers.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who did Jesus raise from the dead in Capernaum?
2. What two vocal proclamations were made about Jesus about the miracle?

***Jesus Speaks of John the Baptist*** (Matt. 11:2-19; Lk. 7:18-35)

“*Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.  And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?  But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.  But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.  For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.  And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children”* (Matt. 11:2-19).

*“And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things. And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?  And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! But wisdom is justified of all her children”* (Lk. 7:18-35).

What motivated John to send two of his disciples to Jesus to question Him over His Messiahship? The sending of two was for the purpose of setting up the truth for a minimum of two would be needed to substantiate (Deut. 19:15). There are two actions taken by Jesus to comfort John. First, He places proof within the minds of the two witnesses as they view Jesus’ miraculous healings. And two, a beatitude is given to those who have faith and are not offended by Him.

After the departure of the two witnesses, the Lord addresses the multitude. Jesus unveils three facts concerning John. First, the Lord speaks of the people’s **PERSPECTIVE** of John. They did not find this remarkable man dressed in the finest of robes or eating the daintiest of foods. He wore camel skins and feasted on wild honey and locusts.

Second, John was a **PROPHET** prophesied by Malachi (Mal. 3:1). The great prophet who would herald in the Messiah.

And third, the Lord speaks of John’s **POSITION**. Though there would be no man born of women who would be greater than John, excluding the Lord, he would not be a subject in the new kingdom that would be established on Pentecost. For all his greatness, the least in the kingdom would be greater than he!

In Luke 7:29-35, Jesus condemns the actions of the Pharisees and lawyers for their refusal to listen to John nor be baptized by him. Hence, Jesus personifies the generation as ones who refused to grasp what was so easily accepted by others, which is also found in Matthew 11:16-19.

“*For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! But wisdom is justified of all her children.”* This portion of the Lord’s discourse has been used incorrectly by some. They try to justify social drinking assuming, by this statement, that Jesus partook of alcohol. Howbeit, the Lord did not pursue sensual pleasures, but addresses false accusations and conclusions drawn by unbelievers concerning both John and Him. The Lord, who so openly in His word, unveils the sins brought forth from the use of alcohol, would not engage in such acts (Gen. 19:32-35; Prov. 20:1; Prov. 31:4).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question did John the Baptist want answered sending two of his disciples to Christ?
2. What did Jesus say about John the Baptist?
3. What is the meaning of “*he that is least in the kingdom is greater than he*!”

***Jesus First Anointing*** (Lk. 7:36-50)

*“And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.  And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment**.  Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.  And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.  There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.  And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.  And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.  Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace”* (Lk. 7:36-50).

According to Luke 7:10, the Pharisees name was Simon. The concept of sitting down to a meal was foreign to the Jews. They preferred reclining. In this sequence of events, a woman with an alabaster box of ointment heard of Jesus dining at Simon’s house and entered unannounced. As she opened the box and began to anoint the Messiah, her tears dropped on the Lord’s feet prompting her to wipe them with her hair.

“*Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.”* Simon judged the Lord by the same rules he enforced. A Pharisee would never let such a sinful person enter his abode nor act in such manner. He inferred that the Lord was not a prophet, and questioned internally not only His authority but His abilities.

“*And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.  There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.  And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.”* The Lord orated a simple parable to open the eyes of the Pharisee. In the parable, one of the debtors owed ten times more than the other, which brought forth the question to Simon, “*Which of them will love him most*?” Simon answers correctly soliciting a positive response from Jesus.

“*And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.  Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”* The Lord fastened His eyes on the woman, never once turning to Simon, and began to illustrate through His words the application of the parable. The woman before Him was indeed a sinner seeking forgiveness. She was the debtor with the large debt. Whereas Simon considered himself to be less of a sinner. The woman’s treatment was one of remorse, repentance, and reconciliation to the only person who could grant it. Hence, the Pharisee did not show remorse, respect, nor acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where was Jesus when he was anointed by the sinful woman?
2. What parable did Jesus teach, and what lesson was meant to be learned by it?

***Jesus Travels Throughout Galilee*** (Lk. 8:1-3)

*“And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance*.  (Lk. 8:1-3).

In these three verses are great details about these women of Galilee. Mary Magdalene, so called because she came from the Magdula. The same place where Jesus retired to after the feeding of the four thousand (Matt. 15:39). It was on the coasts of Galilee south of Capernaum. She is defined in this passage as one of several women who were inflicted with infirmities caused by demon possession. In Mary’s case, Jesus cast out seven demons.

***Jesus Called Beelzebub in Capernaum* (**Matt. 12:22-32) (Mark 3:20-27; Luke 11:14-23)

“*Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?  And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad”* (Matt. 12:22-30).

*“And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.  And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.  And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house*” (Mark 3:20-27).

*“And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.  But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.  If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.  But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth* (Lk. 11:14-23).

In Matthew’s account it is the Pharisees that call Jesus Beelzebub. In Mark’s gospel, the scribes, who came down from Jerusalem, no doubt by the instructions of the Pharisees, label the Lord as the prince of the devils. And in Luke’s account, some of the people who witnessed the miracle claimed that the Lord casteth out devils through Beelzebub.

The Lord’s defense and rebuke in all three gospels centers on the impossibility. “Satan will not cast out Satan.” He will not divide his house, nor will God! For a divided house will fall.

He then turns to their own religious followers. “*And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.”* The validity of His declaration points to their own leaders who believed they could cast out demons. So, if it be true then by what authority do, they perform such things?

“*But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.”* Jesus personifies Himself as the ruling Prince who had come to conquer declaring that all His works are from the finger of God. This fact brings forth the reality of the Kingdom was soon going to be built. Thus, He has come to conquer, and to scatter the unbelievers.

***Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit*** (Matt. 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-30)

*“Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.  And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come”* (Matt. 5:31, 32).

“*Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit”* (Mark 3:28-30).

First, we begin by stating what blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is not. It isn’t taking God’s name in vain. Though it is a very damnable sin, it is not what is being addressed in the context. (Exodus 20:7; Deut. 5:11).

Next, it is not just simply rejecting Jesus. This was the constant problem Jesus ran into with the Pharisees and their followers. Once again, to reject the Lord bears serious consequences for the unrepented.

This passage found in Matthew and Mark’s gospels centers on the Holy Spirit. The answer rests in the blasphemy just committed against Christ calling Him the *prince of the devils*. In the Old Testament their fathers continued to blasphemy God. This did not preempt the Lord in sending His Son to save sinners. Now Jesus stands before them offering salvation to the people, and they continue to refuse and blasphemy against Him.

Only one more attempt will be sent from the Son to save the lost, the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:6, 26, 15:26, 16:7). If they reject the salvation spoken through the apostles by the Holy Spirit nothing more will be sent nor offered. And to die in this state during this period would be indeed blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Name some things that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not?
2. What is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

***A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit*** (Matt. 12:33-37)

***“****Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.  O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned”* (Matt. 12:33-37).

The parabolic message of the good tree aims at the words being blasted at the Messiah. The Pharisees questioned His authority, and yet claimed to be holy. They are the “*generation of vipers*” who constantly badgered the Messiah. They were indeed corrupt in the heart, and Jesus makes it clear that they will answer for every idle word spoken come judgement day.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Out of the abundance of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the mouth speaketh.
2. What condemns a man?

***The Sign of Jonah*** (Matt. 12:38-42; Lk. 11:29-32)

*“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.  But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 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. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here*” (Matt. 11:38-42).

“*And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here*” (Lk. 11:29-32).

In Matthew and Luke’s account, the sign of Jonah was used to rebuke the Pharisees. They desired a sign. Howbeit before their eyes they had viewed many undeniable truths concerning His Messiahship. The Lord calls them an “evil and adulterous” generation. Thus, He offers them a sign, a prediction, and proof of His identity. As Jonah was in the belly of the large fish, so shall Christ be in the belly of the earth for three days.

With that sign comes two rebukes. First, the queen of the south, who traveled a great distance to hear the wisdom of Solomon, shows their ignorance for not hearing one greater than Solomon (1 King 10:1-13). And second, the men of Nineveh, who responded to the preaching of Jonah would condemn them. For one greater than Jonah was standing before them.

***Temporary Reform*** (Matt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-28)

*“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.  Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation”* (Matt. 12:43-45).

*“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and* *they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first*” (Lk. 11:24-28).

The Lord uses the illustration of a demon possessing a person. As it leaves the person and travels through a desert, he is drawn back to the once possessed man. Yet this time, the man has done nothing to prepare himself to ward off the evil spirit. In fact, he had made it more accommodating. So, the evil spirit invites seven more spirits to occupy the person. Thus, the last state is worse than the first. The image portrays the constant rejection of the Hebrews to God.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the interpretation of the demon possessed man?
2. How could it be applied today?

***Who Are My Brothers?*** (Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Lk. 8:19-21)

“*While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.  Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.  But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?  And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!  For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*” (Matt. 12:46-50).

*“There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.  And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?  And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!  For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother”* (Mark 3:31-35).

“*Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.  And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it*” (Lk. 8:19-21).

The three synoptic gospels record the episode with the Lord’s mother requesting to see her son. Because of being surrounded by such a large crowd, Mary and her sons could not progress any further than the door. Being told of the request, Jesus responds with a startling question, “*Who is my mother, or my brethren*?” This was not stated as a rejection of His mother, but to teach a deep theological point concerning the true followers. Mark records, “*And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!  For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus’ refuse to see his mother and brethren?
2. Who are the Lord’s brethren?

***The Lamp of the Body*** (Lk. 11:33-36) (Also spoken by Jesus in Matt. 6:22, 23)

*“No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.  The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.  Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.  If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light”* (Lk. 11:33-36).

The concept of light representing Christ is often used in the New Testament (Matt. 4:16, 5:14-16; 6:22, 23; Lk. 1:79; Jn. 1:4-9; Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5; 1 Jn. 1:5-7). For man, the eye is the vessel from which light passes into the mind. If the eye is not clear difficulties in vision are manifested. The Lord is no doubt speaking figuratively aiming more at the spiritual application. Hence, it behooves a man to walk in the light and not in darkness.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the lamp of the body?
2. What is the spiritual implication of this parable?

***Six Woes*** (Luke 11:37-54)

“*And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.  And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.  And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.  Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you. But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.* *Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them. Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also. And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.**Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.  Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.  Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:  That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;  From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.  Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.  And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something”* (Lk. 11:37-54).

Note the six woes: (1) “*But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”* (2) *Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.*(3) *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.* (4) *Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.* (5) *Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.*(6) *Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.*

The fourth, fifth, and sixth woes were aimed at the lawyers proclaiming that Jesus had offended them also. This led to His personal condemnation of the lawyers being corrupt in their dealings by laying heavy burdens on others.

Take these woes alongside of Matthew twenty-three, and you have an accurate definition of the Pharisaic mentality. They were fanatics about the ceremonial washings and requirements condemning all for the least indiscretion. In this episode, they had condemned the Lord Himself for not washing before a meal.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the six woes in Luke 11?
2. What chapter in Matthew is called the “woe” chapter?

***Parables of the Kingdom Spoken Beside the Sea of Galilee***

***The Sower*** (Matt. 13:1-9; Mark 4:1-9; Lk. 8:4-15)

*“The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.  And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.  And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;  And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.  And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear*” (Matt. 13:1-9).

“*And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.   And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.   And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.   And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.   And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.  And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear”* (Mark 4:1-9).

*“And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:  A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.  And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.  And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.  And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear”* (Lk. 8:4-8)

In Matthew’s account, Jesus begins this parable after coming out of Peter’s house. Peter and Mark both affirm that he entered a ship by the seaside to deliver the message. All synoptic gospels state that a great multitude had gathered.

The simplicity of the parable focuses on a Sower sowing seed. Some fell on the wayside devoured by the fowls. Others fell on stony ground where they were not properly grounded, and the scourging sun destroyed them. And some fell on thorny ground where they were devoured and choked by the weeds. Lastly, some fell on good ground where they flourished.

The parable dealt specifically with the growth of the coming kingdom pointing to those who would flourish contrasted with those who would fail. For the First Century Jew, who were knowledgeable in farming, the parable would be easily comprehended.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Explain the parable of the Sower?
2. Does the spiritual message of the parable hold true today?

***The Purpose of the Parables*** (Matt. 13:10-17; Mark 4:10-20; Lk. 8:9-15)

*“And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?   He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.  For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.  Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.  And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.  But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.  For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them” (Matt. 13:10-17).*

*“And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.   And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.  And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?  The sower soweth the word.  And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.  And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;  And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.  And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.  And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred”* (Mark 4:10-20).

“*And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?  And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.  Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.  Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.   They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.   And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.  But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience”* (Lk. 8:9-15).

After orating the parable of the Sower, the disciples asked specifically the meaning of the parable. In Matthew’s gospel, they ask why the Lord spoke in parables. He tells them that He shared the mysteries of the kingdom privately but directly. Yet for others He spoke in parables “*that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand*.” This implied that their rejection, after seeing His miracles, and hearing His words, they refused to accept the obvious.

“*But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.  For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them”* (Matt. 13:16, 17). It is Matthew who records the beatitude. These privileged men were allowed to walk with God. What prophet of old would not have desired to do such? However, it was their eyes beholding the miracles performed. And it was their ears which were blessed by the words that proceeded from the mouth of the Messiah.

**QUESTION:**

1. What was the purpose of parables?

***The Parable of the Sower Explained*** (Matt. 13:18-23; Mark 4:13-20)

*“Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.  When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.  But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.  He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.   But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty*” (Matt. 13:18-23).

“*And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?   The sower soweth the word.   And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.  And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.  And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred”* (Mark 4:13-20).

“*Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.  Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.  They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.  And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience”* (Lk. 8:11-15).

The synoptic gospels address the four hearts in which the word of God is planted. For the seed that falls on the wayside is immediately taken away by Satan. For the other two (Stony ground and thorny ground), it is man’s weaknesses that allow the word to be destroyed. For the stony heart, it sinks into sin when persecution arises. And for those with the thorny heart, it is the cares and riches of this world that drive them from the truth.

When the word falls on the good heart, the person not only hears and accepts, but brings forth fruit. Matthew and Mark bring forth numeric value of their works. Whereas Luke states that the recipient “*brings forth fruit with patienc*e.”

***The Weeds*** (Matt. 13:24-30)

***“****Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which 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 blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.  So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?  He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?   But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.  Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn”* (Matt. 13:24-30).

Matthew is the only gospel writer that includes this parable concerning the kingdom. The picture is once again a man sowing the good seed in the field. Yet while those who were to keep watch slept, the enemy came and sowed tares in with the good seed. Once the servants realized this, they came and informed their master what had taken place. The master simply told them to let them both grow together, and in the time of harvest, they will be plucked up. At the time, the tares will be gathered and burned, and the wheat will be stored in the master’s barn.

**QUESTION:**

1. Who is the only gospel writer that includes the Parable of the Weeds?

***Parable of the Weeds Explained*** (Matt. 13:36-43)

*“Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.  He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.  As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear”* (Matt. 13:36-43).

After leaving the multitude, Jesus once again entered Peter’s house. The disciple who followed Him came and asked what was the meaning of the parable of the tares? Within this parable is the mission and outcome of the righteous and wicked. He declares Himself to be the Sower of good seed. The sphere upon which the seed is cast is the whole world. The good seed represent the righteous and the bad seed represents what is sown by the Satan. The great harvest is that final judgment day when the righteous will be lifted up to Christ and the wicked will be gathered and cast into the lake of fire where there will “wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

**QUESTION:**

1. Explain the interpretation of the Parable of the Weeds.

***The Lamp*** (Mark 4:21-25; Lk. 8:16-18)

“*And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?  For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.* *And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.  For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath*” (Mark 4:21-25).

*“No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.* *For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have”* (Lk. 8:16-18).

The usage of light and darkness being used metaphorically is found throughout the Old and New Testaments. The nature of light is to reveal. The furtherance of the gospel was to be a light that would travel the globe in the hearts and minds of the righteous. However, the Lord warns that light can be extinguished by darkness. The is the waring of being cautious of what you HEAR!

*And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.  For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.*” And, “*For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.”* Take special note concerning the phrases, “what you hear,” and “how ye hear.” Both imply caution to the hearer enhancing a warning against apostasy.

**QUESTION:**

1. What caution is given to the hearer in this parable of light?

***The Growing Seed*** (Mark 4:26-29)

*“And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come*” (Mark 4:26-29).

How often is this parable overlooked? In its simplicity is also found a deep theological doctrine. It centers on the mystery of the kingdom and her growth. This is the true mystery of how a kingdom so despised by many will be able to flourish in a world of sin. It will start small and grow until the day that the harvest will come. Jesus said, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”* (Matt. 24:35). Under God’s providential care, the church will remain until the Lord comes again!

**QUESTION:**

1. How does the Growing Seed Parable represent the Kingdom?

***The Mustard Seed*** (Matt. 13:31, 32; Mark 4:30-32) (Also spoken in John 13:18, 19)

*“Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.* (Matt. 13:31-33).

“*And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?  It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:  But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it”* (Mark 4:30-32).

Continuing with the kingdom parables, the Lord’s cites the mustard seed parable representing once again the growth of His coming kingdom. He chooses to compare the church like a tiny mustard seed. This is hard with our American mentality to comprehend this parable for the seeds planted on our soil does not grow very large and is used basically as an herb. Howbeit, in Palestine, the mustard seed grows to be a large tree primarily because of the warm conditions.

***The Yeast*** (Matt. 13:33) (Also presented in John 13:20, 21)

“*Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened”* (Matt. 13:33).

Continuing with the growth principles of the church, the Lord likens the kingdom to leaven applied to meal. The outcome would be the rising of the bread provoked by the leaven.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How is the kingdom like a Mustard Seed and Yeast?
2. Is it possible for the church to have this growth in our modern age?

***The Hidden Treasure*** (Matt. 13:44)

“*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field”* (Matt. 13:44).

As the yeast pointed to the enhancement of the coming Kingdom, the hidden treasure and the pearl parable underlines the worth of the Church. In the parable of the “Hidden Treasure” the value is seen in the man selling all that he had to purchase the field.

***The Pearl*** (Matt. 13:45, 46)

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it*” (Matt. 13:45, 46).

Similar to the last parable, the merchant man went out to seek for something specific. When he had found the pearl of great price, he sold all that he had and bought it. The hidden treasure and the great pearl unveil the value of a plot of land in heaven.

The contrast between the last two parables is that in the first the man came across the treasure by accident by simply digging in a field. Whereas, in the parable of the “Great Pearl” the seeker knew exactly what he was searching for and took the value to be worth more than all his physical possessions.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How is the Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl similar?
2. What is the contrast between the two parables?

***The Net*** (Matt. 13:47-50)

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

The parable of the Net shows the outreach of the Kingdom, and the separation of the wicked from the righteous. The Lord then includes a similar scene concerning the final judgment day and the damnation and suffering of the wicked.

**QUESTION:**

1. What does the Parable of the Net symbolize?

***New & Old Treasures*** (Matt. 13:51, 52)

“*Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.  Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old”* (Matt. 13:51, 52).

The scribes in this parable are the disciples. This is presented after an affirmation of their understanding of the parables. The point being stressed is the disciples’ treasures are those things learned and seen, both old and new, which will aid them in their present and future duties as heralds of the good news.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In Matthew 13 and Mark 4, how many parables of the Kingdom are listed? Nine
2. What areas of the Kingdom are presented in these passages? The hearts acceptance or unacceptance, the illuminating presence, the growth, the worth, and the reach of the Kingdom.

***Parables as Fulfilment of Prophesy*** (Matt. 13:34, 35; Mark 4:33, 34)

*“All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world”* (Matt. 13:34, 35).

“*And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.  But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples”* (Mark 4:33, 34).

Matthews quotes the passage from Psalms 78:2, 3. “*And without a parable*” does not imply that this was the only methodology used by Christ to orate His message. It simply meant at this time and moment He chose to speak in parables. For on many occasions during His ministry, Jesus spoke directly and decisively. As the Master Teacher, He knew what to say, how to say it, and when to withhold it.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where is the prophecy found where it is stated that the Messiah would only teach in parables?
2. Can you think of times during the Lord’s ministry where He withheld His tongue in teaching?

***The Galilean Miracles***

***The Cost of Following Jesus*** (Matt. 8:18-22; Lk. 9:57-62)

*“Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.   And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.  And Jesus saith unto him,* *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.  And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.  But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead”* (Matt. 8:18-22).

*“And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.  And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.  And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.  Jesus said unto him,* *Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.  And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.  And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God*” (Lk. 9:57-62).

In this narrative, Matthew cites only two men who approach Jesus, the one a scribe, and the other a disciple. Luke includes a third person wanting to depart from Him for a while so that he may say farewell to his family. And in Matthew’s account the second address to the Lord implies that the disciple spoke first, but in Luke’s account, the conversation with the second began by the Lord asking the person to follow Him.

For the scribe stating that he would follow Jesus anywhere was met with a valuable reality check. Jesus said, “*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”* All the pleasurable things would be abandoned if one was to follow Jesus. He had no earthly dwelling, nor a warm bed to sleep in at night.

The second conversation was between Christ and a disciple. His request was simply to be given time to go bury his father. It was a seemingly admirable and proper plea that receives a surprising answer. Jesus says, “*Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.”* This did not mean that Jesus was unsympathetic, nor pointing to some dismissal of the funeral rites so cherished by the Jews, but an appeal to the obligation of being a disciple. The disciple’s first and foremost mission was to preach the word.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What three excuses are given for not following Jesus?
2. What is the theological implications of discipleship found in this passage?

***Jesus Calms the Storm on Sea of Galilee*** (Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25)

“*And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.   And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.  And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.  And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.  But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!”* (Matt. 8:23-27).

*“And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.  And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.  And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.  And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?   And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.  And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?  And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”* (Mark 4:35-41).

“*Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.  But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.  And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.  And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him*” (Lk. 8:21-25).

All three of the synoptic gospels tell this amazing event. Jesus and His apostles had entered a ship on the Sea of Tiberius. Jesus wearies and tired was resting in the hinder part of the ship on a pillow. He did not stir until He was awakened by the frantic apostles who felt fearful of the storm believing they were going to perish.

Two rebukes take place from the risen Christ. First, the Lord rebukes the wind which produces a great calm. Second, He rebukes the apostles for their fear, and their lack of faith.

“*And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.*” The statement being recorded by Matthew and Luke speak volumes. Bit by Bit they were witnessing astonishing things that no other man had ever seen. Though they believed Him to be the Messiah, their frailties and emotions often hindered them.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why were the apostles amazed at the stilling of the storm?
2. Why did Jesus question their faith?

***Jesus Heals Two Possessed with Demons in Gerasa*** (Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-

39)

“*And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.  And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts”* (Matt. 8:28-34).

*“And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.  And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,  Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.  For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.  And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel”* (Mark 5:1-20).

*“And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.  And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him”* (Lk. 8:26-39).

Mark and Luke state that there was merely one man who was possessed confronting the Lord. Matthew records two men. No doubt, Mark and Luke focus on the one communicating. Yet, this testimony is written in the Holy scriptures first to unveil that the demons knew who Jesus was, even the populace questioned His Messiahship. And, second to note the Lord’s position and authority.

The demons were called “Legion.” This indicated that a multitude of demons had possessed the two men. Their request to enter the swine was intended to give them the chance to continue their torment on others. Whatever their intent, Jesus final condemnation was the drowning of the swine in the sea.

And what was the response of the villagers when the two keepers of the swine reported the event? They feared and requested Jesus to leave their shores. Probably two thoughts emerge, first, the loss of the swine no doubt was costly to the villagers. And two, their reactions was guided by an unhealthy fear.

One of the possessed men followed Jesus to the ship and asked to join His company. Jesus tells Him to go back to his home and family and reveal the great healing that took place.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Is there a contradiction in Luke and Mark’s account of one being possessed, whereas Matthew states that there were two?
2. What was the name of the demon that possessed the man?
3. Why did the villagers get upset at Jesus in the performance of this miracle?

***Jesus Raises a Dead Girl in Capernaum*** (Matt. 9:18, 19; Mark 5:21-24; Lk. 8:40-42)

*“While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.  And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples*” (Matt. 9:18, 19).

*“And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.  And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.  And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him*” (Mark 5:21-24).

“*And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him. And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him*” (Lk. 8:40-42).

As Jesus arrived on the shores of Capernaum, Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, worshiping Jesus and pleading with Him to come aid his daughter. Mark and Luke record that she was near death, whereas Matthew states she was deceased.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What details are given by Luke and not by Matthew and Mark?
2. Who was Jairus?

***Jesus Heals a Sick Woman*** (Matt. 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Lk. 8:43-48)

“*And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.  But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour*” (Matt. 9:20-22).

“*And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.  For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.  And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.  And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?  And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?  And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.  But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague*” (Mark 5:25-34).

“*And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.  And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.  And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace*” (Lk. 8:43-48).

The synoptic gospels point to this amazing healing in Capernaum. While our Lord was proceeding to the house of Jairus, many people walked with Him. One woman inflicted with a blood disease touched the hem of His robe. Jesus felt some of His power drawn into the woman that immediately healed her. As Jesus turned to see who had touched Him, she fell before Him in fear believing she was going to be rebuked. Instead, she found the Lord comforting her, and telling her to go in peace because her faith had made her whole.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the woman with the issue of blood do to get healed?
2. How long had the woman have the ailment?
3. What is the ailment that she suffered? What is an “issue of blood?”

***Jesus Raises Jairus’ Daughter*** (Matt. 9:23-26; Mark 5:35-43; Lk. 8:49-56)

*“And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.  But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.  And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land”* (Matt. 9:23-26).

“*While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?  As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.   And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.  And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.  And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.   And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.  And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.  And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.  And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat”* (Mark 5:35-43).

“*While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.   But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.  And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.  And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.  And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.  And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.  And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done”* (Lk. 8:49-56).

The raising of Jairus’ daughter is merely a short paragraph in Matthew’s gospel. It is Mark that lends the most attention to the story. Jesus’ proclamation that the maiden who was now dead was merely sleeping prompted the reaction of the crowd scorning and laughing at Him. God never has enjoyed or favored His creation laughing at Him as we note from Abraham’s wife laughing at the Almighty when she was told she was going to mother a child at ninety.

As three of the Lord’s disciples and the parents of the young girl watched, Jesus embraced the young maiden’s hand commanding her to arise. As she arose, the Lord asked food to be given to her, and then told those present not to tell others of the miracle. Concerning the parents, Luke records that the parents were “astonished.”

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was Jairus?
2. Which apostles followed Jesus to Jairus’ home?
3. Why did the people laugh at Jesus?

***Jesus Heals Two Blind Men*** (Matt. 9:27-31)

“*And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.  And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.  Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.  And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.  But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country”* (Matt. 9:27-31).

This would not be the first, nor the last time, the sick and maimed would cry out for Jesus. In this healing two blind men are viewed following the crowd behind Jesus crying out for mercy. The sudden stop and questioning by the Messiah must have been exhilarating for the two. Jesus asked but one question, “*Do you believe that I am able to do this*?” Their affirmation led the Lord to touch their eyes and give back their vision.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What one question did Jesus asks the blind men?
2. What did Jesus charge the two healed men not to do?
3. What did the two healed men do?

***Jesus Heals a Mute*** (Matt. 9:32-34)

“*As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.  And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.  But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils”* (Matt. 9:32-34).

The healing of a must who was possessed by the devil caused the multitude to marvel. Their response, “It was never so seen in Israel” infuriated the Pharisees. They respond by claiming that the Lord was merely able to do this through the powers of the prince of the devils. Later the name Beelzebub would be labeled as the prince of the devils (Matt. 10:25, 12:24; Lk. 11:15-18).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the dumb man’s infirmity caused by?

***Jesus is Rejected on the Sabbath in Nazareth*** (Matt. 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-6)

*“And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.   And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?  Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?   And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?   And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.  And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief”* (Matt. 13:53-58).

“*And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.   And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?  Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.  But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.  And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.  And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching””* (Mark 6:1-6).

This rejection in Nazareth was based upon the people’s perception of knowing the family of Jesus. One must remember that the Lord performed no miracles until the age of thirty when he changed the water into wine at Cana. Nazareth would have been a mere six miles away. Yet because the miracle was kept silent, the citizens of Nazareth would have been unaware of His abilities, and knowledgeable of those things being circulated concerning his miraculous powers.

Jesus marveled at their unbelief for the instructions in the synagogue proved a man who was wise, and one who had miraculous powers. Though it did not stop Him from healing a few sick folks and traveling to nearby cities preaching His doctrine.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why was Jesus rejected at Nazareth?
2. Who were the named siblings of Jesus?
3. What few miracles did Jesus perform in that area?

***The Limited Commission***

***The Laborers are Few*** (Matt. 9:35-38; Mark 6:6)

*“And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and 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 on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.   Then saith he unto his disciples**, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest”* (Matt. 9:35-38).

“*And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching”* (Mark 6:6).

After leaving Nazareth, Jesus was teaching and healing souls in the surrounding villages. Two main thoughts are stated. First, the Lord was moved with compassion toward the people because “they fainted.” The Greek word points to weariness and fatigue. Not from the lack of nourishment, which some may suppose, but from a lack of direction from the Jewish leaders. He proclaimed, “*And* *were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd*.”

Second, Jesus exclaimed, “*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”* The fields of grain ripe for harvest is worthless without the laborers to work the fields. And these disciples would be the first laborers recruiting many more to preach Jesus.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus marvel at the villagers?
2. What Jesus say about the laborers and the harvest?

***The Twelve are Called at Capernaum*** (Matt. 10:1-4; Mark 6:7)

*And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.  Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;  Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him”* (Matt. 10:1-4).

*“And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits*” (Mark 6:7).

The appointing of these twelve apostles was their recruitment as the first laborers of the coming kingdom. Each one, including Judas, was given power to heal the sick and cast out demons. Sadly, the spiritual demon which Judas’s bore would be more powerful in his mind than the God given ability to perform the miraculous.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What powers did Jesus give the twelve?
2. Can you name the twelve apostles?

***The Apostles Instructed*** (Matt. 10:5-15; Mark 6:8-11; Luke 9:3-5)

*“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.  Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it.  And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.  And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.  Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city”* (Matt. 10:5-15).

*“And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.  And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.  And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city”* (Mark 6:8-11).

“*And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.  And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.  And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them”* (Lk. 9:3-5).

The basic instructions in the limited commission are recorded in the three synoptic gospels. It is Matthew who records a more detailed account.

“*And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it.  And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.  And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet”* (Matt. 10:11-14). This special note of “enquiring who is worthy” is not what many would interpret. In this passage, the Lord is telling them to seek out those who are willing to open up their homes and hearts in their travels. Those willing to feed them and give them a warm bed as they go about preaching the gospel.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Names the specific charges Jesus gave His apostles.
2. When were the apostles to shake off the dust from the shoes, and what was the significance of this act?

***The Charge*** (Matt. 10:16-33) (Same insight given in Luke 12:1-12)

*“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.  But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;  And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.  And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.  And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.  But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.  It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household*? *Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.  What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.  But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.  Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.  But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven*” ((Matt. 10:16-33).

After the instructions comes the charge and warning. It is pertinent for them to understand with the preaching of the gospel comes the persecution which follows. Not everyone will accept the message. For as they will engage in poor treatment of the Messiah, they also will suffer like punishments. Yet they are told to not be discouraged but pass from city to city heralding out the message of truth. For the warning is given that if they do not confess His holy name before men, neither will Jesus confess their names before God the Father.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the meaning of being “wise as serpents, but harmless as doves?”
2. Why do you think persecution follows the preaching of the gospel?

***Conflict & Sacrifice*** (Matt. 10:34-38) (Lk. 12:49-53)

*“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.  For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.   And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.  He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.  And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me”* (Matt. 10:34-38).

*“I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!  Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law*” (Lk. 12:49-53).

Both Matthew and Luke cite the Lord promoting the reality that the gospel of peace will divide families and friends. Pay close attention to the Lord’s proclamation in Luke’s gospel, “*I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!”*This baptism is not of water for that had already been accomplished. And not of the Spirit, but of the suffering He was going to have to endure.

**QUESTION:**

1. Why does the gospel divide families?

***Whoever Loses His Life Will Find It*** (Matt. 10:39) (Lk. 9:32)

“*He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it*” (Matt. 10:39).

“*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it”* (Lk. 9:32).

The statement is made after advocating one to picking up one’s cross and follow Christ. The man finding his life is the one that seeks to hang onto life in this present world. Whereas the one who loses his life speaks of the man who is willing to sacrifice his life for the cause of Christ.

**QUESTION:**

1. What is meant by “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it?”

***The Reception of the Righteous*** (Matt. 10:40-42)

“*He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.   He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.   And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward”* (Matt. 10:40-42).

This reception speaks of degrees. Those who opened their hearts to the apostles, prophets, or to righteous men will be rewarded. And the simplest deed, like given a traveling Christian a drink, shall also receive a righteous reward.

**QUESTION:**

1. Reception speaks of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

***The Disciples Sent Out*** (Matt. 11:1; Mark 6:12, 13; Luke 9:6)

*“And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities”* (Matt. 11:1).

*“And they went out, and preached that men should repent.  And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them”* (Mark 6:12-13).

*“And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where*” (Lk. 9:6).

In this limited commission, the everywhere is defined as the area of Palestine, and to the Jews only. The Samaritans and gentiles were excluded.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the apostles who were sent out preach?
2. What miracles did they perform?

***The Death of John the Baptist at Machaerus*** (Matt. 14:3-12; Mark 6:17-29; Lk. 9:9)

*“For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.  For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.  And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.  But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.   Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.  And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.  And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.   And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.  And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.  And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus”* (Matt. 14:3-12).

*“For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.  For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.   Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.  And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.  And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.   And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.  And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.  And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.  And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,   And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.  And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb”* (Mark. 6:17-29).

*“And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him*” (Lk. 9:9).

This sad gospel story is told in detail in Matthew and Mark’s gospels. In Luke, he pens but a short sentence of the incident. This horrid ending of the greatest of the prophets is haunting but inspiring. John never yielded from the truth. His proclamation of the unlawful marriage of Herod and Herodias should serve as an example of the willingness to lay down one’s life for the truth.

At any time, John could had backed off his strong opposition to the marriage. He could had just remained silent. Howbeit, truth must not be silenced. And the consequences of preaching the truth can at times lead one’s life being forfeited.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why was John executed?
2. How was John executed?

***Herod Wonders About Christ in Perea*** (Matt. 14:1, 2; Mark 6:14-16; Luke 9:7, 8)

*“At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him” (*Matt. 14:1, 2).

*“And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.  Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.  But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead*” (Mark 6:14-16).

*“Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead; And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again”* (Lk. 9:7, 8).

A man’s conscience can often haunt him. As Jesus was traveling about performing miracles and preaching the gospel, His fame was echoed into the ears of Herod. The rumors that circulated defined Jesus as someone who had risen from the dead. Some said He was Elijah, and others proclaimed that He was one of the great prophets who had risen. And then there were some who said that Jesus was the resurrected spirit of John.

To the old scoundrel Herod, he believed that John had come back from the dead to avenge his death. One source offers insight on a Roman holiday aimed at appeasing the spirits, “*The Lemuria took place on three different days in May. On the ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth of that month, Roman householders gave offerings to their deceased ancestors to make sure their ancestors didn’t haunt them. The great poet Ovid chronicled Roman festivals in his "*[*Fasti*](http://www.theoi.com/Text/OvidFasti5.html)." In his section on the month of May, he discussed the Lemuria” ([Lemuria the Ancient Roman Day of the Dead (thoughtco.com)](https://www.thoughtco.com/lemuria-ancient-roman-day-of-dead-117915).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who did Herod believe Christ to be?
2. What does this say about Herod’s conscience?

**THIRD YEAR OF JESUS MINISTRY**

**(THIRD PASSOVER)**

***The Apostles Return*** (Mark 6:30)

*“And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught”* (Mark 6:30).

In this limited commission, the apostles return with many stories. None of the gospels record how many houses they entered, or how many were accepting the truth. Concerning what they had done speaks of the miracles performed. The focus on what was taught to others would be centered on a unified doctrine given to them by Jesus.

**QUESTION:**

1. What two things did the apostles reveal to Jesus when they returned?
2. Was Judas able to perform miracles?

***Withdraw By Boat to a Solitary Place & Crowd Follows*** (South of Bethsaida) (Matt. 14:13; Mark 6:31, 32; Lk. 9:10, 11; Jn. 6:1)

“*When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities”* (Matt. 14:13).

“*And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.”* (Mark 6:31, 32).

“*And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.  And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing”* (Lk. 9:10, 11).

*“After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased*” (Jn. 6:1, 2).

All four gospels record this withdrawal of Jesus to south of Bethsaida. It is Luke, however, who offers more details. The Lord takes His disciples privately to this desert place. Most likely for rest, and to focus on the success of their ministries. The people noticing His departure, followed Him. He did not turn them away, but taught them, and healed those who were sick.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is another name for the sea of Galilee?
2. Where did Jesus take His disciples?

***Jesus Teaches & Heals the People*** (On a hill, Jn. 6:3, near Passover, AD 32). (Matt. 14:14; Mark 6:34; Lk. 9:11; Jn. 6:3-4).

“*And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick*” (Matt. 14:14).

*“And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things”* (Mark 6:34).

“*And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing”* (Lk. 9:11).

*“And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.  And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh*” (Jn. 6:3, 4).

Though this has been partly discussed in the last paragraph. The focus is on the teaching and healing of the people and pointing out that the Passover was nigh.

“*Moved with compassion*” is a parenthetical statement which unveils the true nature of the Messiah. Jesus drew upon the energy of the crowd. The people needed healing. The people needed hope.

**QUESTION:**

1. Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

***Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand*** (Toward evening, Mark 6:39) (Matt. 14:15-21; Mark 6:35-44;

Lk. 9:12-17; Jn. 6:5-13).

*“And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.  But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.  And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.  He said, Bring them hither to me.  And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.  And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.   And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children*” (Matt. 14:15-21).

“*And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.  He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?  He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.   And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.   And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.  And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.  And they did all eat, and were filled.   And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.  And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men”* (Mark 6:35-44).

“*And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.   But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.   For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.  And they did so, and made them all sit down.  Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.  And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets”* (Lk. 9:12-17).

“*When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?   And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.  Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.   One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?  And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.  And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.  When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.  Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.  When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone*” (Jn. 6:5-15).

It is John who gives us the details of this great feeding. For the synoptic gospels merely address the circumstances surrounding the miracle, as well as the miracle itself. It is John who supplies names and details. For He introduces the specifics that Jesus being concerned for the feeding of the multitude asked Philip, which was said to prove him. Wherein, Andrew steps forward and says he knew of a lad with five loaves and two small fishes.

Upon collecting the loaves and fishes, Jesus has the people sit down on the grass. The Bible stresses there were five thousand men, not including women and children. First, the loaves were distributed, and then the fishes. After all, had eaten and were filled, the apostles gathered twelve baskets of the leftovers.

Next, came the response. After the people had realized what had just happened, they reasoned that Jesus was a prophet. Whereas Jesus reading their thoughts knew they were going to try to take Him by force and make Him king. Hence, He departed to the mountain alone.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Which apostle did Jesus speak with concerning the feeding of the crowd?
2. Who said to Jesus that there was a young lad present with a sack lunch?

***Jesus Sends His Disciples Away By Boat*** (Matt. 14:22; Mark 6:45; Jn. 6:16, 17)

*“And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away*” (Matt. 14:22).

“*And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people*” (Mark 6:45).

*“And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them”* (Jn. 6:16, 17).

The Lord’s instructions to His apostles sets up the next miracle. He has departed to a mountain for meditation and prayer. John says the Lord requested they go toward Capernaum. Whereas Mark cites that they were to travel to Bethsaida. One should note that Capernaum and Bethsaida are on the same side of the sea of Galilee about four miles apart.

***Jesus Goes Up a Mountain to Pray*** (Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46)

“*And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone*” *(*Matt. 14:23*).*

*“And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray”* (Mark 6:46).

We clarified in the last paragraph why the Lord stayed behind as He sent His apostles to Capernaum. This alone time with Jesus and His Father makes up quite a bit of the life story of Jesus. This valuable example of dependency and dedication was something Jesus wanted to pass along to His disciples.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did Jesus send His apostles?
2. What did Jesus do after the apostles left?

***Evening Comes & the Disciples Struggle*** (Matt. 14:24; Mark 6:47, 48; Jn. 6:17, 18)

*“But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary” (*Matt. 14:24*).*

*“And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them*” (Mark 6:47, 48).

*“And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew*” (Jn. 6:17, 18).

Matthew, Mark, and John speak of the great wind that was making it difficult for the apostles to control the small vessel. It was now three o’clock in the morning, and if they had left shore before the sunset at 6:00 PM, they had only traveled less than 30 furlongs over a nine-hour period.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What danger did the apostles face on the sea?
2. What hour of the night did Jesus come to them?

***Jesus Walks on Water*** (Fourth watch after 3 AM) (Matt. 14:25, 26; Mark 6:48-50; Jn. 6:19)

“*And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.  And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear*” (Matt. 14:25, 26).

“*And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.  But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid”* (Mark 6:48-50).

“*So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid*” (Jn. 6:19).

To the apostles, Jesus’ walking on the sea was terrifying. They merely saw a shadow of one walking on the waves believing it to be a spirit. The belief in ghosts and spirits was well believed among the Jews during this period in history.

***“Don’t Be Afraid”*** (Matt. 14:27; Mark 6:50; Jn. 6:20)

“*But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid*” (Matt. 14:27).

*“For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid”* (Marl 6:50).

“*But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid”* (Jn. 6:20).

“*It is I; be not afraid*” must have been a soothing message to the apostles. For fear had overtaken them, and Jesus sought to alleviate that fear. It was the psalmist who wrote, “*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee*” (Psa. 56:3).

While the apostles walked with Jesus, they often acted like frightened children. Mere babes being fed with milk. It would be after the resurrection when the apostles began to bloom like roses on a bush. The once frightened disciples suddenly became towering examples of faith and harmony. They were not only willing and able to suffer for Jesus, but many actually would!

***Peter Walks on Water*** (Matt. 14:28-31)

*“And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.  And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.  But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.  And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt*?” (Matt. 14:28-31).

The beautiful miracle of Peter walking on the sea is recorded in Matthew’s gospel only. If his eyes were fastened on the Lord, he was safe. Yet, the harsh wind blowing cast fear in Peter’s hart, and began to sink. Howbeit, the Lord reached out his hand and caught the doubting disciple.

The theological implication of this event is a powerful lesson on faith. It shows us that doubt is the enemy of faith. And it is our faith in Christ that keeps our bodies above water.

***Jesus Calms the Storm*** (Matt. 14:32, 33; Mark 6:51, 52; Jn. 6:21).

“*And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.  Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God*” (Matt. 14:32, 33).

“*And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened*” (Mark 6:51, 52).

“*Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went”* (Jn. 6:21).

Matthew’s gospel records that when Jesus entered the boat, the wind ceased, and the apostles worshipped Him. Whereas Mark states that the apostles were amazed, but their hearts were hardened. John observes that as soon as Jesus entered the ship, they were at the shores of Bethsaida. This revealing that a second miracle had taken place.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who did the apostles believed was walking on the sea?
2. Which apostle asks to walk to Jesus?
3. Why did that apostle begin to sink?
4. What miracle took place after Jesus entered the ship?

***Miracles at Gennesaret*** (Matt. 14:34-36; Mark 6:53-56)

“*And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.  And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;  And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole*” (Matt. 14:35, 36).

*“And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.  And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him, And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole”* (Mark 6:53-56).

It was back in Nazareth where a woman with a blood issue touched the hem of His garment and was made whole (Matt. 9:18-26). That news had traveled to the various cities and regions round about.

Once Jesus entered the land of Gennesaret, a fertile district, in which were situated the cities of Tiberias and Capernaum, extending along the western shore of the lake to which it gave name; many are brought to Him to be healed.

In passages such as we find in Matthew 14 and Mark 6, the human landscape is mapped. Jesus came at a time when disease was rampant. In the days of Jesus, a person of 33 years old was a senior. Even in America, just 100 years ago, the average life span was 47 years. It has been said that only 4% of the world’s population reached the age 65.

**QUESTION:**

1. What did the people wish to touch to healed by Christ?

***The Bread of Life*** (Capernaum the next day) (Jn. 6:22-71)

*The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone; (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:) When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.  And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?  Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.  Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.  Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.  Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.  The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.  And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.  Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.  I am that bread of life.  Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.  This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.  I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.   The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?  Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.  Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.  For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.  He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.  This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.  These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?  When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?  What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?  It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.  But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.  And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.  From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.  Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?   Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.  And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve”* (Jn. 6:22-71).

The multitude stood on that side, or shore, where they took shipping, near Bethsaida and Tiberias: here, after they were dismissed by Christ, they stood all night, waiting for boats to carry them over. Once they made their way to the shores of Capernaum, they began to question Him.

First, Jesus rebukes the populace stating that they merely followed Him for the “bread and the fishes.” The people were looking to be fed like their forefathers in the wilderness when God supplied manna from the heavens.

The Lord pleads with them not to labor for the physical meat that perishes, but the meat that offers eternal life. Metaphorically, the Lord uses several figures in reference to eternal life. For the Samaritan woman, He spoke of Himself being living waters. And in this passage, Jesus compares Himself to the manna that fell from heaven.

“*What sign will you shew us*?” This question was to prompt Jesus to feed them with another miracle. How much is enough? Jesus had healed thousands, fed multitudes, and continued to bless them beyond measure; but it wasn’t enough!

Their questions move from inquisition to sarcasm. His reference to His Father in heaven is met with the question, “*Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?*”

In this long dissertation, Jesus unveils to the populace His true nature and being. His metaphorical teaching that He was the bread that fed the Israelites confused the populace. The true intent of our Lord was to separate the sheep from the goats. Though He spoke of the betrayal of Judas, many other disciples departed from His presence and no longer followed Jesus. How quickly do the people turn from acceptance to rejection?

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Jesus said that many followed Him for what reason.
2. What teaching did Jesus give that caused certain of His disciples to leave Him?
3. What was Peter’s response.

***Jesus Condemns the Traditions of Men*** (Matt. 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-13)

“*Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.  But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.  Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,  This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.  But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”* (Matt. 15:1-9).

*“Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.  And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.  For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.  And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.  Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?  He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.  Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.  For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say,* *If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.  And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye*” (Mark 7:1-13).

In this confrontation with Jesus, the Pharisees want to know why the Lord’s disciples did not wash their hands before a meal. They saw this as disobeying the traditions of the elders. First, Jesus responds by quoting Isaiah 29:13, “*Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.”* He accuses them of holding the traditions of men over the commandments of God.

Second, the Lord then cites Exodus 20:12 along with Exodus 21:17 and adds, “But ye say!” And what do they say? “*If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.  And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.*” Jesus speaks of the obligation of taking care of parents being nullified by the Pharisees when one said they had promised the money to God (Corban). The money, though promised, was used specifically for their own needs and wants.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did the Pharisees rebuke the apostles?
2. What was the Lord’s reply?

***True Uncleanness*** (Matt. 15:10-20; Mark 7:14-23)

*And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.  Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.  Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.  Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?  But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.  For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man”* (Matt. 15:10-20).

*“And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.  If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.  And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.  And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?  And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man”* (Mark 7:14-23).

The dialogue between the Lord’s disciples and Himself shows their lack of faith. His statement concerning what defiled a person had offended the Pharisees, which in turn, worried the apostles. So, in private, the disciples ask the Lord the meaning of the parable concerning what goes in and comes out of man. He rebukes them for their lack of perception, and then speaks of the thirteen sins that comes from the heart defiling a man in Mark’s gospel. Matthew only lists seven sins.

One notable sin is the “evil eye” in Mark 7:22. Solomon speaks of the evil eye twice in his book of Proverbs, “*Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats*” (Prov. 23:6). “*He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him”* (Prov. 28:22).

Jesus speaks of the evil of the eye on several occasions, “*But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness*! (Matt. 6:23). *“The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness*” (Lk. 11:34).

This is not to say that the evil eye is worse than the other twelve mentioned by Jesus in Mark’s gospel. Yet, we are aware how the lust of the eye caused the fall of man (Gen. 3:6).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. According to Jesus, what defiles a man?
2. What type of sins proceed from the heart so named by Christ?

***END OF GREAT GALILEAN MINISTRY (***John 7:1)

*“After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him”* (Jn. 7:1).

Infuriating the Pharisees and Jewish elders in Galilee, the Lord travels to Judea. This was the southern division of Palestine.

**TRAVELING THROUGHOUT GALILEE AND SURROUNDING REGION**

***The Canaanite woman*** (Tyre & Sidon) (Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30)

“*Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.  But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.  But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said,* *It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.  And she said,* *Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.* *Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour*” (Matt. 15:21-28).

*“And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid.  For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.  But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed”* (Mark. 7:24-30).

Matthew speaks of the gentile woman as being from Canaan. Mark specifies by labeling her a Greek, a Syrophoenician by nation, so called as inhabiting the Phoenician tract of Syria. Her plea to the Messiah was for the healing of her daughter who had been possessed by a devil.

The almost seemingly cruel treatment by Christ and His disciples at first glance is mind boggling. Her pleas were met with silence from the Lord, and a request by the apostles to send her away.

“*But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”* The second treatment of the situation was the Lord making the bold proclamation that He was sent to preach to the Jews only at this time. Matthew then records that she came and “*worshipped Him.*”Jesus replied, “*It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.”* This solicited one of the most amazing statements from the Grecian peasant, “*Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.”* Matthew then writes, “*Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.*” The story in Mark’s gospels tells us the woman returning to her house she found her daughter sitting up in her bed.

**QUESTION:**

1. Jesus said He was sent to whom?

***Healing the Sick*** (Sea of Galilee, Southeast Shore, Decapolis) (Matt. 15:29-31; Mark 7:31-37)

*“And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.  And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel”* (Matt. 15:29-31).

*“And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.  And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.  And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;  And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.  And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;  And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak”* (Mark 7:31-37).

In Matthew’s account, he points generically how the Lord was healing many. Mark on the other hand zooms in on one case. The healing of the deaf and dumb man takes place after Christ placed His fingers in his ears, spat in His hands and touched his tongue, and then prayed in the Aramaic, “*Ephphatha*” which was interpreted as “*Be opened*.”

Next, Mark brings forth two facts that followed**. First,** He charged the witnesses not to publicize the miracle, in which they in turn published it even more. And **second,** the people were astonished proclaiming, “*He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.”*

**QUESTION:**

1. How did Jesus heal the man who was deaf and had a speech problem?

***Feeding of the Four Thousand***(3 days after leaving Tyre & Sidon) (Matt. 15:32-39; Mark 8:1-10).

“*Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.  And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?  And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.  And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.  And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala”* (Matt.15:32-39).

*“In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.  And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?  And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.  And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people.  And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them.  So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.  And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha”* (Mark 8:1-10).

Like the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus shows His compassion and organizational skills. Instead of five loaves and two fishes, seven loaves and a few small fishes are provided to feed the four thousand.

As Mark records, Jesus had compassion on the multitude knowing that they were famished and could not travel to their own homes safely. It is amazing that the disciples asked how Jesus was going to feed the people wherein shortly before He was able to feed five thousand.

The leftovers filled seven baskets from which the Lord no doubt sent with the populace back to their abodes. While they traveled to their homes, Jesus entered a ship and traveled to Dalmanutha.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In this feeding, how many fish and loafs were there found?
2. After this miracle, where id Jesus travel?

***The Pharisees & Sadducees Demand a Sign***(Dalmanutha/Magadan/Magdala) (Matt. 16:1-4; Mark 8:11-13)

“*The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.  He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.  And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?  A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign;* *and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed”* (Matt. 16:1-4).

“*And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side*” (Mark 8:11-13).

As the Pharisees from Jerusalem came to question Christ in Matthew 15:1, it is now the Pharisees and Sadducees from the region of Galilee desiring the Lord to prove His Messiahship by signs and wonders.

The Lord’s rebuke aims at the spiritual blindness of the Jewish leaders in the First Century. By looking at the sky in the morning and evening, one felt he could predict the weather. Howbeit believing this and rejecting the signs of the Savior revealed their wickedness and inability to see the obvious.

“*And there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.”* The gospel of Mark does not cite Jesus mentioning the sign of Jonah. It is in Matthew 12:39-41 and Luke 11:29-32 where the sign of Jonah is used to denote the resurrection of Jesus after three days in the tomb.

**QUESTION:**

1. What the Pharisees demand of Jesus?

***Warning about Jewish Leaders***(Matt. 16:5-12; Mark 8:14-21)

*“And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.  Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.  And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread.  Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?   Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees”* (Matt. 16:5-12).

“*Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.  And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.  And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread. And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?”* (Mark 8:14-21).

Though the apostles witnessed the proof of Jesus being the Messiah, they failed often in comprehending His words. There forgetting to bring bread on their journey led Jesus to use their failure to speak against the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Mark’s gospel also includes the leaven of Herod.

In Mark’s gospel, the Lord accuses the apostles of having the same heart of unbelief that He charged the people having after speaking the parable of the Sower. His remarks then was prompted by the apostles asking why the Lord spoke in parables.

He reminds them of the miracle performed with the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand. Hence, His warning was not to be taken literally, but figuratively. He was warning them of the influences and teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees who would seek to sway the people from believing in Him.

**QUESTION:**

1. What does Jesus warn about the Jewish leaders?

***The Blind Man Near Bethsaida***(Bethsaida) (Mark 8:22-26)

*“And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.  And 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 upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town”* (Mark 8:22-26).

Only Mark records this miracle. Jesus meeting the blindman in Bethsaida led him out of the city. Mark says that the Lord put spit in his eyes. This may imply that his eyes were gummed up by the secretion of the eyes that sealed them shut. The spittle would have been used to moisten the eyes. Then the Lord placed His hands on the man’s eyes and asked him what he had seen. He replies that he saw men as “trees.” In other words, his vision was distorted. The Lord then touched his eyes again asking him to look up. At that point his vision was fully restored.

There is no doubt the Lord could had healed this man without the actions taken. One could conjecture why this miracle involved several touching before the healing took place, but it would have no biblical merit. The Messiah had purpose and meaning in all that He did.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did Jesus lead the blind man?
2. How did Jesus heal the blind man?

**PREPARING THE APOSTLES**

***Peter’s Confession*** (Caesarea Philippi)(Matt. 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30; Lk. 9:18-20)

*“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?  And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.* *He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?  And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.  And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.  And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.  Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ”* (Matt. 16:13-20).

*“And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him”* (Mark 8:27-30).

*“And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again. He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God”* (Lk. 9:18-20).

Concerning Caesarea Philippi, Albert Barnes writes, “There were two cities in Judea called Caesarea. One was situated on the borders of the Mediterranean (Acts 8:40), and the other was the one mentioned here. This city was greatly enlarged and ornamented by Philip the tetrarch, son of Herod, and called Caesarea in honor of the Roman emperor, Tiberius Caesar. To distinguish it from the other Caesarea the name of Philip was added to it, and it was called Caesarea Philippi, or Caesarea of Philippi. It was situated in the boundaries of the tribe of Naphtali, at the foot of Mount Hermon. It is now called Panias or Banias, and contains (circa 1880’s) about 200 houses, and is inhabited chiefly by Turks” (Barnes Notes, *The Gospels*).

In Matthew’s and Mark’s gospels, Jesus addresses the questions while traveling into the town of Caesarea Philippi. Luke records that Jesus had asked the question after he had finished praying privately to His Father.

The question was to imply what the populace were saying about His Messiahship. All the synoptic gospels mention Isaiah and John the Baptist. Yet, it is Matthew who adds “Jeremiah” to the list.

“*He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?  And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* The confession made by Peter pointed to His identity and His office as the Son of God.

Matthew’s gospel records, “*And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”* God’s revelation at times was direct like to the prophets and other chosen vessels. At other times it was gathered from the teachings and understanding of the sacred message and the application of those messages. Peter had drawn his conclusion concerning Jesus by beholding the miracles and acts performed throughout his walking’s with the Messiah.

“*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.  And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”* Matthew is the only gospel writer that includes this magnificent statement made by Jesus. This was not the beginning of the papacy. For this charge will be given to all the apostles (Matt. 18:18-20). It is a simple gracious exhortation to Peter for recognizing the Messiah. He, along with the other apostles, would be given the keys to the kingdom which would be established on Pentecost.

Matthew and Mark cite Jesus instructing the apostles not to make known His identity. The time of the Lord’s manifestation was not yet. For once it was proclaimed openly, the Lord knew the cross was to follow

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question did Jesus ask His apostles?
2. What was their reply?
3. What reply did Peter give, and what was the Lord’s reaction?

***Jesus Predicts His Death*** (Matt. 16:21-23; Mark 8:31-33; Lk. 9:21,).

*“From that time forth began Jesus to shew 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. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men”* (Matt. 16:21-23).

“*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. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men*” (Mark 8:31-33)

*“And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing; Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day*” (Lk. 9:21, 22).

From this time on, the Lord would speak of His coming death. How much was comprehended remains a mystery. Did they hear these words and refuse to accept them? For if they truly understood them, they would have stationed themselves at the tomb awaiting His resurrection.

“*Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.”* This stern rebuke recorded in Matthew’s gospel unveils for us the deep turmoil within the Spirit of Christ. Peter became the devil’s disciple for an instance by his proclamation.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What statement did Jesus make that caused Peter to respond?
2. What did Jesus say to Peter based upon his response?

***True Discipleship & the Kingdom Coming*** (Matt. 16:24-28; Mark 8:34-9:1; Lk. 9:23-27)

*“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.  For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.  For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.  Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom*” (Matt. 16:24-28).

“*And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.  For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.  For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?  Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?  Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power*” (Mark 8:34-9:1).

“*And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.* *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.  For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?  For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God*” (Lk. 9:23-27).

The act of becoming a true disciple of Jesus begins with denying oneself. It demands **surrendering** to God. This is not an easy task for the spirit of man yearns for freedom.

The next act of this surrender is **cross bearing**. The bruising, the banishment, the bereavement that comes with following Christ can be more than some can take. Jesus knew that such an endeavor would cause strife in families (Matt. 10:36, Lk. 6:22). After preaching concerning His preexistence in John 6, the Bible reads, *“From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him”* (Jn. 6:66).

Luke cites, “*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.  For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away.”* Matthew and Mark include the question, “*Or what shall a man give for his soul*?” For Judas it would be thirty pieces of silver.

All three gospels make mention of the Lord’s warning against those who would be ashamed of Him and His doctrine. He points to the day of judgment as the appointed time when punishment would be rendered. And the synoptic gospels bring forth the prophesy that many standing before Him would see the establishing of the Kingdom (the Church).

**QUESTION:**

1. What does it mean to deny oneself and follow Jesus?

***The Transfiguration*** (6 days later, Matt. 17:1, Mark 9:2, Mt. Hermon) ((Matt. 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-10; Lk. 9:28-36)

*“And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.  While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.  And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.  And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.  And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.  And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead”* (Matt. 17:1-9).

*“And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.  And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.  And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.  For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.  And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.  And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.  And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.  And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean”* (Mark 9:2-10).

*“And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.  And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.  And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.  While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.  And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.  And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen”* (Lk. 9:28-36).

All three synoptic gospels testify to this event. Moses, the great lawgiver, and Elijah the great prophet. For Elijah had been honored by being thus translated, and still more by being made the model of the forerunner of the Messiah (Mal. 4:5; Luke 1:17; Matt. 11:14).

Luke records some facts not mentioned by Matthew or Mark. He writes, “*And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him”* (Lk. 9:30-32). So, then, Luke mentions that the conversation between the three centered on His coming demise in Jerusalem, and second, we find the reason Peter and the others did not hear the conversation because they were sleeping.

While departing from the mountain, three things are noted. First, a cloud overshadows the apostles. And from the cloud, God said, “*This is my beloved son, hear ye him*.” The Syriac and Persic versions read, "*they feared when they saw Moses and Elias enter into the cloud*."

Second, Peter requested to have three tabernacles built for Christ, Moses, and Elijah. The statement was made unveiling that the apostle’s still believed Jesus was going to build a physical kingdom. And from that kingdom would come the resurrection, and Israel being once again elevated to a position of power and glory.

Third, in Matthew and Mark’s gospels, Jesus informs the three that they were not to tell of this miraculous event until after the resurrection. Note Mark’s comment, “*And they kept the saying, questioning among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean*” (Mark 9:10). This shows that much of what Jesus spoke to these men was lost in translation. It will perfectly fit when the prophecies came to fruition and the apostles recalled the many words spoken by Jesus concerning His mission.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What two prophets were transfigured?
2. What did the three apostles wish to do after seeing this event?
3. Did they understand at the time what the rising of dead meant?

***Elijah & John the Baptist*** (Matt. 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13)

*“And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?  And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.  But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.  Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist*” (Matt. 17:10-13).

“*And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?  And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.  But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him*” (Mark 9:11-13).

The transfiguration prompted the apostles to ask the question about Elijah most probably wondering why Elijah returned to Paradise. For tradition held that Elijah would come, and restoration would follow. The prophecy was taken from the book of Malachi 4:5, 6.

The Lord affirmed that one like Elijah did come pointing to John the Baptist. Yet, John was rejected by the Jewish leaders, and killed by Herod. And what happened to John would also be cast upon Jesus.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where was the prophecy concerning Elijah quoted from?
2. What was the meaning of this teaching?

***Heals a Boy with Evil Spirit*** (the next day, Lk. 9:37, near the mountain) (Matt. 17:14-18; Mark

9:14-29; Lk. 9:37-42).

*“And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.  And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.  Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.   And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour”* (Matt. 17:14-18).

*“And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.  And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.  And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?  And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;  And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.  He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.  And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.  And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.  And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.   Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.  And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.  When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.   And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.  But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.  And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?  And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting”* (Mark 9:14-29).

*“And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.  And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him.  And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.  And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.  And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father*” (Lk. 9:37-42).

Before this healing took place, Mark reveals that the scribes were communicating with the Lord’s disciples. When Jesus questioned the scribes why they were questioning His disciples, a certain man stepped forward pleading for his son who was possessed by an evil spirit.

In this miraculous healing is brought forth one of the most inspiring conversations. “*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.  And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”* The magnitude of this theological discourse is astonishing. Here was a man distraught over the years his son suffered. He first came to the Lord’s disciples who were unable to help. So, the disciples failures placed doubt in the man’s mind. His honesty was met with the Lord’s rebuke against His own disciples for their lack of faith focusing on the father to aid in his.

“*When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.   And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.  But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose”* (Mark 9:25-27). Matthew calls this foul spirit the devil (Mat. 17:18). And no matter what power the devil believes he holds; he is subject to the Lord’s commands.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Matthew mean by calling the boy a lunatic?
2. What did Jesus tell the father about belief?
3. What was the father’s reply?

***The Mustard Seed Faith*** (Matt. 17:19-21) (Taught again in Lk. 17:5, 6).

“*And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?  He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?  Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.  Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee”* (Matt. 17:19-21).

Jewish temple tax collectors came to Jesus with the question about paying tribute. Adam Clarke explains, *“This was not a tax to be paid to the Roman government; but a tax for the support of the temple. The law, Exo\_30:13, obliged every male among the Jews to pay half a shekel yearly; for the support of the temple; and this was continued by them wherever dispersed, till after the time of Vespasian, see Josephus, War, book 7. c. 6, who ordered it afterwards to be paid into the Roman treasury”* (Clarke, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible*, The Gospel of Matthew).

**QUESTION:**

1. What tax is being discussed in Matthew 17?

***He Predicts His Death Again*** (Galilee) (Matt. 17:22, 23; Mark 9:30-32; Lk. 9:43-45).

*“And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry*” (Matt. 17:22, 23).

*“And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it.  For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.  But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him” (*Mark 9:30-32).

*“And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,  Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying”* (Lk. 9:43-45).

There is no doubt that near the end of His ministry, Jesus spoke often about His death and resurrection. Mark and Luke add that they understood not that saying, and it was hid from them, and they were afraid to ask him.

We are certain by the actions of the apostles after the Lord’s death that they did not understand His teachings on the subject. So detailed and explicit was He. Howbeit, their failure simply shows their vulnerability as men.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Concerning Jesus speaking about His death did the apostles understand?
2. Why do you think they chose not to understand?

***The Coin in the Fishes Mouth*** (Capernaum) (Matt. 17:24-27)

*“And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?  He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?  Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.**Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee”* (Matt. 17:24-27).

One commentary comment:

The double drachma; a sum equal to two Attic drachmas, and corresponding to the Jewish “half-shekel,” payable, towards the maintenance of the temple and its services, by every male Jew of twenty years old and upward. For the origin of this annual tax, see Exod.\_30:13, Exod.\_30:14; 2 Chron.\_24:6, 2 Chron.\_24:9. Thus, it will be observed, it was not a civil, but an ecclesiastical tax. The tax mentioned in Matt.\_17:25 was a civil one. The whole teaching of this very remarkable scene depends upon this distinction (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, the Gospels).

“*What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?  Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.”*

The example of kings not taxing their own household is meant to bring Peter to the reality of the situation. He was not implying that the saints are exempt from paying taxes, but point to the unfairness of those collecting such taxes for the temple since all the Jews were heirs of David.

“*Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.”* Though logically Peter and the apostles should be exempt from such a tax, it was best to pay the tax and not cause extra hardship on them. Hence, Peter is told to cast a hook into the sea, and then open a fish’s mouth wherein he would find a coin to pay the tax.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. The coin in the fish’s mouth was to pay what tax?
2. Whose inscription was on the coin?

***Greatest in the Kingdom*** (Matt. 18:1-6; Mark 9:33-37; Lk. 9:46-47)

“*At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?  And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them. And said,* *Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.  Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.  And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.  But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea*” (Matt. 18:1-6).

“*And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?  But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.  And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me”* (Mark 9:33-37).

“*Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.   And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great” (*Lk. 9:46-48).

In Matthew’s account, the dispute about who was greatest in the kingdom was directly asked to Jesus. Mark records that Jesus overheard the dispute and asked the disciples. Whereas Luke cites that the Lord perceived their thoughts concerning this issue.

His response is both audible and visual. He places a child in the midst of them, and then picks up and holds the child in His arms telling them that they must be converted and humbled like a child in order to be great in the kingdom. Mark focuses on servitude and reception along with Luke’s translation. And it is Luke who ends the teaching with “*for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great*.”

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the purpose of the child in this teaching?
2. According to Mark, what did the apostles dispute among themselves?

***Warning & Consequences of Sin*** (Matt. 18:7-9)

*“Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!  Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.  And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire”* (Matt. 18:7-9).

Offences in this text is more properly rendered “temptations.” When these periods arise, one must be willing to do everything necessary to not heed to them. If it means cutting off a limb or plucking out an eye, then so be it. No doubt, one is not to take this literally. For everyone would be missing limbs, and blind. The idea is to prepare and flee when temptation comes.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the woe in the above passage taken from Matthew 18?
2. Did Jesus really teach that a person should cut off his or her hand, or pluck out their eyes to avoid sin?

***The Parable of the Lost Sheep*** (Matt. 18:10-14; Lk. 15:1-7)

*“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones;* *for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.  For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.  How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?  And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.  Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish”* (Matt. 18:10-14).

“*Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.   And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.  And he spake this parable unto them, saying,  What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?  And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.  And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance”* (Lk. 15:1-7).

One comes to note that the parable is cited on two different occasions. Matthew’s citation was directed to the apostles after the Lord spoke of the treatment of the saints. Luke shows Jesus orating the parable in His rebuke of the Pharisees indictment that the Lord dined with publicans and sinners.

The statement made in Matthew has drawn much controversy. Jesus said, “*For I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”* Some have used this verse as a proof text that people, especially children, have guardian angels. First, one must recognize that Jesus is speaking about the righteous follower. And as in many cases in the Old Testament, angels were involved in aiding and supplying sustenance to the saints.

The sheep parable is orated to unveil the true worth of the sheep. Each one is precious in the sight of the Shepherd. Hence, when one goes astray, the Shepherd seeks, finds, and rejoices over the safe return of the sheep.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. The parable was given for what reason?
2. Why does the Shepherd over one sheep?
3. Does this teach that one can never be lost?

***Discipline in the Church*** (Matt. 18:15-17)

*“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.  But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.  And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican”* (Matt. 18:15-17).

No doubt this passage should be viewed alongside Matthew 5:21-26 which speaks of the one being angry or offended approaching a brother for the purpose of reconciliation. In this example in chapter eighteen, the one offended takes the initiative to settle the matter in a loving manner.

What if that brother refuses to hear? It is that point one takes two or three RELIABLE witnesses so that “EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED!” Hence, bringing the matter to conclusion by repeating the charges and sins of that particular brother before the church.

“*but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” This* verse at times is misunderstood. The final act of withdrawal does not take place until the congregation has the chance to speak and plead with the brother to reconcile. If he refuses to bend, he is disciplined at treated as a heathen and publican.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What other passage should be viewed alongside of Matthew 18:15-17?
2. Why should one take two or three witnesses to a brother who has sinned?

***Apostolic Authority*** (Matt. 18:18-20)

*“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.  Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.  For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”* (Matt. 18:18-20).

As Peter received the commendation of authority in Matthew 16, so do all the apostles in this passage. There has never been, nor never will be, such thing as papal authority. For the papacy is foreign to New Testament doctrine. God, through Jesus, established apostolic authority which would continue by the teachings of those men recorded in the New Testament.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the lesson about binding and loosing?
2. What does Jesus says takes place when two or three are gathered in His name?

***Forgiveness*** (Matt. 18:21, 22) (Lk. 17:3, 4)

*“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?  Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven”* (Matt. 18:21, 22).

“*Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.  And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him”* (Lk. 17:3, 4).

“*Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes”* (Amos 2:6). One ponders why Peter did not use the number three instead of seven. He felt that the obligation of forgiveness was tied to a number. Jesus said just the opposite. For if a person sins against a brother seven times in a day or an innumerable number of times (70 times 7), and asks forgiveness each time, FORGIVE!

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Should I always forgive my brother if he asks?
2. Why is it so necessary to forgive?

***Parable of the Indebted Servants*** (Matt. 18:23-35)

*Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.  And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.  But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.  Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.  But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.  And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.   So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.  Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.  So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses”* (Matt. 18:23-35).

The parable that followed Peter asking about forgiveness places emphasis upon the heart of forgiveness. For it tells of one that owed a great debt to a king (10,000 talents) and was told that he and his family would be sold into slavery to pay the debt. Upon hearing this, he fell down before the Lord in worship, and said he would find a way to pay the debt. The Lord being MOVED WITH COMPASSION, forgave him.

The second half of the parable speaks of the same servant being owed one hundred pence. Instead of showing mercy, he took him by the throat, threw him into prison, and showed him no mercy. In the end, the forgiven servant was brought before the Lord and given to the tormentors because of his inability to forgive and have compassion.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. The above parable is a lesson on what?
2. What does this parable say about the king? What does it say about the unforgiving servant?

***The Brothers of Jesus*** (John 7:2-9) (In Capernaum, September or October 32 AD)

*“Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.  His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.  For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.  For neither did his brethren believe in him.  Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.  Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee”* (Jn. 7:2-9).

This interaction in the life of Christ took place just before the feast of Tabernacles. This Jewish celebration, which began on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri, which answers to part of our September; when the Jews erected tents or booths, in which they dwelt, and ate their meals during this festival; and which was done, in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in booths in the wilderness (John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible*, the Gospel of John).

His own siblings during this period try to persuade Jesus to leave Capernaum and travel to Judaea. This they said because they did not believe in their half-brother being the Messiah, and no doubt for their own protection.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What request did the Lord’s stepbrothers ask Him?
2. Did the Lord’s half-brothers believe on Him?

***Jesus Goes to the Feast of Tabernacles Secretly*** (Jerusalem) (Jn. 7:10-13)

“*But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.  Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.**Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews”* (Jn. 7:10-13).

Jesus attending the feast secretly was because His time had not yet come. It I evident at this time that there is dissention among the people caused by the accusations and insults propagated among the Jews by the Pharisees.

“*Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.”* The Sanhedrin had already created a law that whoever confessed Jesus would be prosecuted and turned out of the synagogue. This was the fear of the blind man’s parents in John 9:22.

***Controversy About Jesus*** (Jn. 7:14-52)

“*Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.  And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.  If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.**Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?* *Why go ye about to kill me?  The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?  Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.  If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?  Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.* *Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?  But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?  Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.  Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.  But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.**Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.  And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?* *The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.  Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.  Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.* *Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?  In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.  He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.  (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)  Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.  Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?  So there was a division among the people because of him.   And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.  Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?  The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.  Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?  Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?  But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.  Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)  Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet”* (Jn. 7:14-52).

The dialogue between the people and Jesus is of a great value in showing the confusion that shadowed the populace. As we add comment to this scene in Jerusalem take note on the providence of God involved in every step taken by our Lord.

“*Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.  And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?”* The feast lasted eight days, and this most probably was the fourth day. Christ, as He had done on several occasions, entered the temple to teach the people.

*“Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.  If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.”* Jesus responds to the people’s charge concerning His past education. No! He did not sit at the feet of Gamaliel like Paul had (Acts 22:3). Neither had He attended any of the rabbinical schools. His teachings were directly from God. For those who do the will of the Father well understand that the doctrine uttered from the lips of Christ came from above.

The false teacher seeketh his own glory, but the true teacher seeks the glory of God. “*No unrighteousness in him”* simply means that no falsehood is spoken by the righteous follower of Jehovah.

*“Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?”* The same law they were accusing Jesus of breaking, because He healed on the Sabbath, was the same law they themselves could not keep.

*“Why go ye about to kill me?”* Hence, if they be violators of the law of Moses, why were they so eager to take the life of Jesus?

*“The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?”* Here was the charge instigated by the Pharisees. They convinced the people that Jesus was Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

*“Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.  If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?”* Jesus uses rationalization for His defense. He questions why they marvel at His healing on the sabbath, and then they turn a blind eye to anyone being circumcised on that day.

*“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”*Jesus places the letter of the law alongside the spirit of the law.

*“Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?  But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?* Here is stated the confusion. They know that those who wish to kill Jesus are present, and yet they do nothing about it. It leads them to think that maybe Jesus is the Christ, and the rulers are aware of it.

“*Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.”* The people knew that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. Yet, believing He was from Nazareth placed doubt in their minds.

*“Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.  But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.”* The adage, “*the proof is in the pudding*” defines the statement by Jesus. He informs them that they had seen the miracles, heard the messages, and bore witness of His compassion. However, they failed to see His Connection with the Father.

*“Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.  And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done*.” Jesus’ proclamation that the Father had sent Him infuriated some of the populace who sought to take Him by force but could not because His hour had not yet come. Whereas others professed that Jesus must be the Christ because of the great many miracles He performed.

*“The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.”* The Pharisees sought all along to influence the people in believing that Christ was a false teacher. They were witnesses at this point in seeing the results of their propaganda and sent officers to arrest Him.

*“Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.  Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.”* Once again, the Lord speaks of His death, and His future reunion with the Father.

*“Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?”* There was always confusion from others when Jesus spoke of His death and resurrection. His own disciples were bewildered by His teachings on the subject. Howbeit, in this episode, the Jews felt that the Lord spoke of taking His message to the Gentiles.

*“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.  He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* *(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”* The Lord speaks of Himself as the watery springs which every man should desire. From His bosom flows the blood that cleanses the sinner of His sins and brings relief to the thirsty souls. The same message given to the Samaritan woman in John four.

The quotation used by Jesus is not found in the Old Testament as recorded, but similar thoughts are expressed by several writers (Isa. 58:11; Joel 3:18).

*“But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.”* The word “given” is not in the original text reads, “*The Holy Ghost was not yet come*” is the proper translation of this verse.

*“Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.  Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?”* Once again confusion is noted among the Jews. The same argument believing that Jesus came from Nazareth and not Bethlehem brought doubt to some. The mixed feelings of the populace believing He was a prophet, others the Christ, and still others that He was Beelzebub would eventually lead to His demise.

*“So, there was a division among the people because of him.   And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.”* No man laid hands on Him because His time had not come to be taken. His own existence and being was on a providential clock held in the hands of God the Father.

*“Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?  The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.”* Upon the officer’s return to the chief priests and Pharisees unaccompanied by Jesus prompted the leaders to asks why they failed. Their reply is astonishing and surprising, “*Never man spake like this man*!”

*“Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?  Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?  But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.”*

Accusation, insults, and contempt sum up the Pharisees misunderstanding of Christ, and those who saw wealth in His teachings.

*“Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet”* (Jn. 7:14-52). Nicodemus, one of the members of the Sanhedrin, and the same Pharisee who visited Jesus in John three, cites the law requirements for one to have a fair trial before being condemned (Lev. 19:15-16; Exod. 23:1-2; Deut. 19:15, 18). The other members reply, “*Art though also of Galilee*?” Nicodemus was not of Galilee, but it was stated for contempt and insult. And then they continue their insult by stating, “*Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet*.”

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What arguments are made for and against Jesus being the Messiah?
2. Who stood up for Jesus against the Sanhedrin?

***The Woman Caught in Adultery*** (Jn. 8:1-11)

“*And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.  And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,  They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.  Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?  This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.  So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.  And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.  And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more”* (Jn. 7:52-8:11).

“*And every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the mount of Olives”* (Jn. 7:53, 8:1). As the Pharisees and Sanhedrin departed to their homes, Jesus traveled to the mount of Olives. Most likely, the Lord came here to pray. A place of solitude and beauty where the Lord often communed with His Father.

In the early morning, Jesus was teaching the people in the temple. The scribes and Pharisees brought forth a woman caught in the very act of adultery. They cited the law of Moses as enforcement that the woman must be put to death (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22). The law did not specify stoning. It was simply the method of execution during the First Century.

The whole dilemma was set up to catch Jesus in disobeying the law. At first glance, there are flaws in the Pharisees attempt. First, where is the man who was caught with her? The law stressed that both were to be executed. And second, who were the witnesses? The proclamation that she was “caught in the very act,” does not alleviate the fairness of a trial.

Hence, they asked the Lord what should be done with the woman. It is at this time that Jesus stoops down and writes in the sand. Whatever His holy fingers scribed in that sand is the million-dollar question. John writes*, “And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.”*

In the end, the woman is left staring into the eyes of Jesus. He asks her two questions, “*Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?”* Note her response, “*She said, No man, Lord.”* And then the Lord says, “N*either do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”*

We realize that there was one standing before her that could accuse her, Jesus. And along with God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, three witnesses would have been found. However, the Lord offered mercy and forgiveness. Metaphorically, the adulteress woman represents all of us. So undeserving of grace and mercy, we receive it anyway through the love God has for all (Jn. 3:16).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What sin did this woman in John 8 commit?
2. Where was the other participant in the sin?
3. Under the law should this woman have been stoned.
4. What did Jesus do to disperse the accusers?

***I Am the Light of the World*** (Jn. 8:12)

***“****Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”* (Jn. 8:12).

John becomes the disciple of the light. He presents the illumination of Jesus, the church, and the word throughout His gospel and epistles (Jn. 1:4-9; 3:19-21; 5:35; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9, 10; 12:35-46; 1 Jn. 1:5-7; 2:8-10). In this passage, Jesus speaks of Himself as being the “*light of the world.”* In order to be guided by that light, one must not walk in darkness. The commitment to follow Jesus becomes the light of life to the obedient.

**QUESTION:**

1. What does it mean that Jesus is the light of the world?

***True Judgment*** (Jn. 8:13-20)

“*The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.  Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.  Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.  And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.  It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.  I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.  Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.  These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come”* (Jn. 8:13-20).

The Pharisees confrontation with the Messiah aims at calling Him a liar. The law stressed that truth could only be established at the mouth of two or three reliable witnesses (Deut. 17:6, 19:15). The Lord states that His testimony is true. First, for Himself being a witness, and second for His Father bearing record.

To establish the reliability of the second witness, they ask. “*Where is thy Father*?” His reply no doubt brought confusion when he replied, “*Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.”*

The discourse took place in the treasury of the temple. The place where the thirteen chests stood, into which the people put their voluntary contributions for the sacrifices, and service of the temple. And with such an entourage present in this area, the Pharisees made no attempt to incarcerate Him.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What controversy did the Pharisees bring before Jesus?
2. What proof did Jesus offer to show His testimony was true?

***You Will Die in Your Sins*** (Jn. 8:21-27)

“*Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.  Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.  And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.  Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.  I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.  They understood not that he spake to them of the Father”* (Jn. 8:21-27).

This passage is just another example of misunderstanding and misinterpreting the Messiah. Though He emphasized on several occasions His relationship with God the Father, they could not, or would not, accept this reality. Sadly, this refusal would cause them to die in their sins.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What two things were stated by Christ in the above passage?
2. How were those statements misinterpreted by the Jews?

***Christ Does the Will of God*** (Jn. 8:28-30)

“*Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.   And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.  As he spake these words, many believed on him”* (Jn. 8:28-30).

Even among the masses there were the few who came to believe on Him. Partly by the miracles performed before their eyes, and secondly by the words that He spoke.

In this passage Jesus states that the recognition of Him being the Messiah will be at the crucifixion (Jn. 3:14, 12:32). The emblematic symbol of Moses and the serpent set on a pole would represent the manner of salvation which came through Jesus Christ.

The Lord exclaims that He speaks only those things taught to Him by the Father. And secondly, all that He does is aimed at pleasing the Father.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. “I do \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ those things that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Him.
2. Should we as Christians follow this example?

***The Truth Will Set You Free*** (Jn. 8:31, 32)

“*Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (Jn. 8:31, 32).

This passage answers the question, who is a disciple? It is defined as one who not only believes on the Lord but continues to obey the words spoken by Him.

**QUESTION:**

1. How will the truth set you free?

***A Servant to Sin*** (Jn. 8:33-38)

“*They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.  And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.  If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.  I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father”* (Jn. 8:33-38).

Arrogance had for centuries enslaved the Jews. Their proclamation of being in bondage to no man was fallacious. Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Greece, and now the Romans ruled over them. And the enslavement to sin was the end result of their pride.

The Lord offers them freedom, but their blindness caused them to seek the death of Jesus. It will always be the refusal of men to accept the words of Christ that will bring the wrath of God upon them.

**QUESTION:**

1. Who is defined as the servant of sin?

***You Are of Your Father the Devil*** (Jn. 8:39-47)

“*They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.  But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.  Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.  Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.  Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God”* (Jn. 8:39-47).

After the Lord defined a disciple as one who continued in His words, the Pharisees quickly responded, “*Abraham is our father*.” Jesus brings forth two conditional statements of rebuke. First, He focuses on the concept of truth. He replies, “*If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.”* Abraham was one who accepted the truth, and followed it without question.

“*Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God”* (Jn. 8:41). Denying their affiliation with Abraham, the people respond believing that Jesus spoke of them as a mixed race. They in turn proclaim God as their father. One should recognize the fact that the Jews perceived God as their spiritual father, but never in the physical sense in which Jesus defined His relationship to the Father (Jn. 5:18).

*“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me”* (Jn. 8:42). The second “if” centers on the acceptance of one who was sent by God. Simple enough, if God was their father, they would surely love the Son. Since they did not accept, obey, or love the Son, they were not truly the children of God.

“*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.  And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.  Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?  He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God*” (Jn. 8:44-47).  Such a condemning statement infuriated His enemies. He dares them to bring forth a valid argument against Him. He logically proves who their father truly was, Satan.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who did Jesus say was the father of the Pharisees?
2. He told them that if God was their father, they would show what to Jesus?

***Before Abraham Was, I Am*** (Jn. 8:48-59)

***“****Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?  Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.  And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.  Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.  Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by”* (Jn. 8:48-59).

First, they accuse Him of taking sides with the Samaritans. “*Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?”*

Second, they perceived He had a devil because of His proclamation concerning those who would keep His sayings would never see death. The people believed that the Lord was condemning Abraham and the prophets because they rested in their graves.

Jesus then speaks of the honor God had bestowed upon Him. He claimed that He knew the Father and the Father knew Him. And then He spoke of Abraham desiring to see the coming of the Messiah. The great patriarch with an eye of faith would long to see the day when the Messiah would come, yet never seeing that day unfold. Howbeit, Jesus stands before the people proving His messiahship, and being rejected by them.

Last, Jesus proclaimed His preincarnate identity, “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”* The very statement made by Him to Moses (Exod. 3:14), and the title orated to John in the last book of the Bible (Rev. 1:11, 17, 21:16, 22:13). And what was the reaction to the Lord’s statement? “*Then took they up stones to cast at him.”*

*“But Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”* This statement points to the miracle of invisibility.

**QUESTION:**

1. What did Jesus mean by, “*Before Abraham was, I am*?”

***Healing of the Blind Man*** (Jn. 9:1-41)

“*And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.  And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?  Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.  I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,  And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.  Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.  They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.  And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.  Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.  Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? 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 seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.  He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.*

There are several parts to this miraculous healing which should be addressed. First, the disciple’s question, “*Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”* It was believed among the Jews that sicknesses and deformities were brought about by sin. Either the sin of the child growing to maturity or the sins of the parents. Jesus corrects this false philosophy by implying that neither the child nor the parents sinned.

Another false statement was made in the interview between the Pharisees and the one healed. The restored said, “*Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”* This has often been quoted trying to prove that God does not hear the prayers of sinners. In actuality, the statement has no reference to prayer. The man was trying to address the fact that God will not perform a miracle through the hands of an imposter. This was the Lord’s question to the scribes who came down from Jerusalem to question His performance of miracles. Jesus asked, “*How can Satan cast out Satan?”* (Mark 3:23).

Second, the way the blindman was healed is noted. “*He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.).* God often tries the hearts of men to unveil their obedience or disobedience. Whether it be Noah’s command to build the ark out of gopher wood (Gen. 6), or Naaman’s instructions to dip in the river Jordan (2 Kings 5); God often includes certain actions from His creation. The clay, the washing, and the pool of Siloam were specifics used by Jesus to test the faith of the blind man.

Third, the questioning of the blind man is an incredible testimony to the ignorance of the Pharisees, the fear of the parents, and the enduring strength of the recipient of the one healed. Concerning the council, they sought only to condemn the man for the miracle occurring on the Sabbath. They condemned him and Jesus for taking such an action.

Further, in verifying the miracle, the parents are called. They were cautious in their answers fearing being thrown out of the synagogue. Hence, they subverted the questioning to their son.

Next, the one healed was prompted to seek out Jesus because of the questioning of the Pharisees. They aroused his interest and his desire to truly find out if the healer was indeed the Messiah. In the end, he becomes one who is not only healed physically, but spiritually, becoming a follower of Jesus.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who interrogated the blind man?
2. What did his parents say about the healing?
3. When did the blind man become a disciple?

***The Good Shepherd & His Sheep*** *(*Jn. 10:1-21)

*“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.  But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.  And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.  And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.  This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.  Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.  I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.  But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.  I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.  Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.  No man taketh 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 commandment have I received of my Father. There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?”* (Jn. 10:1-21).

This popular parable so told by Christ had several components. It consists of the door, the Shepherd, the sheep, the hireling, and the thief. Only the Shepherd gains access to the sheep through the porter who opens the door. He goes before His sheep, calls them by name, and willingly sacrifices His life for the sheep.

Concerning the sheep, they hear the Shepherd’s voice and follow Him. Their refusal to follow a stranger reveals their loyalty to the Lord. Their recognition of the Lord’s voice is the key. The sheep will be made up of two groups, first the Jews, and second the Gentiles.

The hireling, the wolf, and the devil are the unwelcomed culprits who try to divide and devour the flock. By corruption and deception, they will hinder, destroy, and devour those sheep who wander.

The audience responds to the parable with division. Those who harbor hard feelings and perceptions toward Jesus charge Him with having a devil or being insane. Those who respond in a positive manner cite the very fact that the healing of the blind man in John 9 could not had been accomplished by a devil but by one sent from God.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who is the Good Shepherd?
2. Who are the sheep?

**THE MINISTRY WHILE TRAVELING TO JUDEA FROM GALILEE**

***Jesus Leaves Galilee*** (Matt. 19:1; Mark 10:1; Lk. 9:51)

“*And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan*” (Matt. 19:1).

“*And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again”* (Mark 10:1).

*“And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem*” (Lk. 9:51).

Here begins the Lord’s last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem to attend His last Passover. Jesus came from Galilee (which lay to the north of Judea) into the coasts of Judea; and from thence, in his way to Jerusalem, he went through Jericho, (Matt. 20:17, 29), which lay at the distance of seven miles and a half from Jordan, to the western side of it.

***The Healing of Ten Lepers*** (Lk. 17:11-19) (Border between Galilee and Samaria)

“*And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.  And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.  And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.  And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.* *And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?  There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole*” (Lk. 17:11-19).

As Jesus traveled, He entered a town between Samaria and Galilee. There He was met by ten lepers crying out for mercy. Without a touch, He informs them to go show themselves to the priest which was a required act in the ceremonial cleansing of a leper (Lev. 14:12).

“*And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.”* The other nine no doubt were Jews. Whereas the one most unlikely to offer thanks in the eyes of the Jews, showed himself to be guided by faith.

*“And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?  There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.”* The lack of gratitude in honoring their benefactor was alarming. It was the heart of a “stranger” who gave God the glory. Hence, the Lord’s response, “*Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. After leaving Galilee what miracle is recorded?
2. Why was Jesus disappointed in the nine lepers?
3. The leper who gave Jesus the glory was a what?

***Opposition from the Samaritans*** (Lk. 9:52-56) (Samaria)

“*And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.  And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.  And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?  But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.  For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village”* (Lk. 9:52-56)*.*

The rejection of the Samaritans toward Jesus was reactionary. The Lord’s face was set to go toward Jerusalem which would be taken as an insult to the Samaritans. They believed that the proper place to worship God was at the temple built at Mount Gerizim, whereas the Jews believed it to be the one built in Jerusalem.

The reaction of the “sons of thunder” was based on prejudice. Their solution to the conflict was for Jesus to destroy the town and the people as Elijah destroyed his enemy in 2 Kings 1:10-12.

“*But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.  For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.”* The brother’s solution of destroying human life infuriated Christ. He had taught these men from the beginning to aim at saving the souls of men and not wishing harm upon them. That was the mission of the Messiah, and the continued propelling commission given later to the apostles.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who refused Jesus to travel through their lands?
2. What did John and James want done to these men?

***Sending Out the Seventy with the Apostles*** (Lk. 10:1-11)

*“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.  Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.  Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.  Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.  And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.  And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.  And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire.* *Go not from house to house.  And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:  And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.   But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you”* (Lk. 10:1-11).

There are so many misconceptions about this episode in the life of Christ. First, there was never a door knocking campaign in the early days of the church. In the limited commission, Jesus sends out eighty-two men with the charge to go greet, preach and heal. The houses being receptive no doubt was by personal invite which was customary among the Jews. In fact, the Lord exclaims, “*Go not from house to house.”*

Second, miracles were performed not only by the twelve, but by the seventy. They were simply the signature of one sent by the Messiah (John 20:30, 31).

They were to carry neither purse nor script but merely depending on the benevolence of their Jewish brethren. If their reception was well received, the city would be blessed for accepting the promise of the coming Kingdom. If the preaching was rejected, they were to wipe off the dust from their sandals as curse to that city.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Jesus sent how many disciples with the apostles to preach to the Jews?
2. What instructions did give these men?

***Woe To Unrepented Towns*** (Matt. 11:20-24; Lk. 10:12-16)

“*Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.  But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.  And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee”* (Matt. 11:20-24).

“*But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.  Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.  But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.  And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.  He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me*” (Lk. 10:12-16).

Chorazin and Bethsaida were towns not far from Capernaum. Bethsaida was the city of Andrew and Peter (Jn. 1:44). Albert Barnes comments on Tyre and Sidon:

“These were cities of Phoenicia, formerly very opulent, and distinguished for merchandise. They were situated on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and were in the western part of Judea. They were therefore well known to the Jews. Tyre is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament as being the place through which Solomon derived many of the materials for building the temple, 2 Ch\_2:11-16. It was also a place against which one of the most important and pointed prophecies of Isaiah was directed. See the notes at Isa. 23. Compare Eze\_26:4-14. Both these cities were very ancient. Sidon was situated within the bounds of the tribe of Asher Jos\_19:28, but this tribe could never get possession of it, Jdg\_1:31. It was famous for its great trade and navigation. Its inhabitants were the first remarkable merchants in the world, and were much celebrated for their luxury. In the time of our Saviour it was probably a city of much splendor and extensive commerce. It is now called Seide, or Saide, and is far less populous and splendid than it was in the time of Christ. It was subdued successively by the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Romans, the latter of whom deprived it of its freedom” (Albert Barnes, *Barnes Notes*, The Gospel of Matthew).

Jesus mentions Capernaum next. Her location is identified as “*upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim*” (Matt. 4:13). A place where Christ chose to dwell and make His abode. It was in this region where Christ performed many miracles and began His ministry. And now by their future rejection would meet a fate worse than Sodom (Gen. 19:1-28).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What cities received the woes?
2. Why were the cities being condemned?

***The Seventy-two Return*** ((Lk. 10:17-20)

“*And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.  And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.  Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.  Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven”* (Lk. 10:17-20).

As the seventy returns, they are found with a new fervor proclaiming, “*Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.”* Jesus responds, “*I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”* In simplicity, Jesus was hailing that the demons were cast out of others like lightning falling from the sky. It was not said to imply that Satan fell from heaven.

The Lord’s declaration that He gave them this power is balanced with a statement of priority. The celebration was to be focused more on the fact that their names were written in heaven.

**QUESTION:**

1. The seventy stated, “Even the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are subject unto us through \_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

***God’s Revelation*** (Matt. 11:25-27; Lk. 10:21-24)

“*At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.  Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.  All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him”* (Matt. 11:25-27).

“*In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.  All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.  And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately,* *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them”* (Lk. 10:21-24).

Jesus makes it known of His relationship with the Father. The true mystery of Jesus being equal to the Father was hid from the wise (σοφός) and prudent **(**συνετῶν). Paul said to the brethren at Corinth, “*For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are*” (1 Cor. 1:26-28).

In defining the “wise” and the “prudent,” the meanings are often associated with those who are gifted with heavenly wisdom and understanding. Yet in this case He speaks sarcastically. And in contrast to “babes.” For He proclaims that He alone knows the Father, and vice-versa. Hence, man is only able to know God through the Son (Jn. 14:6).

It is at this point that He turns to His disciples and says, “*Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”* Not only those patriarchs and saints of the past, but how many of us would had loved to have seen what those men beheld. We only have a small sample of the events and healings that took place during the Lord’s earthly ministry.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Jesus call His disciples?
2. What beatitude is given in this passage?

***Rest in Jesus*** (Matt. 11:28-30)

*“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”* (Matt. 11:28-30).

These comforting words unveil the heart of Jesus. There is never too much that He cannot handle. He pleads with the sinner, the downtrodden, the poor, and the sufferers of this world to come to Him. He not only has the power to relieve their sufferings, but He offers them rest.

**QUESTION:**

1. What rest does Jesus offer to the obedient?

***Parable of the Good Samaritan*** (Lk. 10:25-37)

“*And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?  He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou?  And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.  And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.  But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.  And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.  And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, 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 on him,  And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.**Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?  And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise”* (Lk. 10:25-37).

Luke is the only gospel writer who pens the parable of the Good Samaritan. It is in response to the lawyer’s question, “*What shall I do to inherit eternal life*?” Jesus responds by asking the lawyer to cite what is written in the Law. He quotes the great laws written in Deuteronomy 6:5. Howbeit, it is the lawyer’s question regarding who would be defined as his neighbor that leads in to the parable being orated.

The parable centers on a man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and was overtaken by thieves and left for dead. Jericho was situated about 15 miles to the northeast of Jerusalem, and about 8 miles west of the river Jordan. The road he traveled on was the main Thorofare for one traveling to and from Jerusalem, and it was known to be dangerous.

The first to come across the wounded man were a priest and a Levite. Both were obligated by their profession to help one in need. Their failure to do so would be a sign that they supposed the man to be expired. Under the law of Moses anyone who touched a dead body in the field would be considered unclean for seven days (Num. 19:16). Thus, the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side.

Later, it was a Samaritan who saw the wounded man, and took him to an inn to recover from his injuries. He not only aided the man but obligated himself with the keeper of the inn to pay any charges that the stranger accrued during his stay.

Jesus asked, “*Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?”* The lawyer quickly answers, “*He that shewed mercy on him.”* The lawyer’s correct response led Jesus to proclaim, “*Go, and do thou likewise.”*

The Lord’s genius in using one most hated by the Jews, the Samaritan, is a lesson for all generations to learn. The biblical definition of a “neighbor” is not inclusive to our own race or creed, but represents every man, woman, and child who have breath.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who are the main characters in this parable?
2. Who becomes the hero in this parable?

***Jesus with Mary & Martha*** (Lk. 10:38-42) (Bethany near Jerusalem)

“*Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.  And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.   But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.  And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her”* (Lk. 10:38-42).

The defined lines drawn concerning men and women in the early centuries are not to be ignored. Most often, women spent their youth learning how to cook, sew, clean, and care for the children. Men were responsible for holding down a job and providing for the physical needs of the family.

On this occasion, Mary left her duties aiding her sister Martha in serving the guests and sat at the feet of Jesus listening to His teachings. Martha rebuking her sister for not aiding her in serving stirs Jesus to say, “*Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”*

Martha’s intent to care for her guests is admirable. The Lord does not sly her for wanting to provide nourishment, but her troubled state of distracting her sister from hearing the word of God. For that is the one “needful things” which is necessary for one to serve Him.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What complaint did Martha have for her sister Mary?
2. What did the phrase mean, “*Mary had chosen that good part*…?”

***Lord’s Teaching on Prayer*** (Lk. 11:1-4) (Also found in Matt. 6:9-15)

“*And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.  And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.  Give us day by day our daily bread.  And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil”* (Lk. 11:1-4).

Many label the Lord’s teaching on this occasion as the “Lord’s Prayer.” Howbeit, it was the Lord’s example to the apostles on how to pray being prompted by the disciple’s request. For in reality, the Lord would never pray portions of this prayer, nor mean for it to be cited continually. For example, the kingdom in promise has now been established (Acts 2).

Second, the Lord would have no need to asks forgiveness from His sins seeing that He never committed a violation against His Father. His request to His Father on the cross was, “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do”* (Lk. 23:34). And His innocence was confirmed by many of the New Testament writers (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who did Jesus teach to pray?
2. Why is it wrong to pray this prayer today?
3. What is wrong in calling this the “Lord’s Prayer?”

***Ask and It Will Be Given*** (Lk. 11:5-13) (Also found in Matt. 7:7-11)

“*And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?  And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.  I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.  And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.  If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?  Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?  If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children**: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”* (Lk. 11:5-13).

The great teachings of Christ were not only provoked by a change of direction, but by the addition of an active faith. This was the significance of James’s teaching on the concept of faith and works (Jas. 2:14-26). In this episode in Luke, Jesus speaks of a friend in need of three loafs to supply for another who has stopped by at midnight on a long journey. The Jews were to be hospitable to their own brethren, but in this case, it is late at night, and his family is sound asleep.

The man’s refusal is thwarted by the friend’s perseverance. That is the meaning “yet because of his importunity” (ἀναίδεια) which literally is defined as “imprudence” in the Greek. And example of this type of behavior as related to prayer is illustrated in the case of Abraham's intercession for Sodom (Gen. 18:23-33); and of the Syro-Phoenician woman (Matt. 15:22-28).

The application to God is implied in the words “knock,” “seek,” and “find.” God loves His children and is willing and able to supply for their needs. And as His sons and daughters, He will not give us a stone when we ask for bread, nor a serpent when we ask for a fish, and surely not a scorpion when we pray for an egg. It concludes this narrative with a question, “H*ow much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”*

The meaning of the Holy Spirit being given to those who asks is directly parallel to the gift of salvation and the various gifts later to be given by the Spirit. This is not Holy Spirit baptism for only two examples are given in the New Testament, one to the apostles (Acts 2), and the other to Cornelius and his household (Acts 10, 11). The New Testament informs the reader that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). And the manifested gifts are given to the faithful. For the early disciples, they received miraculous gifts through the laying on of the apostles’ hands (Acts 8:16-18). Howbeit, they would eventually cease (1 Cor. 13:9, 10). The spiritual gifts gained through continual knowledge of God through His word would be the recognizable energy within the hearts and minds of the faithful (1 Cor. 13:13).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Did God always give the apostles what they asked for?
2. Who would they apostles asks for that would guide them after the death of Jesus?

***The Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) (Jerusalem, November or December AD 32) (John 10:22-39)***

***“****And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.  And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.  Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.  Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.  But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.  My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.  My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck 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 have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?  The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.  Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?  If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?  If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand” (*Jn. 10:22-39).

John Gill comments are this particular feast:

“That is, of the temple; not as built by Solomon, as Nonnus in his paraphrase suggests; or as rebuilt by Zerubabel, for there were no annual feasts appointed in commemoration of either of these; and besides, they were neither of them in the winter time; the dedication of Solomon's temple was in autumn, at the feast of tabernacles, about September, 1Ki\_8:2; and the dedication of the house in Zorobabel's time, was in the spring, about February, Ezr\_6:15; but this was the feast of dedication, appointed by Judas Maccabaeus and his brethren, on account of the purging the temple, and renewing the altar, after the profanation of them by Antiochus; which feast lasted eight days, and began on the twenty fifth of the month Cisleu, which answers to part of our December; see the Apocrypha” (John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible*, the Gospel of John).

At the ending of His ministry the confrontations and accusations become more volatile. The multitude demand clarification concerning His Messiahship. Jesus responds by focusing on the signs and wonders performed on many occasions before them.

This brings about the next phase of the discussion for the Lord reveals His relationship with God. He is one with Him. The Jews respond with picking up stones ready to stone Him for such a proclamation. John writes, “*The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”* Jesus then quotes Psalm 82:6 which relates back to Exodus 4:16 and 7:1. The Lord’s revelation concerning His oneness with the Father becomes the fuse that ignites the hatred within the hearts of His accusers. This will be the true reasoning why the Jewish leaders wanted Him crucified. Yet before Pilate they accused him of perverting the nation and refusing to give tribute to Caesar by saying that he was Christ the King (Lk. 23:2). Insurrection would have prompted Pilate to enforce the death penalty upon the Lord, but Pilate refused to accept the inditement.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When was the Feast of Dedication held for the Jews?
2. Why were the people wanting to stone Jesus?

***The Perean Ministry (The region of Judea beyond the Jordan)***

***To Perea*** (Matt. 19:1, 2; Mark 10:1; John 10:40-42)

*“And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan;  And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there”* (Matt. 19:1, 2).

“*And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again”* (Mark 10:1).

*“And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.  And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.  And many believed on him there”* (John 10:40-42).

This is the last journey of Jesus from the area of Galilee to Jerusalem. He will come to attend His last Passover.

Keep in mind that a considerable lapse of time occurred between the Lord’s last discourse in chapter eighteen, and what is recorded in this segment of Matthew. The events lacking in Matthew’s gospel are taken up in Luke and John’s.

**QUESTION:**

1. How many Passovers did Jesus attend in His 3 ½ year ministry?

***Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees*** (Lk. 12:1-3)

*“In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.* *For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops*” (Lk. 12-1-3).

As Jesus had discourse with the scribes and Pharisees, a myriad (μυριαδων) of people gathered around Him. He then turns toward His disciple and warns them against the leaven of the Pharisees.

In Matthew’s gospel, the spiritual meaning of leaven is defined, “*Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees”* (Matt. 16:12). This warning is given on several occasions during the Lord’s earthly ministry (Mark 8:15; Lk. 12:1). And Paul warns against this same ideology to the brethren at Corinth and Galatia (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9).

“*For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”* Hypocrisy, like all other sins, will be unveiled. Paul exclaimed, “*Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God”* (1 Cor. 4:5).

“*Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.*” So many statements made in the gospels contrasts light and darkness:

“*The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up*” (Matt. 4:16).

*“What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops”* (Matt. 10:27).

*“Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness”* (Lk. 11:35).

“And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (Jn. 1:5).

“*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil”* (Jn. 3;19).

“*Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*” (Jn. 8:12).

“*Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth*” (Jn. 12:35).

“*I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness”* (Jn. 12:46).

The Lord’s statement in Luke 12 is a Hebrew parallel. The darkness and light are the same as the closet and housetop. The emphasis is on the future ministry of the apostles who at one time were taught by their Master in the most private settings and would advance to proclaiming the good news in public assemblies.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the leaven of the Pharisees?
2. Should we be watchful of this type of teaching today?

***Be Not Afraid*****(**Lk. 12:4-7)

“*And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.  But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.  Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows”* (Lk. 12:4-7).

It is a natural tendency to fear in times of trouble, persecution, and danger. Jesus makes a valid proclamation that man can only inflict harm in this life. It is God who is able to punish the soul eternally.

Jesus then brings up two facts concerning the value and worth of His creatures large and small. First, He cites the common occurrence of five sparrows are sold in the marketplace for a measly price of two farthings. John Gill comments, “*A farthing, with the Jews, was a very small coin; according to them it contained four grains of silver; was the ninety sixth part of a "sela", or shilling; and sometimes they make it to be of the same value with an Italian farthing: for they say, it is of the value of eight "prutahs": and a "prutah" is the eighth part of an Italian farthing: it is used proverbially to signify a very little thing in the Misna”* (John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible,* the Gospel of Luke). This small amount does not take away from the value of the sparrow for Matthew writes that not one bird “falls to the ground” without God noticing (Matt. 10:29).

Second, Jesus tells how even the hairs on one’s head are counted by God. Every person realizes that hair is often brushed out, plucked out, cut, and even falls to the ground naturally. Even though it is not noticed or thought of, God sees and cares.

“*Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.”* For the Christian there is nothing to fear from man. As the virtuous woman’s value is far above rubies (Prov. 31:10), the worth of a godly servant is said to be a “great price” in the heart of God (1 Pet. 3:4).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the disciples not to be afraid of?
2. Who should we fear?

***Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit*****(**Lk. 12:8-12)

*“Also I say unto you, Whosoever* shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven. And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say” (Lk. 12:8-12).

Jesus brings forth three important points. First, confession and denial of His authority. For those who confess, Jesus said He would confess that person’s name before the angels. Howbeit, if one denies the Lord, so shall He deny that person before the angels.

Second, the Lord teaches speaking blasphemy about Christ, one could gain forgiveness. Sadly, if one blasphemy the Holy Ghost, that person will not be forgiven. This particular sin has been the subject of much controversy. It should not be difficult in understanding the principle that Jesus brings forth. He is underlining the fact that He has been humiliated, condemned, and even called Beelzebub by many of the Jewish community. After He ascends to His rightful place beside the Father, He will send the Holy Spirit to His disciples. Hence, if one denies the truth, and speaks blasphemous words, that person will face the eternal consequence of such an action. Why? Because the Holy Spirit would be given to these men to convert the souls of others. Once the apostles pass, the last inspired word spoken, nothing else would be given or sent to reveal the path to heaven.

Third, Jesus talks of the guidance the apostles would receive after His ascension. The Holy Spirit that was promised (Jn. 14:26) would speak through them. They would stand before magistrates and leaders with boldness and confidence given by the Holy Spirit.

**QUESTION:**

1. What is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?

***Parable of the Rich Fool*** (Lk. 12:13-21)

*“And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.  And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?  And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.  And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.  And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.  But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* *So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God”* (Lk. 12:13-21).

“*And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.  And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?  And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”*The question of dividing an inheritance is asked by one of the men in the crowd. We sometimes fail to comprehend that not all who came to Jesus were asking for divine healing or food. Some, believing Jesus to be a prophet, came for their own personal agendas. It this case, the man wanted Jesus to mediate a money dispute.

The Lord responds threefold. First, Jesus **rebukes** the man, “*Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?”* His mission was to save the lost, and not mediate in trivial affairs that rested in the hands of magistrates.

Second, Jesus offers a **warning,** “*Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”* The sin of covetousness was prohibited in the Mosaic law (Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21). The Lord takes it a step further by a basic understanding of life. Man’s days are not prolonged or aided by his possessions. They will not bring him happiness, nor assist him in preparing for eternity.

Third, the Lord speaks a **parable** to **provoke** the man’s conscience. In the story, a man is greatly blessed by farming a fertile ground from which God created. As the ground yields her blessings, the man sees the need to build bigger barns and to store up the abundance of his fruits and grains. As he sits back and focuses on his success, he continues to plan for the future. Howbeit, he passes from this life to the judgment hall of God.

Was it wrong for the man to plan? No! Was it wrong for the man to enjoy what the ground had yielded? No! His failure was not seeing God in the picture. Six times in the parable the personal pronoun “I” is used. God was never given the glory, praise, or thanks. The man thought only of his possessions, his success, and his future. He had plenty of room to store his goods, but no room in his heart for God.

Jesus sums up the lesson by stating, “*So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is the farmer in this parable foolish?
2. When did God take his soul?

***Don’t Worry*** (Lk. 12:22-31)

“*And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.  Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?  If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.  If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?  And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Lk. 12:22-31).

Prompted by the covetous nature of the man wanting to have his brother divide his inheritance, Jesus directs His attention to His disciples. He tells them not to worry over where their next meal would come from, or what raiment they would choose to put on the next day; for life is more than what you may eat or put on.

Jesus then cites three examples of God’s providential care. First, the ravens, which God provides for even though they do not have the ability to build nor reap or sow. Second, a man’s inability to change his height. And third, the lilies of the field neither labour as men do, in sowing flax, and dressing it, or in combing of wool, or in spinning of either. Yet Solomon in all his undertakings could not create such beauty.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why are Christians not to worry?
2. What three example did Jesus give showing God’s care?

***Treasure in Heaven*** (Lk. 12:32-34) (Matt. 6:19-21)

“*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.  Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.  For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* (Lk. 12:32-34).

The kingdom was no accident. It was through God’s good pleasure to build it, and to fill it with the saints. They would be the people who would sacrifice all for a plot of land in heaven. We see this exhibition in the book of Acts from the saints willing to distribute, and aid those in need (Acts 2:44, 45; Acts 4:32-35).

“*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”* Here is the separating sentence. Those who hold to the possessions in this world will never enter the gates of heaven. For those who seek and unseen treasure in heaven, they will enjoy the fruits of eternal life.

**QUESTION:**

1. What treasures are there in heaven?
2. What is the difference between earthly treasures and heavenly treasures?

***Watchfulness*** (Lk. 12:35-48)

“*Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.  Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.  And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.  And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.  Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.  Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?  And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?  Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;  The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more”* (Lk. 12:35-48).

The context of this passage speaks of readiness. It also speaks of greater punishment for the fallen Christian. To watch and be ready for the second coming of Christ is a fundamental necessity for the faithful.

As He begins His teaching and watchfulness, He uses two words of great importance: wait, and watch. At first, He speaks of a man coming back from a wedding knocking on a friend’s door with the implication that he is to “open immediately.”

The friend’s reaction to open the door speaks of one who is watching for the Savior. The steward’s loyalty is rewarded with meal served by the Lord. Concerning the several watches of the Jews, Adam Clarke comments:

Anciently the Jews divided the night into three watches, consisting of four hours each. The first watch is mentioned, Lam\_2:19 : the second, Jdg\_7:19; and the third, Exo\_14:24; but a fourth watch is not mentioned in any part of the Old Testament. This division the Romans had introduced in Judea, as also the custom of dividing the day into twelve hours: see Joh\_11:9. The first watch began at six o’clock in the evening, and continued till nine; the second began at nine, and continued till twelve; the third began at twelve, and continued till three next morning; and the fourth began at three, and continued till six. It was therefore between the hours of three and six in the morning that Jesus made his appearance to his disciples (*Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible*, the Gospel of Luke).

The second part of the parable aims at the disloyal steward. He believes that the Lord will delay His coming, so that servant begins to indulge in sin. Then it is stated, “*The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.”*

There is also a third part to this parable that should not be overlooked. Jesus pronounces, “A*nd that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.”* Jesus is teaching degrees of punishment. For the disciple who falls into sin will be beaten with “many stripes.” Whereas, the unlearned will still be punished, but with few stripes.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who is the wise servant in this parable?
2. What happens to the wicked servant?
3. Does this parable teach degrees of punishment?

***Not Peace but Division*** (Lk. 12:49-53) (Matt. 6:19-21)

“*I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law*” (Lk. 12:49-53).

The man of peace would by His preaching bring discord (fire). As He speaks of His death and resurrection as a baptism, He warns of the division that would follow. This is not what the Lord desired, but realized it was the result of erecting the kingdom. Families divided over Jesus. For some would accept His testimony, while others would side with the Pharisees and Sadducees.

**QUESTION:**

1. What did Jesus mean that He did not come to bring peace?
2. What did He bring?

***Interpreting the Times*** (Lk. 12:54-56)

*“And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.  Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?”* (Lk. 12:54-56).

Jesus made the identical observation concerning the Pharisees in Matthew 16:23, 24. They would see a cloud rise, and predict a thunder shower; or a south wind and expect a fervent heat. These are observable events easy to discern. Howbeit, they view the miracles the Lord performed, hear the words preached, and even further, the prophets wrote down the signs and the times for the Messiah to appear, and they ignore all!

**QUESTION:**

1. Why did Jesus call the Pharisees hypocrites?

***Settle with Your Accuser*** (Lk. 12:57-59)

“*Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite”* (Lk. 12:57-59).

The condemnation and warning against the leaven of the Sadducees and Pharisees is ended with the parabolic message of practicality. He brings forth a lesson on one owing a creditor and being taken to the magistrate for arbitration and judgment. While both are walking to the magistrate, the debtor agrees to pay what is owed for fear of what judgment may be cast upon him.

“*I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.”* The mite was a very small brass coin, one-eighth of an ounce. In the N.T. The poor widow in Luke 21:1-4 gave two mites which was all she had.

The symbolic meaning unveils a God who judges the hearts of men. Paul wrote to the brethren at Corinth, “*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad”* (2 Cor. 5:10).

**QUESTION:**

1. When are we suppose to settle our disputes?

***Repent or Perish*** (Lk. 13:1-5)

“*There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem**?  I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*” (Lk. 13:1-5).

Within the crowd, after hearing the condemnation of the Pharisees in chapter twelve, the story of Pilates vengeance against certain Galileans. John Gill comments:

These Galileans were very likely some of the followers of Judas Gaulonitis, or Judas of Galilee; see Act\_5:37 who endeavoured to draw off the Jews from the Roman government, and affirmed it was not lawful to give tribute to Caesar; at which Pilate being enraged, sent a band of soldiers, and slew these his followers; who were come up to the feast of the passover, as they were offering their sacrifices in the temple, and so mixed their blood with the blood of the passover lambs: this being lately done, some of the company spoke of it to Christ; very likely some of the Scribes and Pharisees, whom he had just now taxed as hypocrites; either to know his sense of Pilate's conduct, that should he condemn it as brutish and barbarous, they might accuse him to him; or should he approve of it, might traduce him, and bring him into contempt among the people; or to know his sentiments concerning the persons slain, whether or no they were not very wicked persons; and whether this was not a judgment upon them, to be put to death in such a manner, and at such a time and place, and which sense seems to be confirmed by Christ's answer (Gill, *Exposition of the Bible*, Gospel of Luke).

*“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” Repentance is a necessary action no matter how large or small a sin may be. For God sees all sin as deplorable.

Solomon wrote, “*These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren*” (Prov. 6:16-19). This tells the reader that certain sins are more damaging than others.

**QUESTION:**

1. Jesus told the people that they needed to do what, or they would perish?

***Parable of the Fig Tree***(Lk. 13:6-9)

***“****He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.  Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down”* (Lk. 13:6-9).

Here is the story of the Hebrews. Through bondage and captivity, the Lord wished that His chosen people would follow righteousness. And for three years, the Messiah walked among them healing their sick, and preaching good tidings. Yet the Lord was not ready to abandon them. The church would be established, and more efforts would be made to save these lost souls. Sadly, to no avail, the Jews held onto the Old Covenant. In the end, the gospel was received by the Samaritans and the Gentiles leaving the Hebrews to their own demise.

**QUESTION:**

1. What mercy was extended to the fig tree?

***Crippled Woman Healed on Sabbath*** (Lk. 13:10-17)

“*And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.  And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.* *And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him”* (Lk. 13:10-17).

As on several occasions, Jesus chose the Sabbath as a day of healing. On this occasion, a woman who had been inflicted by Satan with a debilitating infirmity, so much so that she could not even lift herself up, is miraculously healed. Upon such visual demonstration, the ruler of the synagogue rebuked Jesus.

“*And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.”* The ignorance and uncaring remarks of the ruler sounded much like the condemning insults of the Pharisees.

“*The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?”* Jesus responds with common knowledge. Even on the Sabbath, people led their animals to water. And in like manner, this woman who had this affliction*,* should she not receive the mercy of relieving her of this pain?

“*And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.”* The Lord’s proclamation brought shame to His adversaries, and joy to the people. This shame and humiliation would be a driving force for His enemies to seek vengeance.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Was there any Jewish law that prohibited healing on the Sabbath?
2. What hypocrisy did Jesus mention that the Pharisees often performed?

***Parable of the Mustard Seed*** ***and Leaven***(Lk. 13:18-21) (Matt. 13:31-32; Mk. 4:30-32)

“*Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?  It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened*” (Lk. 13:18-21).

“*Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened”* (Matt. 13:31-33).

“*And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it”* (Mark 4:30-32).

Matthew’s citing of the two kingdom parables was pronounced during a different period in the Lord’s ministry. And Mark only quotes the parable of the Mustard seed. The meaning of the two parables centers on the initial start of the kingdom from something small to something gigantic.

**QUESTION:**

1. What is being taught in the parable of the mustard seed and the leaven?

***Heading Toward Jerusalem*** (Lk. 13:22)

“*And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem”* (Lk. 13:22).

From Luke 9:51 to Luke 13:22, all things said was while Jesus was heading through Galilee on His way to Jerusalem. Without a doubt therefore one witnesses a lot of repetitiveness in the lessons taught by Jesus.

***The Narrow Door*** (Lk. 13:23-30) (Matt. 7:13, 14)

“*Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.**There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.**And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last”* (Lk. 13:23-30).

Passing through the cities, a person, not a disciple, asks the Lord, “*Are there few that be saved*?” Jesus responds with a parable. He speaks of the strait gate which was also alluded to in Matthew 7:13, 14. No doubt representing entrance into the Kingdom. He proclaims that many will seek entrance and not be able. For the master of the house controls the entrance to the door. Hence, while many stands outside knocking insisting that the master knows them, he rebukes them proclaiming that he does not know them, and they are seen as “workers of iniquity.”

“*There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.”* The description of hell as being a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth is often used by Jesus (Matt. 8:12, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30).  This speaks of a literal punishment, as well as spiritual. For the anguish and hurt that comes through seeing the righteous saved, and they themselves lost would be torturous.

“*And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.”* And where will the saved come from? They will come from the four corners of the globe. Gentiles, who were so neglected by the Jews, will be granted access to the kingdom, and to life eternal.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question was asked to Jesus prompting Him to tell the parable of the narrow door?
2. How is hell described in this parable?

***Jesus Warned about Herod*** (Lk. 13:31-33)

*“The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem”* (Lk. 13:31-33).

The Pharisee spoke of Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great. He ruled over Galilee and Perea. We do not know if the Pharisees remarks of Herod truly was wishing Jesus to retire beyond his region is true. It seems probable that the Pharisees were using every excuse necessary to drive Jesus from the region.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who told Jesus that Herod was seeking to kill Him?
2. What did Jesus call Herod?

***Lament Over Jerusalem*** (Lk. 13:34, 35) (Matt. 23:37-39)

“*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord”* (Lk. 13:34, 35).

Who would ever question the love God had for Israel? With a sorrowful heart, the Lord pours out His soul in despair over the holy city. He wanted so much to care for them as a loving hen with her young, but THEY WOULD NOT!

*“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”* “*Your house”* represented the temple. It would no longer be a place of holiness where God dwelt. He would abandon it. His final appearing will be in the day of judgment sparing only those who accepted His messiahship.

**QUESTION:**

1. Why did Jesus lament over Jerusalem?

***Jesus at the Pharisee’s House*** (Sabbath) (Lk. 14:1-6)

“*And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; And answered them, saying,* *Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things*” (Lk. 14:1-6).

In this scenario, Jesus enters the house of a chief Pharisee. This meant that he was a member of the Sanhedrin. More than likely the Lord was invited to dine with the Pharisee wanting to catch Him saying or doing something incriminating.

While sitting to dine, a man enters who has been suffering from dropsy. This was a disease produced by the accumulation of water in various parts of the body. Without a doubt this situation was setup for the purpose of seeing if Jesus would break their beliefs of the Sabbath.

Jesus asks two questions. First, “*Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day*?” The Lord gives them the opportunity to support their views, but the lawyers and Pharisees said nothing.

After He heals the burdened soul, the Lord asks, “*Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?”* Their allowance of such actions to be taken on the sabbath further unveiled their hypocrisy. Once again, they said nothing!

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In the above passage, who’s house did Jesus dine?
2. What disease did the man have who asked Jesus to heal him?
3. What question did Jesus asks the Pharisee?

***Parable of the Wedding Feast*** (Lk. 14:7-11)

*“And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.**For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”* (Lk. 14:7-11).

This is the first of several parables presented by Jesus while sitting in the house of the chief Pharisee with his entourage of lawyers and Pharisees. It aims at their lack of humility and focuses on their pride and arrogance.

Jesus speaks of a community wedding where many guests begin to arrive. He tells of the lack of wisdom of desiring to sit in the chief seats and having to be ejected because a more important and nobler man enters.

Therefore, when one is invited to a wedding sit in the lowest seats. Those that are given to the common guests. And if the master of the feasts bids you to sit in a more prestigious seat, it would not be embarrassing.

The lesson is concluded by Jesus saying, “*For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”* It is God’s divine authority to abase the proud and arrogant and exalt the humble.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In the parable what seat should one take when invited to a wedding?
2. What did Jesus say about the prideful and the humble?

***Parable of the Great Banquet*** (Lk. 14:12-24)

“*Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. 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 hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.**For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper”* (Lk. 15:12-24).

The second parable presented by the Lord in the Pharisee’s house aims at true appreciation and not obligation. The parable of the great banquet presents a man who invites many important individuals to come to a feast that he is preparing. Concerning the first friend, he refuses the invite citing that he bought a piece of land and felt the need to go see it.

The second man had purchased five oxen and wanted to go prove them. In other words, he wanted to see how they worked in the fields and pulled the plow.

The third person exclaimed that he had married a wife and would not be able to attend. This along with the other two infuriated the man wanting to hold a feast.

Recorded are three excuse makers with no logical reasoning for rejecting the invitation. Their refusals were insulting and unjustifiable.

With such rejection, the master of the feast asked his servant to go into the streets and invite the poor, maimed, the halt, and the blind. After they arrived, the servant informed his master that there was still room for many more. Thus, the servant was commanded to go further outside the city to the highways and hedges inviting strangers to come to the feast.

This is a parable which points to the rejection by Israel, but acceptance of the gentiles to the gospel. It aims at the great invitation given by God to a lost and dying world. It speaks of reconciliation, forgiveness, and celebration of the Messiah.

“*For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.”* The ending of those rejecting the gospel message comes at a price. They will not enjoy the feasts of the saints but be denied eternal life.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In this parable, the one making a feast should call whom to attend?
2. What three excuses were made by those not wanting to attend the feast?

***The Cost of Discipleship*** (Lk. 14:25-33)

“*And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold 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, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple”* (Lk. 15:25-33).

The cost of discipleship involves loyalty and cross bearing. A man must be willing to hate (love less) his family members, and his own life to be worthy of being a disciple.

Second, if one refuses to carry his own cross and follow after Jesus, he would be unworthy of discipleship. This is met with two necessities of kingdom loyalty.

The first example speaks of a man wanting to build a tower. He must consider if he has the funding to build. For if he is only able to build the foundation, and nothing more, his friends and neighbors would mock him.

The second example, Jesus focuses on a king about to wage war. He must count the probable losses in such and endeavor, especially if the enemy have twice as many soldiers. If the odds are not in his favor, the same king will send an ambassage to negotiate peace.

“*So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”* Counting the cost, and forsaking all, are two important factors in following the Lord.

**QUESTION:**

1. What does it mean to “count the cost?”

***Worthless Salt*** (Lk. 14:34, 35) (Matt. 5:13; Mk. 9:50)

“*Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear”* (Lk. 14:34, 35).

Salt has purpose. When it becomes tasteless and insipid, it becomes useless. It could not serve in a positive way for enriching the ground, neither would it be enriching like manure to be used as fertilizer.

“*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”* This expression is used in Matthew 11:15. It signifies that the meaning of such parables is important to the disciple. One must maintain his or her faith in the kingdom. For one’s goodness and usefulness can be easily extinguished by an arrogant spirit, and a change in priorities.

**QUESTION:**

1. What does one do with worthless salt?

***Parable of the Lost Sheep*** (Lk. 15:1-7) (Matt. 18:10-14)

“*Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (*Lk. 15:1-7).

This is one of two parables that unveils the value of the human soul. In the parable of the lost sheep. It is directed at the Pharisees while the publicans and sinners draw nearer to the Lord to hear His teachings. This causes the Pharisees to murmur.

This parable speaks of a shepherd that notes that one of his sheep is missing. He heads out on a journey to find it. And when he does, he places it upon his shoulder, and carries it home asking his friends and neighbors to rejoice with him.

“*Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”* Never a more compassionate statement had been cited that speaks of the nature and mercy of God. The missing sheep represents all the lost sinners in need of repentance. The great joy felt in the hallways of heaven for the one lost, but now saved.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who drew near Christ to hear His lessons?
2. What does the parable of the Lost Sheep teach us?

***Parable of the Lost Coin*** (Lk. 15:8-10)

“*Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth”* (Lk. 15:8-10).

The second parable spoken which dealt with the worth of the soul focuses on a woman who loses one out of ten pieces of silver. She lights a candle, sweeps the floors, and diligently continues the search until she finds it.

Like the ending of the parable of the lost sheep, the woman involves her friends and neighbors in rejoicing over the coin. So in like manner, heaven rejoices over the sinner who is led to repentance.

**QUESTION:**

1. How is this parable similar to the parable of the Lost Sheep?

***Parable of the Prodigal Son*** (Lk. 15:11-32)

“*And 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 falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet 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 unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, 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 elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found”* (Lk. 15:11-32).

The parable of the Prodigal Son is most probably a favorite among many parishioners. The attitude and demeanor of the younger son, who squanders his inheritance on foolish things, ironically represents most of us who have made foolish decisions in our lives.

Then the elder brother, who through envy and spite, refuses to join in the celebration for his brother’s return. He cites to his father the unswerving dedication so rendered to him. Somehow believing that his loyalty gives him the right to abandon his responsibility as a brother.

The father’s love for the son is never questioned. He does not favor one over the other. Neither does he seek to refuse his penitent son. He represents the true nature of God. A Father who disciplines, rebukes, and rewards. A God who rejoices over those who return to the fold.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What request was made by the younger son?
2. What did he do with his inheritance?
3. Where did the young son end up?
4. Why did the father rejoice when he son returned?
5. Why did the elder son become angry?

***Parable of the Shrewd Manager*** (Lk. 16:1-13)

*“And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am 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 lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely:* *for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.  If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?**No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”* (Lk. 16:1-13).

It is certain that this is one of the more complicated parables presented by Jesus. It speaks of a rich man having a steward, one in charge of household, to give account of his affairs. The accusation that landed in the rich man’s ears is that the steward had wasted his goods.

Being called by his master concerning his undertakings, he hurries to collect from those who are debtors. His wisdom to collect enough to satisfy his master shows his enthusiasm to perform his business when necessary. This does not excuse his past behavior.

“*For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”* This phrase points to the shrewdness of the unjust steward. It is realistic to note that worldly people are more prone to collect what is owed.

*“Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.  If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?”* Jesus speaks of the unjust steward being able to secure some future if his present position is lost. He does this by his fair treatment of the debtors.

The true disciple will understand that one’s commitment is to God. And by righteous living the saint will be rewarded.

*“No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”* The Messiah’s conclusion points to the fact that one cannot serve two masters. There is no straddling the fence in the Kingdom. You either serve God with all the zeal and enthusiasm that should be given, or not at all.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the shrewd manager fear?
2. Why can’t one serve two masters?

***The Law & the Kingdom*** (Lk. 16:14-17)

“*And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things:* *and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail*” (Lk. 16:14-17).

The Pharisees took the parable of the unjust steward as a rebuke. They felt the accusation of covetousness was aimed directly at them. Yet the intent was to include covetousness universally.

*“And they derided him.”* The literal meaning is, “*They turned up their noses at him*!” No doubt showing that grown men can revert to childish behavior when insulted.

Jesus then enlightens them concerning the Kingdom. For the Law was still being followed even by John. Howbeit, since that time, the gospel has begun to be preached. The Mosaic Law was still enforced and would not be abolished until after the Lord’s resurrection.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Luke says the Pharisees were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Who knows your heart?

***Divorce & Remarriage*** (Lk. 16:18)

“*Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery*” (Lk. 16:18).

Luke sixteen should be examined along-side-of Matthew 5:31, 32 and Matthew 19:1-12. A subject of much controversy is presented in these passages. I ask the question, “Why?” Jesus approached the subject directly. He took the concept of marriage back to the very beginning when man was first created. The established law of one man married to one woman for life becomes the foundation for all marriages. The Bible later states that only two events could dissolve a marriage. First, death would sever the relationship (Rom. 7:2, 3). And two, fornication would render a person the right to divorce his or her spouse and marry again (Matt. 19:1-9).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is adultery?
2. What two other passages should be looked at when discussing this sin in Lk. 16:18?

***The Rich Man & Lazarus*** (Lk. 16:19-31)

“*There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.  And 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 thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from th*

*e dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead”* (Lk. 16:19-31).

This parable is much different than the others. First, one of the main characters is mentioned by name. Second, the specific details to the realm of the dead are astonishing. The various components of this parable lend many to believe that it is not a parable at all. Yet for this author, it matters not. Even parables are based on basic truths. They are not fables, but common-sense teachings that are meant to guide the soul.

The poor man Lazarus represents the oppressed, the indigent, and the abandoned. He feeds from the rich man’s table along with the dogs who lick his sores.

The rich man is not abusive, nor does he render any cruel treatment to the poor soul Lazarus. He is not condemned for what he does, but for what he does not do. He fails in his responsibility to aid the poor.

Sadly, the rich man learns too late. He is suffering in a pit of fire when he begins to plead for Lazarus to dip his finger in water so that he may “cool his tongue.” He further begins to think about those left behind headed for the same fatality. He proclaims that he has five brothers who need to hear the gospel. Abraham responds, “*If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead”* (Lk. 16:31).

One of the fascinating teachings from this parable has to do with the transportation of souls. Jesus states that the rich man is simply buried and finds himself in torment. Whereas Lazarus is “carried by the angels.” Years ago, while my sister was on her death bed, I whispered in her ears to look for the angels. God takes special care in transporting His saints to Abraham’s bosom. They are carried away by an entourage of angels.

***Causing Little Ones to Sin*** (Lk. 17:1, 2) (Matt. 18:6, 7; Mark 9:42)

“*Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones”* (Lk. 17:1, 2).

Millstone justice is God’s way of dealing with the unrighteous. Especially those who offend and harm His saints. The many Christians who have been bruised, beaten, and killed are more than mortal man can fathom. And like the saint’s underneath God’s altar in the book of Revelation (Rev. 6:10), they cry out for vengeance upon their inflictors.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Jesus warns that what will come upon the righteous?
2. The one who causes another to sin, the Lord says it would be better that a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ be hanged upon his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and that he be cast into the \_\_\_\_\_\_.

***Forgiveness*** (Lk. 17:3, 4)

*“Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him*” (Lk. 17:3, 4).

The hardest thing for a person to do on this earth is forgive! Jesus begins this section by stating, “*Take heed to yourselves*!” He knew how difficult it would be for His creation to forgive. It is even more sternly stated in Matthew chapter six, “*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*” (Matt. 6:14, 15).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is a person to do when a brother sins against him?
2. How often should one forgive when asked?

***A Mustard Seed Faith*** (Lk. 17:5, 6) (Matt. 17:19-21)

“*And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you*” (Matt. 17:5, 6).

The apostles were men of integrity. They had their faults. Howbeit, they realized their lack of faith. By asking the Messiah to increase their faith was stirred by their inability to forgive. Though there was much they did not know, they understood what they lacked could be provided by the Lord.

The idea of a “mustard seed” faith is a crucial part of New Testament Christianity. Most men would not be overflowing with faith. Throughout history, the heroic figures of faith were mortal men who often failed and exhibited weaknesses. Yet that little bit of faith allowed them to accomplish great things.

**QUESTION:**

1. What does it mean to have a mustard seed faith?

***Unworthy Servants*** (Lk. 17:7-10)

*“But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?  And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?  Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.  So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do”* (Lk. 17:7-10).

To serve is sacrifice and obedience. The Lord’s parable of a diligent servant working hard in the fields and then coming to his quarters and taking time to feed his master seems harsh. One must take note of the master/servant relationship. It was not one of neglect and abuse, but one of responsibility and action. The parable centers on the concept of duty.

In our relationship with God, we are commanded to work and obey. There is no room for self-conceit, or praise. The reward we receive in the end is not earned but gifted by grace. The works we perform are based on our duty to satisfy our Savior. Keep in mind, however, that James makes a strong argument for the faithful being dedicated to the work of the church (Jas. 2:14-26).

**QUESTION:**

1. What does this parable teach?

***The Coming Kingdom of God*** (Lk. 17:20-37)

*And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.  And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.   And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.   For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.  And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.  They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.  Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.  Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife.   Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.  I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.  Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.  Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together”* (Lk. 17:20-37).

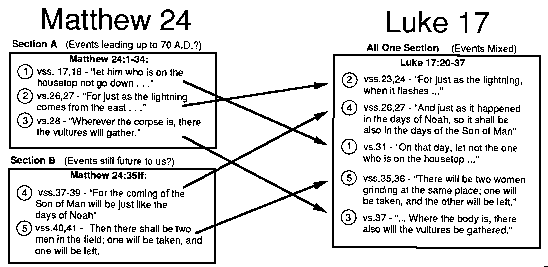
When you place Luke 17:20-37 along-side-of Matthew 24, they seem very similar. Yet, Luke uses a mixture of the signs in Matthew 24 to speak of one event. Whereas Matthew is divided into two sections: 1) the fall of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:4-25), and 2) the second coming (Matt. 24:36-51).

To make sense of Luke 17 one should begin with the question asked by the Pharisees, “*When will the Kingdom of God come?* They were not alluding to the second coming, but to God setting up a physical kingdom on earth.

The *Son of man coming in His day* is characterized the way lightning strikes, visible by all (Matt. 24:27). This is followed by the statement made by Matthew concerning the gathering of eagles. Keep in mind that Matthew’s focus is on the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Interwoven with these signs used in Matthew are the references made by Matthew and Luke concerning the days of Noah. In Matthew’s gospel these signs allude to the second coming, but this is not so in Luke’s narrative. The link is simply in understanding that the affairs of men will continue.

The losing of life, and the taking of one man in bed and another in the field focuses on the events that happened on Pentecost. The Jews had gathered in Jerusalem to worship when the suddenness and amazing happenings on Pentecost occurred. It was the day when the kingdom came, and the world that once was, would be no more.



***Parable of the Persistent Widow*** (Lk. 18:1-8)

“*And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.  And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”* (Lk. 18:1-8).

The one purpose of the parable was stated from the onset, “*And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”* It unveils the actions of a godless judge who was corrupt and discouraging. However, there was a widow residing in the same city who cried for justice against an adversary.

After her consistent pleading, the wicked judge honored her request. His response was not based on compassion, nor his respect for the law. He rendered justice to alleviate the constant badgering of the poor widow.

“*And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.  And shall not God avenge his own elect,*

*which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge*

*them speedily.”* The foundation of faith is in the belief that God hears and responds to His saints.

A patient God reacts at the right time. Not to eliminate the pleading, but to try the hearts of the

faithful.

“*Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”* This penetrating question was meant to motivate the apostles to be constant in their faith. The harvest would be plenteous, but what about the laborers? What about the continual preaching of the Great Commission? Will the second coming reveal a world where the saints had become stagnant, unsensitized because of the corruption of the world around them? That is a question only God knows!

**QUESTIONS:**

1. The judge in this parable, was he just or unjust?
2. Why did the judge give in?
3. What is the purpose of the parable?

***Divorce & Remarriage*** (Matthew 19:3-12; Mark 10:2-12)

*“The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?  And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.  They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?  He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.  For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it”* (Matt. 19:3-12).

*“And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.   And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?  And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.  And Jesus answered and said unto them, For 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 cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.  What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.  And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery”* (Mark 10:2-12).

Though we have touched on the subject in Matthew five, it is within this passage in Matthew nineteen and Mark ten that has been greatly challenged by theologians throughout the centuries.

Looking at this passage in Matthew, we note but one question being asked by the Pharisees, “*Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*”  During the time of Christ only a man could enact a divorce, but this did not mean that women could not get a divorce. If they could show a court of rabbis that they had sufficient grounds for a divorce, the court could persuade her husband to divorce her.

The principle that divorce could only be enacted by a man was based on the law which said that a man should write out the divorce certificate (Deut. 24:1). This privilege was not given to the woman.

The true debate on the subject by the Pharisees and Christ aimed at the legalists citing Moses, whereas Jesus brought the law back to Genesis 2:24.

The pinnacle statement by Jesus was, “*What God had joined together, let no man put asunder*!” This points to the fact that man cannot decide what are suitable infringements allowing a divorce to take place.

It is at this junction that Jesus says, *“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”* The adultery mentioned is not a one-time act, but a continual action as long as the couple stay together.

The response of the apostles should not be abandoned. First, they understood perfectly what Jesus was teaching. They said*, “If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.”* They did not ask, “*Could he not simply repent and stay in the relationship*?” This is what the false brother does in trying to ignore the Lord’s instructions. Repentance requires a “change of course.” To truly repent, one must stop doing the wrong!

Next, note the Lord’s response, “*All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is*

*given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”*

A eunuch has no choice but to remain a eunuch. He cannot get back what has been taken. The same is true of a man or woman who commits fornication. The sacredness of the marriage vow has been broken*.* In the action cited by Jesus, the man has divorced his wife and had married another. Keep in mind we are not talking about separation (I Cor. 7:9-16) but divorce. For one in such a case must remain celibate as long as the divorced wife or husband is living.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question did the Pharisees asks Jesus in Matthew 19:1?
2. Who did the Pharisees cite for the stand on the subject?
3. What Old Testament reference did Jesus make concerning the act of marriage?
4. What is the only reason for a living spouse to divorce a husband or wife?

***Jesus Blesses the Children (***Matt. 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17)

“*Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence*” (Matt. 19:13-15).

“*And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.  But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.  Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them*” (Mark 10:13-16).

“*And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.  But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein*” (Lk. 18:15-17).

The term used by Luke was τα βρεφη, infants, or very young children. The action of blessing someone was common among the Jews. Yet in this situation, the disciples saw it as an unnecessary event. They seemed to be more worried that such actions were a burden to Christ.

Jesus uses this incident to teach a spiritual lesson. He relays to the disciples that a kingdom was about to be built, and the citizens of that kingdom would have the purity and simpleness of children. The reception of the kingdom is the pinnacle of the doctrine. The mind that believes and follows by faith.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus bless the children?
2. Why did the disciples complain?

***The Rich Young Ruler*** (Matt. 19:16-24; Mark 10:17-22; Lk. 18:18-25)

“*And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.  The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?  Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.  But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.  Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.  And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God”* (Matt. 19:16-24).

“*And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions”* (Mark 10:17-22).

“*And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?  And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God”* (Lk. 18:18-25).

If ever a man would have been saved by his past obedience, it would had been the rich young ruler. He proclaimed that he had kept the commandments of Moses from his youth up. Jesus never denies this fact. Yet, like the rich man in the Parable of the “rich man and Lazarus,” his condemnation came for what he failed to do.

He was in the early stages of becoming the 13th apostle. The same charge given to the other twelve is offered to him. He merely had to sell all he had, give it to the poor, and follow Jesus. Hence, only one thing was holding him back. Sadly, that one thing was the anchor which caused him to fail.

“*Ye lack one thing*!” What a theological nurturance! When this writer came to the Lord there were many things I had to give up and accept. This rich young man had only ONE thing. However, it was the one thing he loved more than life itself, his riches! Sadly, he walked away never realizing the great blessing that was about to be bestowed on him.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What commandments did the rich young ruler stated that he kept?
2. Why did the rich young ruler walk away sorrowfully?

***The Love of Riches*** (Matt. 19:25, 26; Mark 10:23-27; Lk. 18:24-27)

“*When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?  But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible*” (Matt. 19:25, 26).

“*And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!  And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into 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 into the kingdom of God.  And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible”* (Mark 10:23-27).

*“ And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!  For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?  And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God”* (Lk. 18:24-27).

It is Mark’s account that has more clarity on riches. In the synoptic gospels, the apostles ask, “*Who then can be saved*?” It is Mark who cites the word “trust.” The Lord makes it clear that riches do not condemn a man. For we have multiple examples in the Old Testament where God blessed the righteous with riches. Yet the condemnation is meant for those who trust in their riches, lust for them, and live for them. For such a person to enter the kingdom of God is equated to a camel passing through the eye of a surgical needle. So one can deduct that a man lusting on his possessions will never enter the kingdom.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What will the love of riches do to the soul?
2. Are all riches evil?
3. Can a rich man make it to heaven?

***Leaving the Things of This World*** (Matt. 19:27-30; Mark 10:28-31; Lk. 18:28-30)

*“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first*” (Matt. 19:27-30).

*“Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first*” (Mark 10:28-31).

*“Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting*” (Lk. 18:28-30).

Peter’s remarks are legitimate. It does not unveil his ignorance, nor his intent for earthly gain. He makes a statement of fact. He, along with the others, have forsaken everything to follow Jesus. He simply wants to know what will be gained by such an act.

The answer is twofold. First Jesus says, “*Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”* (Matt. 19:28).

The Premillennial sees this passage as pertaining to an alleged return of Christ to set up an earthly kingdom over which he will reign from Jerusalem with his apostles as His ambassadors. The diligent student would be able to see the flaws and misguidance of such a belief.

The only other verse that uses the term “regeneration” (παλιγγενεσία) is Titus 3:5. We find this taking place on the day of Pentecost. For Peter professed that they were witnesses of the resurrected Jesus, and that He now sits at the right hand of God. It was on this day that the apostles received the Holy Spirit and began to implement to Great Commission.

The second audience brought forth from Matthew’s account is the church. “*And* ***every one*** *that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.*” The Lord first began speaking directly to the apostles with the pronoun, “you.” Then He speaks of “every one.” This universal overlay of the church consisting of those who have forsaken all is laid forth. By their sacrifices and obedience, they shall be blessed a “hundredfold,” and inherit eternal life.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the two groups addressed by Christ in this passage?
2. When did the apostles begin sitting on thrones and judging?

***Parable of the Workers in the Kingdom*** (Matt. 20:1-16)

“*For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny 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 unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen*” (Matt. 20:1-16).

This is a unique parable. It speaks of the rewards that are giving to the righteous. The householder is God. He hires workers for His vineyard with the agreement of their reward. Every third hour during the workday, he hires more servants with the same agreement given to the first. At the end of the day when it came time to be paid, those who were hired first complain that the others hired during the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hour received the same pay.

The men first hired would seem to have a valid complaint, but they are reminded that the householder kept his end of the agreement. One penny a day was offered to all upon their own submissiveness. Which brings the parable to a conclusion with the words, “*So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen*” (Matt. 20:1-16).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who is the householder in this parable?
2. What agreement did the householder make with all the workers?
3. What was the complaint of some of the workers?
4. What theological truth is taught by this parable?

***Lazarus is Sick*** (Jn. 11:1-16) (Jesus is in Perea)

*“Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest 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 might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.* *Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.  His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?  Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.  These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.  Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.  Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him”* (Jn. 11:1-16).

John goes out of his way to identify this Lazarus. Mary and Martha send words to Jesus that their brother, so termed,” *he whom thou lovest”* 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 might be glorified thereby.”* Without a doubt, the apostles would have taken this statement to mean that Lazarus was not going to die. However, the Lord spent two more days in Perea before heading off to Bethany.

*“Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.”* This insert by John shows the closeness of this family to the Lord. They were dedicated friends, and more importantly, they were loyal in their faith.

*Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.  His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?  Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.  These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.*To the Jews there were twelve hours in a workday consisting of twelve equal parts. This consisted of a period from sunup to sunset.

Jesus did not ignore the fact that in the same place where Lazarus resided, the Jews sought to stone Him (Jn. 10:31). Howbeit, He was obligated and motivated to teach and preach the gospel. For as long as the days came, He would continue to do the will of God.

And with His determined mind, Jesus reveals that Lazarus is “sleeping.” The apostles respond, “*Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.”* Once again, they show their lack of understanding.

“*Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.”* Their ignorance in understanding the metaphor forced Jesus to say it bluntly that Lazarus was dead.

“*Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.”* Thomas was the apostle’s Hebrew name, and Didymus his Greek name. Both are interpreted, “*Twin*.” After hearing the words of Jesus and knowing that He was almost stoned once in Bethany, he heralds the other apostles to travel with Jesus with the possibility of being executed.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus wait to go to Bethany?
2. How did the apostles misinterpret the Lord’s statement of Lazarus being asleep?

***The Raising of Lazarus*** (Jn. 11:17-44) (In Bethany near Jerusalem)

*“Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: And many of the Jews came to 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 sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?**She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.**The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.  Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.**When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.**Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?**Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go”* (Jn. 11:17-44).

John points out the popularity of Lazarus. Bethany was about two miles from Jerusalem, and many of the Jews traveled the distance to pay their respects to the family of Lazarus.

*Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.* Though she truly believed in the greatness of the Messiah there was hesitancy concerning His abilities.

*Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.*The statement made by Jesus was looked upon as future tense by Martha, and the others who came to grieve with the family. We note that Jesus was speaking of the immediacy of the miracle that was about to take place.

*Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.* There was a division among the Jews concerning the resurrection. The Pharisees were firm believers in it, and the Sadducees denied such an event. This would place Martha on the side of the Pharisee’s belief on the subject.

*Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?* Jesus orates that He is the resurrection. To believe in Him was at the center of the doctrine. Hence Jesus asks Martha, “*Do you believe this*?”

*She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.*What she affirms is not what Jesus asked. With her finite understanding, she simply confirmed that He was Christ, the Son of God.

*The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.  Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.*In the next scene, one finds Mary running out of the house, confusing the guests inside. Once she reaches Christ, she falls to her knees and makes the same statement her sister made previously, “*If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”*

*When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.* This is one of the most intimate scenes we read of the Lord’s Compassion on His creation. The groaning shows the Lord’s agitation with grief. Though He knew He was going to resurrect Lazarus, His human soul reacted to the grief around Him.

I also submit another reason for the Lord weeping. Lazarus was in a place of peace and rest. The goal that every righteous soul hopes to achieve. Now a soul is about to jousted from the peaceful valley and back to a world of conflict and sin.

*Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?*Seeing Jesus weep, the multitude responds, “*Behold how he loved him*!” This led them to the same conclusion that Lazarus would still be alive if the Lord would have arrived earlier.

“*Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”* It is not revealed what is going through the minds of the people gathered on that day. Jesus would raise several souls during His ministry, but this was different. They body of Lazarus had remained in the grave long enough to have advance stages of decomposition. This was the resurrection of a body laid in a burial tomb and not a person stretched out on a bed or carried on a cot.

Jesus prays to the Father to allow the people to see that God had sent Him. Then He screams, “*Lazarus come forth!”* His disciples had already rolled away the stone (Jn. 11:39), which prompted Martha to state that her brother had laid in the tomb four days and was showing signs of putrefaction.

The amazement, terror, and every other emotion that was running through the minds of the gathering would have been a sight to see. From the coming forth out of the tomb to the unwrapping of Lazarus, the miracle witnessed glorified God, and confirmed the undeniable presence of the Messiah.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How far was Bethany from Jerusalem?
2. How long had Lazarus laid in the grave?
3. If you were at the grave of Lazarus on that day, how would you have responded to this miracle?

***The Plot to Kill Jesus*** (Jn. 11:44-57)

*“Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.  But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.  Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.  If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.  And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.  And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples. And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him”* (Jn. 11:44-57).

*“Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.  But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.”* Those who saw Lazarus brought forth from the grave became true believers in Jesus. Yet there were some, loyalist to the Pharisees, who refused to believe what they had seen and informed the Pharisees.

*“Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.  If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.”* The Pharisees felt they were facing a dilemma. First, they feared the miracles performed by Jesus would yield a great following. And that following would be supportive of the Messiah and not for them.

Secondly, they felt that the Romans would see Jesus as a threat to Caesar. They would take His following as insurrectionists, and enemies of Rome. In response, the Romans would ravage the land with their armies.

*“And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.  And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.”* A member of the party of the**Sadducees, Caiaphas** was the son-in-law of Annas, a previous high priest who had also succeeded in placing several of his own sons in the office. He prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and for the Gentiles. In his pronouncement, he makes it clear that is better for Jesus to die than for the whole nation to perish.

God can make His providential decree known even by the mouth of a scoundrel like Caiaphas. This He did also with Pharaoh (Exodus 10:28). As a Sadducee, Caiaphas believed that the death of Jesus would be the end of this cultish following since he did not believe in the resurrection.

*“Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.”* At this point, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews performing miracles. He traveled to the wilderness, and to a small town called Ephraim, which was about five miles from Jericho.

*“And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.”* The sacredness of the event had to be met with a purification (Lev. 22:1-6; 2 Chron. 30:17, 18). A multitude of Jews traveling great distances began to arrive in Jerusalem.

*“Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.”* The populace debated whether Jesus would come to the feast. On the one hand He was obligated to attend being an adult male. Secondly, some felt He would not appear fearing the Pharisees for they sought to take Him.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was Caiaphas?
2. Was Caiaphas a Pharisee or Sadducee?
3. After what miracle did the Jewish leaders decide to have Jesus put to death?

***Jesus Again Predicts His Death*** (Matt. 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34; Lk. 18:31-34) (Road to Jerusalem)

“*And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again”* (Matt. 20:17-19).

“*And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again*” (Mark 10:32-34).

“*Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken*” (Lk. 18:31-34).

Jesus had never been so blunt and specific. It is Luke who speaks of the apostles’ failure to understand, “*And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken*” (Lk. 18:31-34).

Their denial is somewhat justified. They had seen the Lord escape many near fatalities. He was the Messiah. And in their eyes, He would reside in Jerusalem, and take His place as king of the Jews.

***The Mother of James & John Appeals to Jesus*** (Matt. 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45)

*“Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.  And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of 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 shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many”* (Matt. 20:20-28).

*“And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?  And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John.* *But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many”* (Mark 10:35-45).

In Matthew’s narrative, it is the mother of James and John who comes to Jesus requesting that her sons sit on thrones of authority. Whereas Matthew shows the two-brothers requesting it from Jesus.

“*Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?  And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.”*Jesus enlightens them that what they asks is not His to give, but God’s. However, He asks them if they will be able to drink of the cup that He was about to drink from and be baptized with His baptism. The Lord was speaking of His persecution and death. And as the Bible along with secular history records, James will be one of the first martyred after the church is established, and John will be banished to the island of Patmos.

Matthew states that the ten apostles responding to the conversation were “*moved with indignation*” Mark writes that the other apostles “*began to be much displeased with them*.”

“*But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many”* (Mark 10:42-45). Jesus intercedes with crisis intervention. As He taught at various times, the Lord speaks of servitude. It is the Gentile nations that have rulers, either by birth or appointment, who rule tyrannically over their subjects. Howbeit, this is now how the kingdom of Christ will be manifested. It is a kingdom where humility and compassion will be shown to all citizens. And most importantly it is built upon the premise of servitude.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the mother of James and John request of Jesus?
2. What was the Lord’s reply to her?
3. How did the other apostles feel about this request?

***The Healing of Blind*** ***Bartimaeus & His Friend*** (Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43) (Jericho)

“*And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him”* (Matt. 20:29-34).

“*And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.  And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.  And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way”* (Mark 10:46-52).

“*And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.  And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God”* (Lk. 18:35-43).

The healing of blind Bartimaeus took place while Jesus left Jericho. Matthew records that there were two blind men sitting and begging. Whereas Mark and Luke only speak of Bartimaeus.

As the two blind men cried for mercy, the crowd sought to hush them. Jesus hears their cries and calls for them. Ecstatic, the blindmen throw off their outer garments and station themselves before Christ. Jesus then heals them. This did not prompt them to return to their homes rejoicing, like so often transpired after a healing. These men glorified God and followed Him.

Blind Bartimaeus and his friend serve as paradigms of true discipleship. Their progression of faith went much further than the healing of their fleshly infirmities. It motivated them to take up their crosses and follow Jesus.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did blind Bartimaeus, and his friend cry out to Jesus?
2. After being healed what did Bartimaeus do?

***Zacchaeus*** (Lk. 19:1-10)

“*And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.  And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.  And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.  And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.  And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.  For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Lk. 19:1-10).

What child has not been enlightened by the story of Zacchaeus. A man of small stature with great authority. He was a chief publican who earned his riches with fervent honesty. Yet because of his position, he was hated by the Jews. For in the eyes of the Hebrews, men like Zacchaeus were traitors and sinners of the highest order along with prostitutes.

Imagine the surprise when the Lord looked at Zacchaeus sitting on a branch of a sycamore tree, and the people heard Jesus say, “*Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.”*

As the people murmured, Zacchaeus spoke about his integrity and honesty which provoked Jesus to proclaim, “*Salvation has come to your house*!” No matter how the people felt, the Lord underlined His mission to save the lost.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was Zacchaeus?
2. What was sitting upon when he saw the Lord?
3. What did Jesus say to him?

***Parable of the Ten Minas*** (Lk. 19:11-27)

“*And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.  He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.  But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.  And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.  And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.**But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me”* (Lk. 19:11-27).

“*And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.”* Jesus nearing Jerusalem prompted His following to believe He was going to enter the holy city and bring back the glory to Israel. Jesus knowing their thoughts spoke this parable of the ten minas.

This parable was like the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-28). In this particular parable, a nobleman wishes to travel to a far country to do business, but before he does, he calls his ten servants to take care of a certain portion of his kingdom. He gives them each A mina and expects them to increase their portion before the returns. The mina was a Roman monetary unit worth one hundred denarii or about four months’ wages for an average worker based on a six-day work week.

“*But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.”* This is further emphasized by the statement made by the disobedient servant in verse 21, “*For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.*

Upon the nobleman’s arrival, he calls forth the ten servants. Nine of the ten give positive reports of adding dollars to the minas. Each receives more authority over parts of his kingdom because of their investments. However, one of the servants fearing the nobleman, wrapped his minas in a napkin, and handed it back. Hence, his minas was taken and given to the servant who had ten.

The greater punishment is rendered against those citizens who refused to have the nobleman reign over them. “*But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus speak the parable of the ten minas?
2. Who receives the greater punishment in the parable?

***Going to Jerusalem*** (Lk. 19:28)

“*And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem”* (Lk. 19:28). The last parable had been spoken, and now it was time to journey up to Jerusalem. He would enter the city with a triumphal entry and leave carrying His cross.

***The Plan to Arrest Jesus*** (Jn. 11:55-57)

“*And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him”* (Jn. 11:55-57).

It would be nearly two months between verse fifty-four and Jesus final journey to Jerusalem. This Passover would be the last celebrated by Jesus before His trial and execution. The purification was required by the law for anyone who might have been defiled or unclean because of coming in contact with the dead (Lev. 22:1-6). Sadly, the Pharisees and chief priests had petitioned the populace to report any sighting of Jesus for the purpose of arresting Him.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the last spoken before traveling to Jerusalem?
2. Why did men go to Jerusalem before the Passover?
3. What commandment was given by the chief priests and the Pharisees?

**THE LAST WEEK OF THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST**

***The Anointing of Jesus*** (In Bethany on Saturday, six days before the Passover)(Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; Jn. 12:1-8)

“*Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.   But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?  For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.  For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her*” (Matt. 26:6-13).

“*And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.  And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.  And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.  For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.  She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her*” (Mark 14:3-9).

“*Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.  There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.  Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.  Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?  This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.  Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.  For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always*” (Jn. 12:1-8).

There are those who feel that there are two anointings that take place before the death of Jesus. The first was the anointing by the woman in the house of Simon the Leper. And the second by Mary, the sister of Lazarus, recorded in John twelve. However, this writer believes that only one was administered to Christ. For the anointing, the reaction to it, and the statement made by Jesus is made by Matthew, Mark, and John.

The importance of the anointing is seen in the blindness of those not understanding what was taking place, and the instigator of the negativity coming from Judas Iscariot. It may well be that this incident is what prompted Judas to betray his Lord.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did the first anointing of Jesus take place?
2. Who anointed Him?
3. For what purpose was He anointed?

***The Plan to Kill Lazarus*** (Jn. 12:9-11)

“*Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.  But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus”* (Jn. 12:9-11).

Many who were in Bethany at the time Jesus was anointed were present, not only to see the Messiah, but to view the risen Lazarus. It is during this period that the Jewish leaders show their true contempt toward Jesus wanting to kill Lazarus.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who plotted to kill Lazarus?
2. Why did they want to kill Lazarus?

***Triumphal Entry*** (Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Lk. 19:28-40; Jn. 12:12-19)(Palm Sunday)

“*And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 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.  And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.  All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.  And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.  And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. 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. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee*” (Matt. 21:1-11).

“*And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.  And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.  And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.  And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.  And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.  And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way.  And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.  And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve*” (Mark 11:1-11).

“*And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.  And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.  And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.  And when he was come nigh, even now at 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 that they had seen;  Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.  And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.  And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.*  (Lk. 19:28-40)

“*On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 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.  And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.  These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.  The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.  For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.* *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him”* (Jn. 12:12-19).

All four gospels speak of the Lord’s triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. It would be on *Sunday,* the 10th of Nisan. The synoptic gospels speak of the two disciples sent out into a nearby village to procure a colt. John does not mention the procurement but simply states that the Lord had found an ass and sat upon him. He then mentions the prophecy being fulfilled by this act (Zech. 9:9). Matthew informs the readers that Jesus not only took the colt, but the ass also, which would have been the mother of the colt.

John further states, “*These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him. The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.”* This is information exclusive in John’s gospel.

In the entrance of Jesus to the Holy City several actions take place**. First**, the laying down of garments and palm leaves. Those who had no garments to lay substituted the palm leaves from the nearby trees. All this was part of the enthusiastic zeal that overtook the people. No doubt thinking that Jesus was now coming to establish His throne and restore Israel.

“*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.”* Secondly, the crowd paraded behind the Lord. This showed their submissiveness and acceptance of the Messiah. The word “*Hosanna*” means “*Save, we pray thee*.” They herald out the words from one of the Hallel (thanksgiving) Psalms (Psa. 148:1), the same pronouncement heralded in the ears of the shepherds by the angel when Jesus was born (Luke 2:14).

Third, the Pharisees react to the crowd’s praise of Jesus. Luke writes the Lord’s reaction to their criticism, “*And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out”* (Lk. 19:40).

John focuses on the conversation between the group, *“The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him”* (Jn. 12:19). To the world, Jesus was the hope, but to the Pharisees, He was a burden!

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did Jesus find the colt?
2. What does Hosanna mean?

***Lament Over Jerusalem*** (Lk. 19:41-44)

“*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation”* (Lk. 19:41-44).

No matter how often the people had forsaken God, cursed His name, and provoked Him to jealousy; God still loved them. Like Jeremiah who cried for the nation (Lamentations 3:51), So now Christ weeps for Jerusalem. A city as he predicts will be pillaged and burned in A.D. 70 by Nero, professing once again that “*not one stone would be left upon another*!”

**QUESTION:**

1. In this second lamenting over Jerusalem, Jesus said what was hid from the people’s eyes?

***Jesus Returns to Bethany*** (Matt. 21:17; Mark 11:11)

*“And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there”* (Matt. 21:17).

*“And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve”* (Mark 11:11).

After lamenting over Jerusalem, He healed the sick, and taught the gospel. For whatever reason, when evening was drawing near, He traveled about two miles from the city to Bethany to lodge. For the once holy city that was shadowed by the temple was no longer safe for the Messiah to dwell in it at night. The hatred of His enemies, and the shrewdness of the Jewish leaders were looking for every opportunity to arrest Him secretly.

***Jesus Cleanses the Temple*** (Matt. 21:12, 13; Mark 11:15-17; Lk. 19:45-46) (Jerusalem) (**MONDAY)**

**“***And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves”* (Matt. 21:12, 13).

“*And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves”* (Mark 11:15-17).

“*And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves”* (Lk. 19:45, 46).

Mark and Luke states that Jesus quotes from the Old Testament (Isa. 56:7) in reference to this transgression against God and the temple. The moneychangers were there to exchange Roman money for Jewish. And second, those who sold livestock to the masses were selling blemished animals.

The Lord’s cleansing did not stop them from returning to their malicious ways. For twice the Lord had to purge the temple.

**QUESTION:**

1. How many times did Jesus cleanse the temple?

***Chief Priest Displeased*** (Matt. 21:14, 15) (**MONDAY)**

*And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased”* (Matt. 21:14, 15).

Envy and jealousy lead to displeasure. You would think that viewing the wonderful things performed by the Savior would lead men to favor Christ. Howbeit, with the religious leaders, it had the opposite effect.

***Chief Priests Plot Against Jesus*** (Mark 11:18; Lk. 19:47, 48) **(MONDAY)**

*“And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine. And when even was come, he went out of the city”*(Mark 11:18, 19).

“*And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him*” (Lk. 19:47, 48).

In Luke’s account concerning this plotting to kill the Messiah, he includes the elders along with the chief priest and scribes. As Luke uses the phrase “attentive to him,” Mark records that the people were astonished at His doctrine causing the chief priests and scribes to fear Jesus. Their pride, position, and arrogance prompted them to plan the death of the Messiah.

**QUESTION:**

1. Because the Chief Priest was displeased, what did the Sanhedrin do?

***The Fig Tree Incident*** (Matt. 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-14)(On the way back to Jerusalem, (**TUESDAY**)

*“Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.  And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!  Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.  And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive*” (Matt. 21:18-22).

*“And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.  And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it*” (Mark 11:12-14).

The incident of the fig tree is covered in both Matthew and Mark’s gospels. It is Matthew who adds commentary using it as an example of faith.

The cursing of the fig tree begins with the statement, “*And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry”* (Mark 11:12). As He saw the fig tree, He came upon it hoping that a few fruits were left on it, but there were none. In response, He curses the fig tree, and proclaims, “*Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth forever.”*

The lesson taught to His apostles was twofold: 1) To show the penalty for not bearing fruit spiritually, and 2) To teach the apostles not to doubt in their faith.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus curse the fig tree?
2. What was the apostles’ response?

***Jesus Authority Questioned*** (Matt. 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33; Lk. 20:1-8) (**TUESDAY MORNING IN JERUSALEM)**

**“***And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?  And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things*” (Matt. 21:23-27).

*“And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?  And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.   The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me.  And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?   But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.  And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things”* (Mark 11:27-33).

*“And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders, And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?  And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?  And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?  But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.  And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.  And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things”* (Lk. 20:11-8).

All three of the synoptic gospels pen this conversation Jesus had with the chief priests and elders. Mark and Luke add that the scribes also were involved. The questions asked to Jesus were, “*By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?”*Keep in mind that this meeting took place a day after Jesus cursed the fig tree. At this moment they do not object His doctrine, nor question the miracles He performed; they are more concerned about His commission.

These false leaders thought they had placed a snare in front of our Lord but were surprised when Christ replied with a question aimed at the very core of the matter. He asks, “*The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?”*

The Jewish leaders discussed among themselves what reply they should give. Their reasoning was valid since they knew that John was praised by many of being a prophet. Hence, they reply, “*We do not know*!” This shows their cowardness and their lack of conviction. For a man that truly led by conviction stands his ground whether right or wrong.

*And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.”* Any obligation to respond to the chief priests and elders was thwarted by their lack of integrity.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question was asked of Jesus in the temple?
2. What question did Jesus asks the Jewish leaders?
3. How did they respond?

***Parable of the Two Sons*** (Matt. 21:28-32)

*“But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.  He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him”* (Matt. 21:28-32).

The parable is such a genuine look at the Great Commission and the need for workers in the Lord’s Kingdom. The first son receives the request to work in the father’s vineyard. He refuses, thinks about his reply, and then goes and works. The second son is deceptive. He tells his father he will go and work in the vineyard, and then does otherwise.

We note from the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) how the Lord hates deception. In their case, the cost of such deception was their lives.

**QUESTION:**

1. How does this parable relate to the church today?

***Parable of the Tenants*** (Matt. 21:33-41; Mark 12:1-9; Lk. 20:9-16)

*Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons”* (Matt. 21:33-41).

*“And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.  And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.  And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.  And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.  And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.  Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.  But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.  And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others”* (Mark 12:1-9).

“*Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty. And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out. Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him.* *What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid”* (Lk. 20:9-16).

In this parable is the history of Israel and Judah. The servants who were sent to the vineyard represent the prophets. For some they abused, while others they killed. And in the parable the Jewish people are the husbandman.

How much love and care God showered among His people simply requesting fruits from His vineyard? However, their response was pitiful, damaging, and shameful. God did not abandon them for He sent His Son offering them forgiveness and mercy. Sadly, God’s grace was not sufficient for them, so they killed His beloved Son.

“*What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid”* (Lk. 20:16). The others who would be given charge over the vineyard were the Gentiles. Paul said it best while a prisoner in Rome. Some of the Jewish leaders came to speak with him. After hearing his testimony, they rejected it. Paul left them with this proclamation, *“Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it”* (Acts 28:28).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What history is covered by the above parable?
2. Who was the son in the parable?

***The Stone Rejected*** (Matt. 21:42-44; Mark 12:10, 11; Lk. 20:17, 18)

*“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?  Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder”* (Matt. 21:42-44).

“*And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:**This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”* (Mark 12:10, 11).

“*And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder*” (Lk. 20:17, 18).

The reference to Jesus being the rejected cornerstone is in the book of Isaiah. The prophets’ states, *“And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.  And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken”*(Isa. 8:14, 15).

“*This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”* Mark’s statement shows the reaction of the disciples. And those who would be ground to powder was interpreted by the chief priests and Pharisees to be a prophesy against them.

**QUESTION:**

1. Who is the stone rejected?

***Leaders Offended*** (Matt. 21:45, 46; Mark 12:12; Lk. 20:19)

“*And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet” (*Matt. 21:45, 46).

“*And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way”* (Mark 12:12).

“*And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them*” (Lk. 20:19).

After the pronouncement of Isaiah’s prophesy, the chief priests and Pharisees faced a dilemma. They had just been ridiculed and humiliated by the Messiah. Yet they did not react for fear of the populace seeing Christ as a prophet.

**QUESTION:**

1. Why were the leaders offended?

***Parable of the Wedding Banquet*** (Matt. 22:1-14)

“*And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,  The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.  But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.  Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.  Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.  So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:  And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.  Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.  For many are called, but few are chosen”* (Matt. 22:1-14).

Here is said another parable which speaks of the Jews denying entrance into the kingdom, and yet being accepted by the Gentiles. In this parable, a king has arranged a marriage for his son. The invitations are prepared and sent out but are met with several responses. At first, they simply would not come. When sent out a second time, the Bible says “*they made light of it.”* Whereas some reacted violently to the invitation and killed the king’s servants.

The king reacted with vengeance and exacted punishment upon the remnant and slaughtered them. When the wedding was ready, the king sent forth his servants to the highways to handout invitations to strangers. Note that the guests were made up of both “good and bad.”

“*And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:  And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.  Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.  For many are called, but few are chosen.”* To understand this part of the parable, one must have knowledge of the traditions of that day. When an important figure was holding a wedding, such as a king, he would supply wedding garments to the guests. To refuse to wear the garment was of the utmost contempt.

Upon refusal of the garment, the man is bound and thrown in outer darkness. This alludes to damnation. Hence, the ending of the parable with “*There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called and few chosen.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How did the first invited guests respond to the invitation?
2. What is meant that many are called but few are chosen?

***Questions about Taxes*** (Matt. 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Lk. 20:20-26)

“*Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.  And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying,* *Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men**.  Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?  But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?  Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.  And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?  They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.  When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way”*(Matt. 22:15-22).

“*And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.  And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?  Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.  And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him”* (Mark 12:13-17).

“*And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor. And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly:  Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's.  And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.  And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace”*(Lk. 20:20-26).

There have been many theories about the Herodians. What one can presume is that they were answerable to Herod. Which would mean that they had Herod’s ear, and that was the reason for the Pharisees involving them in this conversation about paying taxes.

What is powerful in this narrative is the shrewdness and hypocrisy shown by the Pharisees. First, they come to Jesus with praise, “*Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.”*

Second, they asked a question merely for the purpose of tempting Jesus. *“Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?  But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?”*

The area where many miss the understanding of what takes place is in the Lord’s response. He asks for them to take out a penny and show it to Him. The Pharisees made it a requirement in the temple that no money with Caesar’s inscription could be used. Hence, the money changers were stationed in the temple to exchange Roman currency to Jewish.

The penny shown to Jesus was a Roman coin. The tribute that every person under the leadership of Rome would have to pay. The tribute for the temple tax was paid in a Jewish shekel which would have no inscriptions upon it. The Roman coin would have been a Roman denarius which be worth about 14 cents in American currency.

Jesus asks the Pharisees, “*Who’s inscription is on the coin?”* They reply that it was Caesars. Jesus then proclaims, “*Render unto Caesars what is Caesars, and unto God, what is God’s.”*

How did they respond to such an answer? The Bible says, “*When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. The question asked about taxes was for what purpose?
2. How did Jesus respond to their questions?

***Questions Concerning Resurrection*** (Matt. 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Lk. 20:27-38)

*“The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine”* (Matt. 22:23-33).

*“Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.  Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed. And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.  And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.  In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err”* (Mark 12:18-27).

*“Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him, Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.  There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.  And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.  And 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 of them is she? for seven had her to wife.  And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.  Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him”* (Luke 20:27-38).

It is amazing that two opposite groups would rise during the intertestamental period to rule the Hebrews. One being the Pharisees, who were legalistic, but firm believers in angels, spirits, and the resurrection. And the other being the Sadducees. They denied the resurrection, a future state, and the separate existence of the soul after death altogether, as well as the existence of angels and spirits (Acts 23:8).

To come to question Jesus using the perpetuate law presented by Moses for the preservation of the nation in Deuteronomy 25:5, 6. In their example they speak of a woman whose husband has died living her without children. She then lived long enough to marry her husband’s seven brothers. Howbeit, not one of them left her a child. In the end, she also dies childless. The question is then asked, “*Who will be her husband in the resurrection*?”

Jesus alludes to the fact that man will live in two spheres. The one is physical. Marriage between a man and woman happens in this physical sphere. Once death comes, the marriage does not exist. Whereas, in the spiritual sphere, where God and the angels live, there is no such thing as physical marriages. Once a person dies, they will be like the angels which have no physical lusts, nor do they marry.

Jesus proves His position by bringing up Moses at the burning bush. It should be observed that Abraham was dead upwards of 300 years before these words were spoken to Moses: yet still God calls himself the God of Abraham.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question did the Sadducees ask Jesus?
2. What were some of the beliefs of the Pharisees?

***The Greatest Commandment*** (Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Lk. 20:39, 40)

“*But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”* (Matt. 22:34-40).

*“And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:  And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.  And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.* *And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:  And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.**And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question”* (Mark 12:28-34).

“*Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.  And after that they durst not ask him any question at all”* (Lk. 20:39, 40).

Perplexed on how well Jesus had put to silence the Sadducees, a lawyer of the Pharisees came to tempt Jesus. It is the gospel of Mark which makes some startling observations. As Jesus answers the question concerning which Old Testament law was the greatest, He cites correctly Deuteronomy 6:4, 5 adding Leviticus 19:18.

“*And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:  And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”* Here was a scribe who not only knew how to quote the law, but he also fathoms how to interpret it. His response is directly from 1 Samuel 15:22.

“*And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.”* Just a step away is still a distance away. “Almost” is never good enough. However, there is hope for this pious lawyer. He possibly could have later become a disciple of Jesus.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the greatest commandment?
2. What did Jesus tell the scribe concerning his approval?

***Whose Son is the Christ*** (Matt. 22:41-46; Mark 12:35-37; Lk. 20:41-44)

*“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying**, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions”* (Matt. 22:41-46).

“*And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?  For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.  David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly*” (Mark 12:35-37).

*“And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son? And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?”* (Luke 20:41-44).

Here is one of the few times with the Pharisees that Jesus begins the conversation. It could be that He was responding to their whispers, or what they were thinking.

He asks them, “*What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?”* Keep in mind that the Pharisees did not believe Jesus to be the Christ. The question was meant to point to their misunderstanding on the subject.

*“They say unto him, The Son of David.”* It Was a proper reply, and one that was given when the people debated over the identity of Jesus (Jn. 7:42).

“*He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?”* Jesus cites Psalm 110:1. No man could debate the wisdom of God. The Lord’s question aimed at the very core of man’s ignorance. For if the Christ is David’s Lord, how could the Lord be descended from him? With that question came silence.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question did Jesus ask the Pharisees?
2. What Old Testament passage did Jesus refer?

***Jesus Condemns Pride*** (Matt. 23:1-12; Mark 12:38-40; Lk. 20:45-47)

*Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, 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 for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,  And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.**But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted”* (Matt. 23:1-12).

“*And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation*” (Mark 12:38-40).

*“Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples, Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation”* (Lk. 20:45-47).

Jesus warns the disciples against the Pharisees. He condemns them for several reasons: 1) Binding heavy burdens on others, 2) performing works to be seen by men, 3) they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the border of their garments, 4) they love to sit in chief seats, and 5) they love to be greeted as Rabbi in the marketplace. Mark and Luke add two more, 1) they devour widow’s houses, and 2) they make long prayers to be seen and heard by others.

Matthew goes on to say, “*But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted”* (Matt. 23:8-12). The Lord condemns His disciples of seeking out titles of distinction. For they are learn servitude and humility.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What titles are men not to wear?
2. What did the scribes desire?

***Eight Woes*** (Matt. 23:13-36)

“*But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.  Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!  Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.  And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.  Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.  Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.  Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.  Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation”* (Matt. 23:13-36).

*“But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in”* (Matt. 23:13). Imagine a religious group of legalists who are blind. They profess their righteousness, and seem to have knowledge of the law, but they do not have a clue on how to be saved. They first would deny John’s baptism (Lk. 7:30), and later, the Lord’s teachings.

*“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation*” (Matt. 23:14). This shows that the Pharisees were charlatans and thieves. To coverup their sins, they made long pretentious prayers for the purpose of making others believe they were pious.

“*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves*” (Matt. 23:15). Thirdly, they travel the known world to proselyte others, not to the faith, but for their own agenda. Faithful followers of the beliefs and practices that Jesus looked to condemn.

**“***Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor*!” (Matt. 23:16). Next, the Pharisees engaged in making a man a debtor to them when his pledge was by the gold within the temple. Whereas, swearing by the temple itself meant nothing to them.

*“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone*” (Matt. 23:23).  Fifth, the tithing of the mint, anise, and cumin, no matter how little, were sought out by the Pharisees, but at the same time they ignored the weightier matters of the law. They were stated by Christ to be judgment, mercy, and faith. Howbeit, in their eyes there was no personal advantage in doing so.

“*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess*” (Matt. 23:25). Sixth, they prided themselves on their apparel, and looking holy. Sadly, internally, they were extortionist and men who thrived on excess.

“*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness*” (Matt. 23:27). Even more detestable was the analogy to white sepulchers.  Their purple robes, and embroidered symbols made them look stunning. However, Jesus compares them dead men decaying in whited tombs.

“*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous*” (Matt. 23:29). The building of structures and memorials over the graves of the prophets was typical among the Jews. By the Pharisees engaged in such acts had ulterior motives. They wanted the praise of men.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. The eight woes were directed at whom?
2. Can you name the eight woes?

***Lament Over Jerusalem*** (Matt. 23:37-39; Lk. 13:34, 35)

“*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!  Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.  For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord”* (Matt. 23:37-39).

*“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!* *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord”*(Lk. 13:34, 35).

Jerusalem, the holy city of the kings of Judah, and the place where the great temple was erected. In this same location was where battles were fought, and the prophets were stoned and slaughtered. God constantly sheltered her inhabitants and tried to shower them with His grace and love, but they refused. Jesus brings forth the analogy of a mother hen covering and protecting her chicks and the sad conclusion that “*they would not.”*

“*Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”* There are those individuals who use this verse to speak of the restoration of Israel, and the Lord returning to setup His kingdom. Yet this passage speaks concerning those who would come in the name of the Lord, and not Jesus Himself.

The Lord would walk the streets of Jerusalem and Galilee after His resurrection. The kingdom itself would not come until after the Lord’s ascension. And the future conversion of Israel, so noted in Psalms 118:26, would come by the preaching of the apostles to the remnant.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What metaphorical example did Jesus give of His love for Israel?
2. What prediction did He make concerning Jerusalem?

***The Poor Widow’s Mite*** (Mark 12:41-44; Lk. 21:1-4)

“*And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.  And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living”* (Mark 12:41-44).

“*And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.**And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had*” (Lk. 21:1-4).

As a Jewish woman, the poor widow was allowed entrance into the court of the women. The Gentiles were allowed to enter the outer temple enclosure. This large, paved area surrounding the temple and its inner courts was enclosed by a double colonnade of pillars standing 37 feet high.  The perimeter of this area measured three-quarters of a mile.

Gentiles were physically prevented access to the inner courts of the temple by a 4 ½ foot high barrier (Paul’s “wall of partition” in Ephesians 2:14). The Jewish historian Josephus pointed out that 13 stone slabs with writing in both Greek and Latin were posted at intervals on the barrier, warning Gentiles not to enter. In Josephus’s words, “*There was a partition made of stone…Its construction was very elegant; upon it stood pillars, at equal distances from one another, declaring the law of purity, some in Greek, and some in Roman letters, that ‘no foreigner should go within that sanctuary*’” (*Wars,* 5.5.2).

As the poor widow entered the court of the women, passing through the court of the Gentiles, she would have viewed several coffers fixed in various areas where the money was deposited. The tribute given was for the care of the temple.

This event was a lesson for the apostles. Like most, they were impressed by how much the wealthy gave. In this example, Jesus focused their attention on a poor widow. She gave two mites. The word in Greek is lepta **(**λεπτὰ). Two of these equaled one farthing which would have been one quarter of a penny. Each lepton was equal to 1/64 of a denarius – or a day’s wage for a laborer. Her two lepta equaled one Roman penny. To be more correct, the widow gave about eight cents. In her day she could have bought 1/3 of a loaf of bread.

“*And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had*” (Lk. 21:3, 4). Mark points out that this widow cast in “all her living.” This amazing example of faith was brought about by the Lord’s omniscience. He knew the precise moment of the widow’s arrival. He knew the amount she was going to give. And most importantly, He knew her sincerity and faith.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How much did the poor widow give?
2. What is the lesson taught to the apostles about this event?

***The Fall of Jerusalem*** (Matt. 24:1-35; Mark 13:1-31; Lk. 21:5-36)

*“And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.  And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.  And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?  And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.  For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.  All these are the beginning of sorrows.  Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.  And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.  And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.  And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.  But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.  When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand😊  Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!  But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before.  Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.  For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.  Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:  And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”* (Matt. 24:1-35).

*“And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!  And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.  And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,  Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?  And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you:  For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.  And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.   For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.  But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.  And the gospel must first be published among all nations.  But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.  Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.  And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.  But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:  And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house:  And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.  But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!  And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.  For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.  And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect’s sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.  And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not:  For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.  But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things. But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,  And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.  Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:  So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.  Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.  Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away”* (Mark 13:1-31).

*“And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? And what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?  And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.  But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.  Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.  But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.  Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.  And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man”* (Lk. 21:5-36).

*“And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.  And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down”*(Matt. 24:1, 2). This narrative in Matthew twenty-four, Mark thirteen, and Luke twenty-one was brought about by the apostle’s view of the temple. They felt that it would be in this temple where Jesus would setup His dynasty and begin His reign on earth. Jesus informs them that this would not be so. In fact, He predicts the destruction of the temple.

Making His proclamation, the apostles asked two questions. First, *“When shall these things be?”* or “*When would the temple fall*?” This prompted them to asks the second question, “*And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”* This would be a logical sequence because the apostles would have believed that the end of the world would come with the destruction of the temple.

Concerning the destruction of the temple, Jesus said that several worldly events would take place. He lists:

1. False Christs would arise (Matt. 24:4, 5).
2. There would be wars and rumor of wars (vs. 6).
3. There would be nations rising against nations along with famines, pestilence, and earthquakes (vs. 7).
4. There would be a great persecution of the church, and betrayals against the righteous (vs. 9, 10).
5. False prophets would arise, and sin would abound (vs. 11).
6. The love of many would wax cold (vs. 12).
7. The gospel would be preached to the whole world (vs. 14).
8. The prophesy of Daniel 9:27 would be fulfilled (vs. 15).
9. False Christs would arise (vs. 24).

With these things in mind, Jesus says that the Christians in Jerusalem would have time to flee into the mountains. And one would be able to view these signs as He states in the Parable of the Fig Tree. Most importantly is verse thirty-four, “*Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*” Jesus makes it clear that people listening to this prophesy would still be alive when these things took place.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Name five of the nine prophecies concerning the fall of Jerusalem.
2. What verse and statement are most important in interpreting the meaning of these prophecies?

*T****he Second Coming*** (Matt. 24:36-51; Mark 13:32-37)

*“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.  But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.  For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?  Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”* (Matt. 24:36-51).

“*But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.  Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.  For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:  Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch”*(Mark 13:32-37).

It is in these verses that Jesus answers the second question asked by the apostles. They wanted to know when the second coming would take place. Unlike the usage of “days” mentioned for the fall of Jerusalem, the plural is changed to singular concerning the Lord’s return (day, hour).

Several distinguishing statements are presented. First, No one knows when the second coming will take place, NOT EVEN THE SON (Mark 13:32).

Secondly, no signs will be given concerning this event. He uses two examples to emphasize this point. The first introduced was Noah and the days before the flood. People were unaware until the time the rains came. Next, Jesus tells the apostles that the second coming will occur as a thief invading a home.

The great lessons for the preparation of the second coming are found in the words “ready” and “watch.” As He says in Mark, “*Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:  Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch!”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who knows when the second coming will take place?
2. What one word sums up the disciple’s position on the second coming?

***Parable of the Ten Virgins*** (Matt. 25:1-13)

*“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.  And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.  They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:  But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.  While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh”* (Matt. 25:1-13).

The parable of the Ten Virgins is one of the more popular parables of our Lord. In the last parable it was that of servants waiting for their absent Lord; in this it is that of virgin attendants on a Bride, whose duty it was to go forth at night with lamps, and be ready on the appearance of the Bridegroom to conduct the Bride to his house, and go in with him to the marriage.

When the time of their calling took place, five of the virgins were ready with the lamps, but not so with the other five. At first, they tried to skim off the prepared five, but upon their refusal, they were told to go to the market and buy oil. Upon their return, it was too late to join the party. And though they knocked on the bridegroom’s door, but He simply replied, “*I know ye not*.”

Like the ending in Matthew twenty-four concerning the second coming, the lesson on being prepared and ready is the point. The disciples of Christ are to be always ready for the Lord’s return to take His follower’s home.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In this parable, how many of the virgins were wise?
2. How many were foolish?
3. What was the request of the foolish virgins to the wise?
4. What was the final outcome of the foolish virgins?

***Parable of the Talents*** (Matt. 25:14-30)

“*For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.  And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*” (Matt. 25:14-30).

The Parable of the Talents teaches the disciple multiplication. The whole reasoning of our walk with Christ is to increase our works and faith. For the five and two talent servants, they were both able to double what was entrusted to them. Sadly, the one talent man feared the Master, and decided to bury his in the earth. This would not only cost him what he buried, but his soul.

Though this parable is simple and direct, it is still one of the recognizable problems in the kingdom. Members who feel that there only obligation is to sit in a pew or keep their eyes open during services. They have buried their talents and have even gone so far as to forget where their treasures are buried.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the money distribution to the three servants?
2. Why did the one talent man bury his talent?
3. What judgment was cast upon the one talent man?

***Parable of the Sheep & Goats*** (Matt. 25:31-46)

*“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:  For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?  When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?  Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?  Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal*” (Matt. 25:31-46).

The Parable of the Sheep and Goats follows naturally the Parable of the Talents. For all of us have individual talents that God has given us. There are men who are excellent song leaders, bible class teachers, and leaders. And then there are those members who will send cards, make visits, and prepare food to be taken to the homeless. God simply demands that we do our absolute best to increase our talents.

The talents named in this parable are requirements of our discipleship. For all of us have the capability to feed strangers, to visit the sick, and to comfort the downhearted. These are all outward expressions of our love for others.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In this parable, who are the sheep?
2. In this parable, who are the goats?

***Jesus Again Predicts His Death & Completion of Public Ministry*** (Jn. 12:20-36) (Tuesday Afternoon)

*“And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.  And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.  If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.* *Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.  Father, glorify thy name.* *Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.  The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.  Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.  Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.**The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them”* (Jn. 12:20-36).

Like the Samaritans, who sought out Jesus, John informs us of certain proselytes acquainted with Philip, being from the same town where he lived, asks to speak with the Lord. Philip takes their request to Andrew, and both Philip and Andrew approach Jesus.

*“And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.  If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.”* While the crowd is near Jesus when Philip and Andrew talk with the Lord, He uses their requests as a theological basis for His death and resurrection. As these men, and others sought Him, it would soon be that He would not be found.He orates the Parable of the Falling Corn. It is meant to symbolize His death, and how it must take place in order for others to receive the mercy of God.

“*Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.  The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.*

“*Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.  Father, glorify thy name.”* The impending doom that was soon to take place brings the same sadness exhibited in the garden before His arrest.”

“*Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.  The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.”* Now for a third time in the gospels, a voice from heaven is heard. His glorification first came at His incarnation, baptism, and ministry. It will be glorified again at His resurrection and ascension.

“*The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.”* The crowd was confused. Part of the crowd felt that what they heard was merely thunder. Others believed the voice was that of an angel.It was the belief of the Jews that God did not speak to men except by the ministry of angels (Heb. 2:2; Gal. 3:19).

“*Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.  Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.”* God was supplying undeniable proof that Jesus was the Messiah. His death would be the catalyst that would bring about the judgment of the world and bring forth the chariot of grace offered to all men.

“*The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?”* The belief among the Jews was that the Messiah would not die. He would come, conquer the enemies of the Jews, and reestablish His throne in the Holy city.

Concerning the son of man, Ezekiel the prophet was given such a name (Ezekiel 2:1-3), but it was Daniel who predicted Christ would be termed the “Son of man” (Dan. 8:17). The Lord’s proclamation of being “lifted up” confused the masses.

*“Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.”* The light that came into the world was about to exit. He begs them to be “children of the light,” and to stay clear of the darkness. After speaking these words of hope, He goes into hiding.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who came searching for Jesus?
2. What statement by Christ confused the people?
3. How did Jesus react to their negativity?

***Jesus Reminds Apostles of His Crucifixion*** (Matt. 26:1, 2) (Two days before Passover/Unleavened Bread)

“*And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified*” (Matt. 26:1, 2).

On several occasions, Jesus spoke to His apostles concerning His death. At this junction, He makes an astonishing prediction that He will be betrayed and crucified. Were they so dazed by these statements that their minds refused to accept the inevitable? Howbeit, let us not forget that they were mere men who were easily distracted and confused.

**QUESTION:**

1. Jesus had spoken about His crucifixion on several occasions, but what is added to this peculiar prediction?

***The Plot Against Christ*** (Matt. 26:3-5; Mark 14:1, 2; Lk. 22:1, 2)

“*Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people”* (Matt. 26:3-5).

*“After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death*” (Mark 14:1).

“*Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people”* (Lk. 22:1, 2).

Adam Clarke offers insight on Caiaphas:

“Caiaphas succeeded Simon, son of Camith, about a.d. 16, or, as Calmet thinks, 25. He married the daughter of Annas, who was joined with him in the priesthood. About two years after our Lord’s crucifixion, Caiaphas and Pilate were both deposed by Vitellius, then governor of Syria, and afterwards emperor. Caiaphas, unable to bear this disgrace, and the stings of his conscience for the murder of Christ, killed himself about a.d. 35” (Adam Clarke Commentary on the Bible, *the Gospel of Matthew*).

Matthew uses the word “subtilty” to speak of the way the Jewish leaders wanted to capture Christ. The word means “guile.” Whereas Mark chooses the word “craft.” The word was used in the gospel of Luke when the same group tried to entrap Him concerning taxes (Lk. 20:23).

Their intended plan had to be conducted in the utmost secrecy because they feared an “uproar” as Matthew and Luke state. The spiteful and degenerative hatred of these men toward the Lord defined the history of the Jews. A people loved by God, who, without hesitancy, failed to return that love.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did the Jewish leaders meet to plot against Jesus?
2. What Jewish celebration was drawing near when this plotting took place?

***Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus*** (Matt. 26:14-16; Mark 14:10, 11; Lk. 22:3-6)

*“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.  And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him”* (Matt. 26:14-16).

“*And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them”* (Mark 14:10).

“*Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.  And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.**And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude”*(Lk. 22:3-6).

Luke says that Satan entered Judas, and Matthew states that he covenanted with the council to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. To the Jews thirty pieces of silver was the standard price for a slave.

“*And he promised and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude”* (Lk. 22:6). Judas, like the Jewish leaders, also feared the reaction of the masses if his plan was carried out openly.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Judas meet with the chief priests and captains?
2. What agreement was reached by Judas and the Sanhedrin?

***Summary***

***Unbelief of the Jews*** (Jn. 12:37-43)

“*But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God*” (Jn. 12:37-43).

John cites two passages quoted by Jesus, Isaiah 53:1 and Isaiah 6:9, 10 to point to the hardened hearts of the people. The vast number of proofs brought to light by Jesus could not convince the unbelievers. And those who did believe, yet would not confess, John states, “*Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*”

Through the ages, men have ignored the truth, not by ignorance, but by the shameful desire to be praised by others. Being a follower of Jesus has never been popular, nor will it ever be.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why wasn’t faith produced by the miracles Jesus performed?
2. What two passages did Jesus’ quote?

***Summary of the Lord’s Message*** (Jn. 12:44-50)

*“Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.  And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.  And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* *For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.”*

These words are spoken after the rejection of the Pharisees and the chief priests (Jn. 12:42, 43). What He says is a deep confirmation of His deity, and His mission from the Father. The emphasis is exemplified when He proclaims, “*the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”* He makes it openly known, partly by parable, metaphors, and direct statements that He was sent by God to save the lost.

“*For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak*.” The word “commandment” used in the King James should be properly rendered “commission.” It comes from the Greek word *entole* **(εντολη**) which signifies one commissioned to a certain position or task.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Jesus said He came as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ into the world.
2. Jesus said He came not to judge the world but to do what?
3. What should the word “commission” be properly rendered?

***Preparation of the Lord’s Supper*** (Matt. 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Lk. 22:7-13) (First day of the Passover/Unleavened Bread)

“*Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover*” (Matt. 26:17-19).

“*And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover”* (Mark 14:12-16).

“*Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover”* (Lk. 22:7-13).

In preparing an area for the Lord’s Supper, it is Mark and Luke who go into greater detail. Two disciples are charged to go into the city and follow a man with a pail of water. When he enters the house, asks the owner to lead them to the guestchamber in the upper room of the house. It is there that they will make ready the room for the Last Meal.

Every detail is given by Christ. As He had revealed on several occasions His ability to miraculous see what other men could not. Whether it was Nathanael under a fig tree (John 1:48-51), or Peter’s denial (Mark 14:30); Jesus proved His Messiahship.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What two apostles were sent into the city to prepare for the Last Supper?
2. What were the details of them finding this particular spot?

***The Lord’s Supper*** (Matt. 26:20-35; Mark 14:17-31; Luke 22:14-39; John 13:1-17:26)

“*Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.  And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?  And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.  The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.  Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.  And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.  And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;  For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.  And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples”* (Matt. 26:20-35).

*“And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?  And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.  And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.  And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered (Zech. 13:7). But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.  And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.  But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all”* (Mark 14:17-31).

*“And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.  And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.  And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.  And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.  Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.  But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.  And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.  Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.  And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.  For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors (Isa. 53:12): for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.  And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him* (Lk. 22:14-39).

On this sacred occasion will be brought forth the only significant physical emblems that will be carried through the centuries, the Lord’s Supper. The prediction of Judas’ betrayal, and Peter’s denial are shadowed by the Lord’s blessing upon the bread and fruit of the vine.

He also speaks of His coming Kingdom, and the need for the apostles to serve each other. He promises, “*But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”* Mark says, "*in the kingdom of God*” (Mark 14:25); and Luke, "*until the kingdom of God come*,” (Luke 22:18). Though the Kingdom came on the day of Pentecost, the literal partaking of this communion would not take place until the saints are taken to heaven. However, spiritually we have communion with Christ every Lord’s Day when the Supper is served. Paul writes, “*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?”* (1 Cor. 10:16).

*“And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee”* (Matt. 26:30-32). Jesus quotes from Zechariah 13:7. The slaughtered Shepherd would be resurrected. And He would reunite with the sheep in Galilee.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What gospels cover the Lord’s Supper?
2. When will Jesus partake of the Supper again with the apostles?
3. What does the bread represent?
4. What does the fruit of the vine represent?

***The Lord’s Preparation and Instructions to the Apostles*** (Jn. 13:1-17:26).

The three synoptic gospels dealt specifically with the presentation of the Lord’s Supper, Judas’ betrayal, and Peter’s rebuke. Howbeit, it is John who brings forth these meaningful teachings and prayers made by Jesus before His arrest.

“*Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.  Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.  A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice. Let not your heart be troubled: ye 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 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.  If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.  I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.  At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.  He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?  Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.  And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.  Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.  I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.  Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.  I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.  Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.  If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.   Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.  These things I command you, that ye love one another.  If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.  If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.  Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.  But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.   If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also.  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.  But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.  But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.  But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.   But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?  But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.  And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?  Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.  A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.  And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.  Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.   These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.  I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.  His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?  Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.  And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.  They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.  And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them*” (Jn. 13:1-17:26).

John spends a great deal of time defining what took place in the upper chamber, and in the garden of Gethsemane. In chapter thirteen, one finds Satan entering the heart of Judas. And then Jesus disrobes to wash the apostles’ feet. Immediately after, John writes, “*When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me”* (Jn. 13:31). The apostles being concerned over such a statement, began to question among themselves the betrayer’s identity. It is Peter who prompts John resting on the bosom of Jesus to ask cautiously.

John pens, “*Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.  And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.  Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him”* (Jn. 13:26-28).

Next, the Lord gives a new commandment to the apostles (Jn. 13:31-35). It will come to represent the true nature of the disciple. It is after this exhortation that Peter’s betrayal is addressed.

Still in the upper chamber, Jesus seeks to bring comfort to their sorrow (Jn. 14:1-14). He then promises them that He will not leave them without guidance. They will be sent the Holy Spirit who will guide them and bring to their remembrance all things spoken from the mouth of the Messiah (Jn. 14:15-31).

It is in chapter fifteen where Jesus teaches them the parable of the vine. The emphasis on love and bearing fruit. Once again, He encourages them to “love one another.”

Fifteen ends with the warning that the world will hate them (Jn. 15:18-27). Yet He will not leave them comfortless during this period for that is another mission put on the shoulders of the Holy Spirit. The thought is expanded in the first three verses of chapter sixteen. In this chapter three fundamental concepts are presented. First, the mission of the Spirit is defined (John 16:4-15). This is followed by the Lord’s understanding of the sorrow they were expressing because of His departure with the promise that their sorrow will be turned to joy (John 16:16-24).

He then provokes the thought of the peace that will come by overcoming the world. For as He returns to His Father, He will leave them with the peace that only He can offer (Jn. 16:25-33).

The beautiful, orated message is brought to closure by the Lord’s prayer to His Father. He speaks of the glory of God, the joy of discipleship, and the unity which will keep the church pure. If the sermon on the mount is looked upon as the constitution of the Kingdom, the sermon presented in John as the declaration of promise to the apostles.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. After the partaking of the Lord’s Supper, what act and lesson did Jesus teach the apostles?
2. Who was Jesus going to send to them (the apostles) after His resurrection to guide them?

***Gethsemane*** (Matt. 26:36-56; Mark 14:32-50; Luke 22:40-53; John 18:1-12)

*“Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.  Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled*” (Matt. 26:36-56).

“*And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, 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 unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand. And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him. And they laid their hands on him, and took him. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. And they all forsook him, and fled*” (Mark 14:32-50).

“*When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.  And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.  As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?  Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him*” (Jn. 18:1-12).

All four gospels give us a clear look at the events that took place in the garden. We find the Lord entering the garden three times instructing Peter, James, and John to remain awake in which they failed to do. It is the one time in scriptures where the Messiah needed these men, but because of their human frailties they were unable to accommodate.

In that garden, Jesus pours out His heart to God. His prayer was for God to remove the cup but only if it be the Father’s will. God would respond by sending an angel to comfort Jesus.

Second, we find Judas entering the area with the Jewish soldiers to capture Jesus. For recognition, Judas chose a kiss to signify who was the Christ.

And last, we find Peter striking the servant of the High Priest, Malchus, and cutting off his ear. Jesus in turn heals the wound of the servant miraculously.

It is well founded that the Lord won the victory in the garden of Gethsemane. When He exited the garden for the last time, He told His disciples that He was ready. The pain, the anguish, and His demeanor had changed. Like brother Paul in his outlook on death, the Lord was ready to be offered (2 Tim. 4:6).

Theologically speaking, Jesus never feared death. He did not fear the abuse, beatings, and treatment of His persecutors. What He did fear was the separation that would take place by accepting sin into His mortal body. It would be at that point that the unity of the three would be broken. A period when God would turn away from His Son (Matt. 27:46).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who were the three apostles with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane?
2. What was the name of the servant whose ear was severed? Who was he a servant to?

***Trial Before Jewish Authorities*** (Matt. 26:57-75; Mark 14:53-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:13-27)

*“And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.  Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, 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 unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. 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. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee? Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.  But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly” (Matt. 26:57-75).*

*“ And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.  And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together. And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept” (Mark 14:53-72).*

*“Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly” (Luke 22:54-62).*

*“And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?  Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew”* (John 18:13-27).

All four gospels focus on the trial of Jesus before the High Priest and the Sanhedrin. It is John who mentions that Christ was first led to Annas. He was the father-in-law to Caiaphas and held the position of High Priest prior to Caiaphas.

The gospels point out that many false witnesses gave testimony. The main indictment was seeded on the Lord making the proclamation that He would destroy the temple and three days later would raise it up. Howbeit, we note that He spoke concerning His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection.

The second emphasis of this trial before the Sanhedrin was the three denials of Peter. The first two times, he was challenged by women who had seen Him with the Christ. The last denial came when a soldier challenged him as he warmed himself by a fire. To enforce his denial, he followed it with cursing and swearing. Peter knew that no true disciple of Christ would act in such a manner.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was Annas?
2. Who was Caiaphas?

***The Sanhedrin Condemns the Lord*** (**Friday**, early morning) (Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1; Lk. 22:66-71)

“*When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death*” (Matt. 27:1).

“*And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate”* (Mark 15:1).

*“And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all,* *Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth*” (Lk. 22:66-71).

Matthew simply states that the Jewish leaders took counsel against Jesus. Mark goes a little further and views Jesus being bound and taken before Pilate. It is Luke who fills in the gaps. We find Jesus being asked by the elders, chief priests, and scribes if He was the Christ. He replies first with telling them that they would not believe Him no matter what He said.

Jesus says, “*Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.”* This prompts the Jewish leaders to asks, “*Art thou then the Son of God?”* Jesus’ reply is somewhat distorted in the King James, for it reads, “*Ye say that I am*.” This should properly be rendered, “*Ye say right.*”

The Lord’s reply becomes the proof they sought. He admittedly responds with an affirmative to the question. It is fact that Jesus spoke truth. The Jewish leaders were just too hardened to accept it.

**QUESTION:**

1. What question and answer prompted the chief priests, elders, and scribes to condemn Jesus?

***Judas Commits Suicide*** (Matt. 27:3-10; Acts 1:18, 19)

*“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, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.  And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.  And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.  And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me*” (Matt. 27:3-10).

*“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.  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”* (Acts 1:18, 19).

The sin that condemned the soul of Judas was his suicide. The Bible makes it clear that Judas recognized his wrong, repented, and even proved his repentance by throwing down the thirty pieces of silver. Seeing that all the apostles betrayed Him, he was no better or worse than any of them. Peter, himself, would deny the Lord three times.

Judas’s problem is iconic of the many repentant sinners who do not believe that God truly forgives. The belief that certain sins are unforgiveable. The Bible informs the reader that only one sin holds this position, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31). Whereas, all others, no matter how horrid, devious, and detestable; forgiveness can be granted to those who truly repent.

When looking at Matthew’s description of Judas’ suicide compared to Luke’s narrative; they may seem to be different. In perspective, Judas hung long enough on that limb that it decapitated him causing his body to fall to the rocks below and burst because of decomposition.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Did Judas repent of betraying Jesus?
2. How does Matthew and Luke (Acts) describe the death of Judas?

***Trial Before Pilate*** (Matt. 27:2, 11-32; Mark 15:1-21; Luke 23:1-31; John 18:28-19:17)

“*And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor…  And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.  “Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.  Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?  For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.  When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.  But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.  The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.  Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.  Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.  And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon 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!  And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.  And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.   And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross*” (Matt. 27:2, 11-32).

“*And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.  And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.  And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.  And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.  But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.  Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.  And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.  And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.  But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.  And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him.  Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head, And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross”* (Mark 15:1-21).

“*And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.  And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.  And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.  Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.  And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.  When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean.  And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.  And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.  Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.  And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him, and release him. (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)  And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.  But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.  And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.**And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.  And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”*(Lk. 23:1-31).

*“Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.  Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.  Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.  Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.  But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?  Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.  And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.  And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha”* (Jn. 18:28-19:17).

The Roman trial of Jesus had three phases: (1) first appearance before Pilate; (2) appearance before Herod Antipas; and (3) second appearance before Pilate.

The Jews asked Pilate to accept their verdict against Jesus at first without any investigation ([John 18:29-31](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=joh+18:29-31&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ). Pilate refused this and gave them the opportunity to punish Jesus severely. Yet they knew they could not invoke the death penalty unless Jesus was tried by Roman law.

The Jews fabricated three charges against Jesus which would be of concern to a Roman governor. Luke writes, “*And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King*” ([Luke 23:2](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=lu+23:2&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ).

Pilate ignored two of the charges and showed concern for the third charge of Christ claiming to be king. If it were substantiated, Jesus would have been tried for treason.

Pilate interrogated Jesus long enough to be convinced that He was no political rival nor threat to Caesar ([John 18:33-37](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=joh+18:33-37&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ). He returned to the Jewish leaders and reported that he found no proof of their claim, and hence Jesus was not deserving of death ([John 18:38](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=joh+18:38&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ).

Pilate’s oration prompted the Jews to announce more vehement accusations against Jesus, citing His actions in Judea and Galilee ([Luke 23:5](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=lu+23:5&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ). With the mention of Galilee, Pilate sends Jesus to Herod Antipas, who was presently in the city of Jerusalem ([Luke 23:6-12](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=lu+23:6-12&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ). Herod welcomed the engagement for he longed to see Jesus perform a miracle before him. Jesus neither performed a miracle, nor spoke a word to Herod. This led the king and his soldiers to mock and ridicule Jesus. Thus, Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate.

Once returned to Pilate, the Roman governor announced that he still found Jesus’ innocent of the charges of treason. He made this attempt three times. First, Pilate offered to chastise or beat Jesus and then to release him ([Luke 23:16](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=lu+23:16&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ).

Second, he offered to release either Jesus or Barabbas, a murderous radical revolutionary. The governor was surprised when the crowd chanted for Barabbas ([Luke 23:17-19](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=lu+23:17-19&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ).

Third, he scourged Jesus. He had his soldiers flog the Lord’s bare back with a leather whip in which were tied to the thong’s pieces of iron and bone. He then placed a crown of thorns on His head, and a purple robe. The shamefully, bleeding, and humiliated Christ, Pilate felt, would have received mercy from the crowd. His plan simply irritated the crowd and they chanted more spitefully to crucify Jesus ([John 19:4-6](https://www.studylight.org/study-desk.html?q1=joh+19:4-6&t1=eng_nas&sr=1) ).

When Pilate seemed to waver one more time concerning crucifixion, the Jews threatened to report his conduct to Caesar. John writes, “*And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha* (elevated place)*. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!  But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar*” (Jn. 19:12-15).

The mere threat triggered Pilate's action. It also showed how far the Jews were willing to go to destroy Christ. For they were taught in their religion that there was no other king but God. Now the chief priests, those who swore their allegiance to the faith, have turned to blasphemy and a complete denial of the God of heaven.

At this point, Pilate pours water into basin and washes his hands declaring that he “*washed his hands of this matter*” (Matt. 27:24). Then he delivers Jesus to be crucified (Jn. 19:16).

“*And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.  And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”* (Lk. 23:26-30).

Mark states that this Simon was the father to Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21). There was a colony of Jews in Cyrene. And according to Acts 6:9 and Acts 11:20, the Cyrenians had a synagogue in Jerusalem. The sons are name for they must have had some notoriety among the Jews in that area.

Because of the flogging and the bleeding, Jesus would have been anemic and exhausted. Simon is selected to carry the cross beam of Jesus to the place of execution.

As Jesus continues His trek to Golgotha, Jesus turns and notices the great number of people following, and the women weeping for Him. The Lord tells them not to weep for Him, but for themselves, and orates one last prophecy concerning the coming destruction against Jerusalem by Nero.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What were the three phrases of the Lord’s trial?
2. Why did Pilate give in to Jesus being crucified?
3. Who was Simon the Cyrenian?
4. What prophecy did Jesus pronounce to the women following?

***Jesus is Crucified*** (9:00 AM)(Matt. 27:33-56; Mark 15:22-41; Lk. 23:27-49; John 19:18-30)

*“And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be 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.  The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children”* (Matt. 27:33-35).

“*And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.  And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.  And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, Save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.  And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and filled a spunge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem”* (Mark 15:22-41).

“*And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things*” (Lk. 23:27-49).

“*Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am 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 every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.  They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.  When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost”* (Jn. 19:18-30).

There has been much controversy on the year Jesus died. What we do know can be obtained from several presented facts from the gospel writers. **First**, the High Priest that year was Caiaphas (Matt. 26:3, 4, Jn. 11:49-53). Historian’s date his serving in this position from A.D. 18 to 36.

**Second**, the Bible reveals that Pilate was governor of that region, and it was by his orders that the Lord was crucified (Matt. 27:24-26; Mark 15:15; Lk. 23:24; Jn. 19:15, 16). Pilate served as governor of Judea from A.D. 26 to 36.

**Third**, according to Luke, the ministry of John the Baptist began during the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar (Lk. 3:1, 2). This would be in the year 29 A.D. All four gospels state that the ministry of Jesus started after John began his ministry.

**Fourth,** the Lord was crucified on a Friday (Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Lk. 23:54; Jn. 19:42) before the Sabbath (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Lk. 24:1; Jn. 20:1). This was called the “day of preparation” which involved the Jewish community preparing for the Sabbath.

**Fifth,** the gospels refer to the fact that Jesus was crucified in conjunction with the annual feast of Passover (Matt. 26:2; Mark 14:1; Lk. 22:1; Jn. 18:39).

An historic calendar can be used to point to the various days when the evening Passover began from A.D. 29 thru A.D. 36. Only two dates are possible: Friday, April 7, A.D. 30 and Friday, April 3, A.D. 33. The A.D. 30 date would not fit because the gospels record three different Passovers during the ministry of Jesus (Jn. 2:13, 6:4, 11:55). The ministry of our Lord would last for 3 ½ years. Hence, the logical date of the Messiah’s crucifixion was April 3, A.D. 33.

Concerning the crucifixion, all for gospels shed light on what happened while Jesus hung on that cross. The offering to the Lord the wine mingled with myrrh. This was common for the Romans to give the condemned man this drink to lessen the pain.

Then there were the several miracles that took place. From the whole world turning dark, to the earthquake, and the dead saints rising from their graves after Jesus took His last breath; these were all indicators that they had crucified the Messiah.

Then there were the guards that parted His garment into four parts, and then gambled for the coat that was of one seam. One of these same men who witnessed the miracles professed that Jesus must surely be “*the Son of God*.”

And let the reader not forget those two thieves that hung beside Jesus. Both mocked Him in the beginning, but later one would praise Him and asked to be remembered when Jesus set up His Kingdom. The Lord’s reply was breath taking, “*Today thou shalt be with me in paradise*.”

### With all that has been said and witnessed, the most important parts that were echoed from the cross were those seven Divine statements made by our Lord: 1) “*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do*” (Lk. 23:24); 2) “*Today you will be with me in paradise*” (Lk. 23:43); 3) “*Woman behold your Son… behold your mother*” (Jn. 19:26, 27), 4); “*My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me*” (Matt. 27:46). 5); “*I thirst*” (Jn. 19:28); 6) “*It is finished*” (Jn. 19:30); and 7) “*Father into thy hands I commend by Spirit*” (Lk. 23:46).

By those seven statements, Jesus unveiled His humanity, divinity, and His love for all mankind. It would create a bridge between what happened on that cross and the events viewed on the day of Pentecost.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. On what day was Jesus crucified?
2. What did the guards do with the garment Jesus wore? What did they do with His coat of one seam?
3. Can you name the miracles that happened while Jesus hung on that cross?
4. Can you place in order the seven statements orated by Christ on the cross?

***Jesus is Buried*** (Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42).

*“When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.  And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,  And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.   And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre”* (Matt. 27:57-61).

*“And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,  Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.  And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.  And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.  And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.   And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid”* (Mark 15:42-47).

*“(The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them, he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.  And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.  And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment”* (Lk. 23:51-56).

*“And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.  And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.  Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.  Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.  There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews’ preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand”* (Jn. 19:38-42).

All four gospels write on the burial of Jesus. We note from Matthew’s account that Joseph was a disciple of Jesus. Mark calls him a “*good, just, and honorable counsellor who waited on the kingdom*.” Mark further informs us that Pilate would not release the body to Joseph until there was proof that He had expired.

Luke speaks of the women who followed behind Joseph and then prepared ointments and spices. However, it is John who offers the most insight on this event. He states that Joseph came to Pilate with his friend Nicodemus, who brought 100 pounds of myrrh and aloes for the Lord’s burial. After Joseph and Nicodemus wrapped the body according to Jewish custom, they laid Him in a newly carved out tomb in a garden.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What wealthy man came to Pilate to asks for Jesus to be buried in his tomb?
2. Who else came to Pilate with this request?

***The Guards*** (**Saturday**)(Matt. 27:62-66)

“*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. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.  Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch:* *go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch*” (Matt. 27:62-66).

The chief priests and Pharisees stand before Pilate informing him a possible plot by the apostles to steal the body of their Master. Pilate informs them, “G*o your way, make it as sure as ye can.”* Upon this command, the Pharisees went to the tomb making the sepulchre sure by sealing the stone and setting a watch.

During this period in Jewish history, the temple had a corps of Roman troops which assisted the Jews in guarding the temple. Some writers have proposed that the same soldiers who crucified Jesus would be the ones stationed at the tomb.

The security of the tomb had two parts. First, they would make the sepulchre sure. This is done by rolling a large stone in front of the entrance, and then tying a robe from one end to the other. Second, they would station guards near the tomb to ward off any trespassers.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When the chief priests and Pharisees came to Pilate, what did they call Jesus?
2. What three things did the Pharisees do to ensure that the body of Jesus would not be stolen?

***The Women (*Saturday evening)** (Mark 16:1; Lk. 23:56)

“*And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him*” (Mark 16:1).

“*And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment*” (Lk. 23:56).

The three women bring aromatic embalming spices to mask the putrefaction of the body. The first was Mary Magdalene who anointed the feet of Jesus and she is the same Mary whom Jesus cast out seven demons (Mark. 16:9).

The second woman mentioned was Mary, the mother of James the less (Mark 15:40) and Joseph. She was the wife of Alphaeus, and the sister of Mary the mother of the Lord, whom John names Cleophas.

The third woman who traveled to the tomb was Salome. This was the mother of James and John who came to Jesus requesting places of authority for her sons (Matt. 20:20).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the women bring to the tomb?
2. What were the spices to be used for?

**THE FORTY DAYS FROM THE RESURRECTION TO THE ASCENSION**

***The Resurrection*** (Matt. 28:1-15; Mark 16:2-14; Luke 24:1-48; John 20:1-25)

*“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.  And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.  And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.   And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.  Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.   Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.  And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.  And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.  So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day”* (Matt. 28:1-15).

*“And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.   And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?  And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.  And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.  And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.  But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.  And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.   Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.  And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.   And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.   After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.   And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.  Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen”* (Mark 16:2-14).

*“Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.  And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.  And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.  And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?  He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet 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, And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.  It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.  And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.  Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?  And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which 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 have crucified him.  But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.  Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:  Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?  And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.  And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.  And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?  And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.  And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.  And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.   But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.  And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?  Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.  And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved 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 among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things”* (Lk. 24:1-48).

*“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.  Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.  Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.  So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.  And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.  Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,  And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.  Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.  Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.  But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,  And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.  And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.  Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.  Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto 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 unto her.   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, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.  And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.  Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.  And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe”* (Jn. 20:1-25).

By piecing together, the events of that great day, one must view the four accounts side-by-side. Matthew speaks of the earthquake and the angel rolling away the stone. He tells of the frightened soldiers who froze like dead men. And Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the mother of James and John, conversing with the angel who sat on the stone, allowing them entrance into the tomb to see that Jesus had been raised.

The angel informs the ladies four facts: 1) the knowledge that he knew who they sought, 2) the proclamation that He had risen, 3) the invitation to see the place where He laid, and 4) the request to tell the disciples to travel to Galilee where they would find the Lord.

Mark’s gospel speaks of the ladies viewing a young man inside the tomb wearing white, and informing them to go tell Peter that the Lord had risen. The writer adds, “*And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid*” (Mark 16:8).

Luke informs the reader that it is Mary Magdalene, Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward (Luke 8:3), Mary the mother of James and John, and the other women who informed the disciples of the risen Lord. No doubt these women had traveled to the tomb to anoint Jesus with the various spices so used by the Jews.

John’s gospel is unique. He speaks of Mary Magdalene seeing that Jesus had arisen from the tomb runs back and tells Peter. The apostle in response grabs some of the disciples and hurry to the tomb. After viewing the empty tomb, the Bible says, “*Went away again unto their own homes*.”

Mary Magdalene still weeping at the tomb, stoops down and investigates the tomb. She sees two angels sitting on opposite ends where Jesus was laid. Then she arises, turns, and runs into Jesus. She does not recognize Him and begins a conversation.

At first, she supposes Him to be the gardener, asking where possibly He had taken the body. John writes, “*Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto 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 unto her*” (Jn. 20:16-18).

Mary did not recognize our Lord physically. She recognized His voice. Like so many of us who know the voices of those closest to us. Whether it be the phrases they use, the tone, or the mere way they say our name. Jesus said that the sheep “*know His voice*” (Jn. 10:4), and Mary surely knew the sweet voice of the Messiah.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who were the first people who came to the tomb?
2. Which Mary met Jesus at the tomb? And did she recognize Him?

***Jesus Appears Before Thomas* (one week after the resurrection)** (Jn. 20:26-29)

“*And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.  Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.  And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.  Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*” (Jn. 20:26-29).

It is sad that Thomas is defined from this one episode. The scriptures teach us that all the apostles doubted in the beginning. Maybe it was the passing of Jesus through a closed door, or the teachings believed by many Jews on the subject of ghosts. Thomas was a mortal man who needed proof.

Let this apostle be defined by what happened next. After touching the wounds of Jesus, he fell to his knees, and proclaimed, *“My Lord and My God!”*

“*Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*” The Hebrew writer defined faith as “*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (Heb. 11:1). Paul scribes, “*So then faith* *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). God knew that for 3,500 years, men had seen miracles, heard His voice, and walked with His prophets. Howbeit, for the past many centuries no miracles have been performed, no prophets have prophesied, nor any visions of Christ have been given. Men would only have the written word to instruct, guide, and build their faith upon.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Thomas have to touch to believe Christ had risen from the tomb?
2. What did Jesus say about those who would come to believe without seeing?

***Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples*** (**Galilee, Sea of Tiberias)** (Jn. 21:1-24)

“*After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.  There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.  Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.  And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.  Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.   And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.  As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.  Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.  Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.  Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.  So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.  He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.  Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?  Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?  Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.* *Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?  This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true”* (Jn. 21:1-24).

There are three parts to this narrative. First, the Lord’s instruction in the capturing of the fish. This He gave to Peter and the disciple *whom Jesus loved*, being John. The apostles were able to catch one hundred and fifty-three fish. Yet, before reaching shore, Peter being naked, wrapped his father’s coat around himself, dove into the sea, and swam to shore.

It is at this time, the second part is described, is Jesus preparing a meal for the disciples and asking them to “*come and dine*.” As they sat down, not knowing it was Christ, the Lord begins a direct theological conversation with Peter. He asks the question three times, “*Lovest thou me more than these*?” The first two, Jesus would use the word AGAPE. The third time, He changed the word AGAPE TO PHILEO. Agape is the highest form of love, while Phileo, is simply brotherly love.

What followed the question was the remark, “*Feed my sheep*!” Here is viewed the true meaning of discipleship and love for the church. The responsibility for Peter, and all others to render love and aid to every person, whether strong or weak.

Jesus knew that Peter would have difficulty in this area, especially when it came to the Gentiles. Hence, Jesus tells Peter that he will finally learn the meaning of AGAPE upon his own crucifixion.

The final part of the narrative speaks of the prophesy of John’s long life. Peter would take the Lord’s statement to John as meaning that the apostle would not see death. Note the clarification, “*Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?  This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.*

Secular history, along with the statements made in the book of Revelation, tell of John being imprisoned on the island of Patmos. He is and elderly man looking back at the past when he once enjoyed the fellowship of the apostles. Now they had all been martyred. So often we see long life as a blessing, and in many ways, it is, but it can also be a curse. To exists pondering on missing friendships, and seeing man’s inhumanity to others, would carry quite a load on the last survivor of the chosen apostles.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the three parts to the narrative written by John?
2. Who did Jesus’ question about loving the church?
3. What did Jesus predict concerning Peter?
4. What did Jesus predict concerning John?

***Jesus Appears to the Eleven in Galilee* (A mountain in Galilee)** (Matt. 28:16, 17)

“*Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted*” (Matt. 28:16, 17).

Jesus told the apostles that after His resurrection He would meet them in Galilee (Matt. 26:32). Matthew now tells us more of the specifics concerning that meeting place.

“*And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.*” Thomas is usually looked upon as the apostle who doubted. The Bible tells us that he was not alone in his lack of faith. Though these men would become bulwarks of faith, at this time in their history they had been numbed by the risen Savior.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did Jesus appear to the eleven?
2. Whey they saw Jesus, what two responses are given?

***Signs*** (Mark 16:17, 18)

“*And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover”* (Mark 16:17, 18).

How were the apostles to show proof of the resurrected Christ? It would be through these signs. Paul, for example, dispossessed the young damsel who had a spirit of divination (Acts 16:16-18).

The speaking in tongues was given to the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:4-11). It was also one of the gifts given by the apostles to the disciples by the laying on of hands (Acts 8:10-18; 1 Cor. 12:10). This, like the other gifts, would vanish when the last recipient of this gift passed.

“*They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.”* The taking of deadly serpents would be proven by Paul in the book of Acts. After being shipwrecked to the island of Malta, the apostle shakes off a viper, and showed no signs of harm (Acts 28:5, 6).

The drinking of poison is a separate miraculous sign given to the apostles. Though we do not have a recorded incident of this taking place in the New Testament, it would be logical that they could survive such an event noting Paul’s example in Malta.

Lastly, The Lord said that the apostles would be able to lay hands on the sick and they would recover (Acts 3:6, 7). While Paul was in Ephesus, the bible states, “*And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them*” (Acts 19:11, 12).

**QUESTION:**

1. What signs were given to the apostles to prove the resurrection?

***Appearance to the 500*** (1 Cor. 15:6)

“*After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep”* (1 Cor. 15:6).

Once again you have a fact not recorded in the gospels. One can read where Jesus spent the greatest amount of time in the area of Galilee after His resurrection. And it is probable that the apostles told the many disciples of His appearance. The eyes of five hundred witnesses could not be denied by even the most profound skeptic.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Did Jesus appear to these 500 brethren at once?
2. Were some of these witnesses dead?

***Appearance to James*** (1 Cor. 15:7)

“*After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles”* (1 Cor. 15:7).

This James, the church fathers say, was James the Less, the half-brother of Jesus. The other James had been martyred (Acts 12:1) when this Epistle was written.

This James, the author of the Epistle that bears his name, was settled in Jerusalem. Paul traveled there after his return from Arabia. He writes in the book of Galatians, “*But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother”* (Gal. 1:19).

Without a doubt, Paul would have shared with James the vision which he had of the Lord Jesus on his way to Damascus, in which James would have responded with His encounter with Jesus after the resurrection.

This appearance is not recorded in the gospels. Albert Barnes says it is mentioned in the fragment of the apocryphal Gospel according to the Hebrews (Barnes, *The Book of Acts*), which is, however, of no authority. We do note that somewhere within the scope of His forty days before His ascension and after His resurrection, James would become a believer (Acts 1:14).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Which James did Christ appear to?
2. Is this appearance recorded in the gospels?

***The Ascension*** (In Bethany near Jerusalem, **40 days after resurrection (**Mark 16:19; Lk. 24:49-53; John 20:30, 31, 21:25) (Acts 1:4-14)

“*So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God*” (Mark 16:19).

*“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen*” (Lk. 24:49-53).

“*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name*” (Jn. 20:30, 31; 21:25).

“*And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren*”  (Acts 1:4-14).

For forty days Jesus had walked among His disciples after the resurrection. As the Jews wandered in the wilderness being cursed by their own disbeliefs, this was not so with the apostles. These once frightened men had found courage.

As angels heralded the Lord into this world, they now stand to herald Him out. The Lord’s ascension did not take place until the final charge is given to these apostles. They were to go and wait. They had no clue concerning the meaning of this statement, nor what would take place in the temple on Pentecost. What they came to perceive is that they would never be alone again. For the Lord had said, “*And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*” (Matt. 28:20).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What commands were given by Christ to His apostles before His ascension?
2. Who waited in the upper room in Jerusalem?