

Building on Bedrock

“...like a man which...dug deep, and laid the foundation on a rock”

Luke 6:47-48

Revisiting God's Standard

First Century Apostolic Christian
Faith & Practice

By

Mark Q. Bullen

Building on Bedrock

Copyright © 2019 by Mark Q. Bullen
All Rights Reserved.

Building on Bedrock

“...like a man which...dugged deep, and laïd the foundation on a rock”

Luke 6:47-48

Chapter	Page
1. Bruising The Serpent's Head	1
2. Messiah Immanuel	13
3. The Word Becomes Flesh	23
4. Favor With God And Man	31
5. The Ministry Of Messiah Begins	37
6. The First Passover Of Christ's Ministry	43
7. Second Passover	47
8. Third Passover	51
9. The Lamb Presented	61
10. The Lamb Bound	67
11. The Lamb Slain	79
12. The Resurrection Of Christ	91
13. The Lord's Day	97
14. Forty Days Of Kingdom Instruction	103
15. Pentecost Sunday	107
16. The First Twelve Years	115
17. The Conversion Of Cornelius	123
18. The Church At Antioch In Syria	133
19. The Council Of Jerusalem	143
20. Paul's Second Missionary Journey	149
21. Paul's Third Missionary Journey	159
22. Paul's Arrest And Trials	169
23. Paul In Rome And Beyond	175
24. The Destruction Of Jerusalem	185
25. The Apostle John's Writings	193
26. Second Century Christendom & Beyond	199

Chapter 1

Bruising the Serpent's Head

Exposing the Counterfeit by Presenting the Original

Ac 17:23 *For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. 30 **And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man (Jesus Christ) whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.***

Where did Paul begin his message about the Gospel? Did Paul see Christianity as being a recent creation, since this encounter was only about 22 years after Christ's resurrection? Those who attend secular learning institutions, and take a course on religion, will be told that "*Whereas Christianity is about 2000 years old, there are other religions that are much older; and many of the concepts taught in Christianity have been borrowed from these older religions...etc.*" This naturally shakes the faith of an untrained youth, and makes them think their trust in the Bible is unsubstantiated and based on their ignorance of history. Their professor is actually the ignorant one whose arrogance would wither if confronted by someone who knows the true history of Christianity and of the "other older religions".

Who borrowed from whom? Alexander Hislop gives us an example from history to demonstrate how the most ancient idolatrous system strove to

establish its validity by borrowing from God's promises that were known back at the confounding of the languages of Babel (2144 BC).

*"The Tower was built under the direction of the founder of the world's first kingdom, Nimrodbar-Cush, the son of Cush ("the black one") and grandson of Ham ("the dark or the sunburned one"). Secular records state that Nimrod (Orion, or Kronos [a corona or crown] "the horned one") married the infamous Semiramis I. She is reputed to have been the foundress of the Babylonian "Mysteries" and the first high priestess of idolatry. Tradition also ascribes the invention of the use of the cross as an instrument of death to this same woman. Apparently when Nimrod (a black) died, Semiramis became pregnant out of wedlock. The child, like its father, was white. Semiramis acting to save the moment declared that Nimrod's spirit had become one with the sun - incarnated with the sun - and that he had come to her in the night so that she had miraculously conceived a god-son. As the first mortal to be so deified, Nimrod thus became the actual "father of the gods". **Semiramis presented the infant to the people and hailed him as the promised "seed of the woman" - the deliverer.** Thus was introduced the "mystery" of the mother and the child, a form of idolatry that is older than any other known to man. (The Two Babylons, op. cit., pp. 91-103, esp. p. 93.) (Emphasis mine)*

So who borrowed from whom? And When? 2144 BC? Just shortly after the Flood (2319 BC) when God destroyed the world because of man's persistent wickedness and started over with Noah's family. I've read many claims that Christianity borrowed from other religions; but upon investigation I find it is the other way around, except for erroneous beliefs invented after the first century by "church fathers".

Our Christian Faith is based on the entire Bible record which happens to begin in Genesis 1:1 *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* This was approximately 4000 years before Jesus' baptism. The Bible answers the colossal question of our ORIGIN. Where did we come from and how did we get here? While speaking with a man whom I had formerly witnessed to and who stubbornly professed atheism, I heard him make reference to God. I immediately commented that I thought he had professed atheism, and asked, "Do you now believe there is a God?" He immediately replied in his strong German accent, "Of course! How else did we get here?"

Not only is it important to know how we humans got on this planet; but also how you personally got to where you are. I mean in what you believe; what church you go to; and how you view Jesus. If you wish to have a sure

foundation for your beliefs, as I do for mine, then you will appreciate the historic data in this book. God's Word is a history book and the facts we are going to peruse from His-story will greatly enhance your ability to know and defend ***The Faith Once Delivered To The Saints***. Do you want to get a good grip on the first century facts relevant to your faith? Then let's get started with a vital historic backdrop to the first century events recorded in the New Testament.

Christianity, in St. Paul's estimation, started with the Almighty Creator. The Epistle to the Hebrews begins with the understanding that, *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, **by whom also he made the worlds**; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"*

Remember where the Apostle Paul began his discourse with the men of Athens when the "sect of the Nazarenes" was only about 22 years old? It is important to understand that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem He was coming to fulfill a promise God made about 3975 years earlier to Adam and Eve (Gen 3:15). This promise and its fulfillment is the theme of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; and this story is *Christianity*. Our merciful Creator has provided a path of reconciliation for His fallen and sinful creation and is calling men to take that path which leads to LIFE.

God's faithful men preached this redemption plan (*the Gospel*) and the terms of reconciliation from the earliest ages through Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and also Noah. Methuselah was about 243 years old when Adam died; and Methuselah died only weeks before the Genesis Flood. When God destroyed the world with the Flood, about 1700 years after creation, He preserved one family who had

THINK: *Would God use the same definitions for His terms through His entire book? How did Noah find grace in the eyes of the LORD and become justified by faith?*

Hebrews 11:7

It is important to allow the Bible to define its own terms, rather than some biased theologian.

been faithful to walk by the terms of God's Reconciliation Program. *God graciously pardoning repentant and faithful people through the sacrifice and Priesthood of Christ is the only plan for man's salvation from the beginning.*

Gen 6:5 *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.*

Ge7:1 *And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. (2319 BC - Reese)*

Heb 11:4 *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. 5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 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. 7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the justification* which is by faith.*

**Adam Clarke: "dikaiousnh, which we render righteousness...is best rendered justification, as expressing that pardon and salvation offered to us in the Gospel" -- See ACC for Ro 1:17, 5:18.*

This applies to almost every time this word is used in the N.T. and is a crucial point for accurate interpretation "Christ is the end (goal) of the Law for **Justification**" The Law's typical sacrifices all pointed to Christ's Justifying sacrifice as their fulfillment". Replace "righteousness" with "justification" in most NT verses speaking of our salvation, e.g., **Ro 1:17, 10:1-7; Ga 2:21; Heb 11:7...etc.**

The reason God did not destroy all life on earth with the flood and simply start over is because He had a promise to keep. He patiently waited until there was only one faithful

family left before He was forced to act. The salvation of all the faithful up to that point was dependent upon the fulfillment of His promise concerning the “seed of the woman bruising the serpent’s head”. Every time Adam and his descendents offered a little lamb to God in sacrifice and walked according to God’s ways, they were testifying their faith in God’s promised salvation. Exercising faith by obedience made them eligible for the grace promised. They were looking forward to the coming of the **Messiah (Hebrew)** or **Christ (Greek)** – both terms refer to the “**Anointed One**” coming to save mankind from their sins and bruise Satan’s head.

The sons of Noah: Ham, Shem, and Japheth all had the same concepts of God; but as their descendents repopulated the earth, these ideas morphed into many different, yet similar belief systems. The religions of the world and their ideas of God are corrupted versions of the truth that Noah’s sons learned from their father. The primary corruption being the admixture of Satan’s lies: “Ye shall be as gods”, “You can be your own god”, and “Ye shall not surely die when you disobey God”. Satan works to lessen the bruising that God’s reconciliation plan gives him by leading men into counterfeit doctrines and away from God. False religion is man’s alteration of Truth, in cooperation with Satan, in order to accommodate his own self-will, lust, and pride. Because man still has the moral conscience from being created in the image of God and experiences the Holy Spirit’s universal “striving” (Ge 6:3); he seeks out religion to ease his convicted and troubled conscience. Paul declares this in Romans (1-3); however, the false security that comes from counterfeit religion will not save those who cling to it.

Ro 2:14 *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another*

The Code of Hammurabi, probably written during his reign (1792 to 1750 B.C.) was one of the earliest written legal codes; but we find Abraham walking in the laws and statutes of God (Ge 26:5), receiving the covenant of circumcision, and then offering Isaac up to God on Mt. Moriah from around 1900 to 1830 BC. Abraham interceded for Sodom before it’s destruction in

1868 BC. The gospel was understood by Abraham, and he rejoiced in the hope of redemption through Jesus Christ (Gal 3:8; Joh 8:56).

Job lived and judged around 1967 BC and knew God's redemption plan (Job 19:25). Noah was a preacher of righteousness and walked with God from around 2500 BC before the flood (2319 BC); and was saved by grace through faith. Jude tells us that, even earlier than this, before Enoch was translated (2988 BC) he, *"...prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."* (Jude 14, 15). Enoch was preaching about the second coming of Christ to judge and reign on earth **before the death of Adam**.

Compared to these early preachers of Gospel salvation, the dates of Buddha's birth (623 BC); Confucius' birth (551 BC); and Muhammad's birth (571 AD) are quite recent. Jesus is the Word of God, and the Apostle John tells us:

Joh 1:1 *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 anything made that was made...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.*

Adam Clarke: *There was no mode of worship at this time on the face or the earth that was not wicked, obscene, puerile, foolish, or ridiculous, except that established by God himself among the Israelites...Take away what Asia and Europe, whether ancient or modern, have borrowed from the Mosaic laws, and you leave little behind that can be called excellent.*

St. Paul, in his letter to the Colossian Church, says of the LORD Jesus: *"by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."* **Christianity was FIRST.**

As God's plan unfolded we find Him choosing the family through whom

Christ would come. Abraham's faithful obedience caused his descendents to be chosen as the special family that God would use to fulfill His promise (Ge 26:5). 430 years after God's promise to Abraham, the history of this family was finally penned by Moses (about 2500 years after creation).

God brought Abraham's descendents out of Egypt, formed them into a nation, and made a covenant with them at Sinai (1462 BC). This covenant is called the Mosaic Covenant which contained God's Laws concerning moral conduct, civil government, and religious observances. This Law was God's view, opinion, verdict, and ethic concerning every issue that it dealt with; and was consistent with the Spirit's conviction of men everywhere – *remember Romans 2:14-15?* This Law and the society set up by God was to be a demonstration of God's WAYS to the whole world; and this covenant was God's "narrow way" of salvation for all mankind at that time. Any man from any nation that wished to be reconciled to Jehovah (like Rahab) had to come in through this door. This covenant was God's offer of salvation to all mankind....Just as the Ark of Noah had been. These were all object lessons about Jesus and His promised eternal redemption for man.

The ritual observances in Moses' Law were lessons to teach and prepare that nation, as well as all mankind, concerning the coming Christ who would fulfill God's promise to redeem mankind from sin and death. Though God was teaching the principles of His redemption, many details could not be understood until they happened; but this is how God shows the divine inspiration of His messengers. No mere man could coordinate such a scheme perfectly orchestrated over many generations. Man being reconciled to God is complex, and must be done in accordance with God's Law. God sets the terms and teaches the difference between God's part and man's part through a covenant relationship. These principles of reconciliation and redemption we call *THE GOSPEL*, meaning "the good message" i.e. God's "good news" to man; and it was preached to man from the beginning.

Christianity, in its proper definition, is the religious or sacred observance of God's terms of reconciliation. Believing in the Christ of God as the Savior of the World has led men to repent and obey God's terms of reconciliation and the pertinent ceremonies since Adam. The terms of reconciliation

have always been the same in principle; but different religious ceremonies, rituals, or observances have been used at different times for specific educational purposes. The earliest ceremonies still have relevance today in teaching us God's original and only plan of redemption.

Adam was taught about offering a blood sacrifice most likely when God killed an innocent animal to clothe him and Eve. Cain and Abel were taught this, which was the basis of Cain's trespass. A thanksgiving offering (which Cain offered) can never take the place of the commanded sin offering (which Abel offered) in the Gospel scheme.

Abraham was later given circumcision as a sign to commemorate (to his descendents) a faith that obeyed God at all cost (Rom 4). It referred to the promise that through Abraham's seed the Messiah would come into the world; and only those who observed it were eligible for reconciliation with God. Not only the foundational terms of reconciliation are important to God; but the object lessons by way of ritual observances are also necessary obedience in God's Gospel program.

About 1500 years before Christ came, the Mosaic Covenant was established with the nation of Israel (Abraham's children) to instruct and illustrate the principles of Christ's future coming, teaching, sacrifice, priesthood, intercession, etc. This covenant was meant to prepare the world for the coming of the *Anointed One*. Moses was shown the "heavenly tabernacle/temple" where Jesus would eventually minister as our Heavenly Priest, and told to establish an earthly priesthood and "make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." (Heb 8:5) The primary difference between "Old Covenant" and "New Covenant" is "Earthly Priesthood" in contrast to "Heavenly Priesthood". The Old Covenant (Earthly Priesthood) was established to teach us the dynamics and workings of the New Covenant (Heavenly Priesthood of Christ).

Because humans are generally poor listeners and poorer when it comes to faithfulness, the God given terms of reconciliation have been altered, rearranged, presumed upon, poorly communicated, and changed according to men's personal agendas; thus creating many false religions. We find today many corrupted versions of God's original instructions in different religions worldwide who have all borrowed from Adam, Enoch, Noah,

Abraham, Moses, etc. Had God not preserved His Word (the Scriptures) all would be lost in striving to know Him and obey Him correctly. The Word of God, providentially preserved, is our only sure foundation.

Ultimately, since God's Law is God's Love expressed, then all false religions are simply arguing with God about the definition of LOVE. God's Love is defined by God's Revelation to man from Genesis to Revelation. Laws, Principles and Examples fill the pages of God's Book so we can know HIM by knowing His definition and priorities of LOVE.

What is called Christianity today is overrun with misinformation concerning this *Anointed One* – the Son of Jehovah Elohim (LORD God – Gen 2:4). Most of the misinformation is due to studying the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth divorced from the Father's preparatory revelations about Him for the previous 1500 years. Yes, the *Old Testament* Scriptures were meant to teach and prepare the world to properly love and understand Yeshua Ha'Mashiach (Jesus Messiah). It is inexcusable to interpret Jesus contrary to the Law of Elohim in the Old Testament Scriptures. Nothing is better established by God, the Lord Jesus, and the Apostles than the fact that Jesus is the author of all the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation; for He is the **Dabar** (Hebrew), **Memra** (Aramaic), **Logos** (Greek) -- the **WORD** of God who became flesh (John 1:1-14, 1Tim 3:16).

Jewish rabbin, Simeon ben Joachi (Zohar) "Come and see the mystery of the word Elohim; there are three degrees, and each degree by itself alone, and yet notwithstanding they are all one, and joined together in one, and are not divided from each other." (See Clarke on Genesis 1:1)
The Doctrine of the Tri-Unity of God didn't start with Christians.

Join me as we re-visit the history of Christ's coming, His life work, and the churches established by His disciples in the first century. I am convinced that if people would just honestly pay attention to the true and accurate order of events as given to us in the New Testament Scriptures, they would be delivered from much false teaching. By examining, studying, and knowing the original, we can identify the counterfeits.

Chronological order and historical context are very important when studying the Bible; and to ignore this is to misrepresent God's Word.

Chronology is generally to be understood as “approximate dates”; because perfect precision is not always attainable and is not the important issue. The order of events *in relation to each other* and the approximate time they transpired *is* important for the proper interpretation of God’s message. My primary goal is to present events in order **as they relate to each other**, not argue the labyrinth of chronological issues, which really only slightly alter the dates anyhow, and don’t change any of the truths we will be seeking to establish in this study.

Many have erroneously formed their views of early Christianity from uninspired writers of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th centuries; but that could not be more misleading. God has preserved HIS record, and never intended that it be made to conform to the ideas of men who are known to be uninspired and often in gross error. Those who rely so much on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, century writers, often form their views of Jesus, the *WORD*, while ignoring the *WORD* Jesus inspired for 1500 years previous to His incarnation **for the very purpose of helping men understand HIM**. These misled Bible teachers divorce Jesus from the Old Testament Scriptures, and then interpret Him through their own presuppositions. This is all so wrong and foolish; and that is why we need to get our view of Jesus and the early church from God’s inspired *WORD* in its proper historic context.

2Co 11:2 *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him...13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

Uninspired writers, *like myself*, can strive to straighten out wrong thinking and overthrow heresy; but **only** if we labor to be in line with Scripture; otherwise we become part of the problem. The **only Foundation** to build upon is the Inspired Word of God. Thus, it doesn’t matter what *some*

“Christians” *did* or *believed in the past*; our church *TODAY* must be patterned after the First Century Apostolic Churches, which were built by the apostles on **The Rock** of *hearing* and *obeying* the words of Jesus Christ, which were perfectly consistent with HIS PREVIOUS WORDS – Genesis to Malachi. (Mt 7:12-27)

The most effective method of exposing the lies of the serpent and his false ministers is to display clearly the truth. The more truth you know, the better you will recognize the lies. When you become thoroughly acquainted with the genuine, you will be quick to spot the spurious. Tuning your senses to know the original will more easily manifest the counterfeit. With this confidence, let us re-examine the Faith and Practice of the First Century; for it is the “early church” that *really* matters. Unless we are contending for THE FAITH once delivered to the saints in the first century, we are not building on THE ROCK, but on shifting sand. God’s Pattern for today’s churches was established by the Apostles in the first century, and there is *NO OTHER PATTERN*. **“Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”** The Christ Jesus of the first century with the church program established by His Apostles is The *Bedrock* for our faith and practice in this century.

Re 12:11 *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb (True Atonement), and by the word of their testimony (True Preaching); and they loved not their lives unto the death (True Faithfulness).*

Pay close attention as we take a fresh look at the first century, and what really happened there; and let’s bruise the serpent’s head by exposing his lies.

Study Questions for Chapter 1

1. **Is it reasonable to build our doctrine on individual writers in the 2nd through the 4th century who are uninspired and in known error?**
2. **The New Covenant was made with whom? And for what purpose?** (Jer 31:31-34; Heb 8:8-11; 10:16)
3. **What did God give us so we could recognize, rightly understand, and appreciate the Messiah?** (De 18:18; Joh 1:45, 5:46; Acts 26:22; Ga 3:22)

- 4. When did Christianity begin?**
- 5. What is the primary message of the Gospel in all ages?**
- 6. What is the best method of preparing yourself to recognize counterfeits?**
- 7. How does Satan try to lessen his bruising and thwart God's plan of redemption?**
- 8. If you follow one of Satan's counterfeits, will it affect your salvation? (2Co 11)**
- 9. In Revelation chapter 12 Satan is represented as the grand deceiver, persecutor, and accuser of the brethren; how can Christians overcome Satan in all three areas?**
- 10. If your church is not patterned after the first century apostolic churches, are they building on the Rock of Jesus Christ?**
- 11. Why is the order of God's operations important to the interpretation of them?**
- 12. Why should we expect the New Testament definition of terms like grace, faith, love, salvation etc. to be established in the Old Testament?**

Chapter 2

Messiah Immanuel

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isa 7:14

Around 732 BC the prophet Isaiah told King Ahaz that the hope of Israel's future was a virgin's son whose name would be "*God with us*" (Mt 1:23). In 597 BC Jeremiah proclaimed God's plan to establish a New Covenant with those who welcomed and desired God to write His Law in their hearts by sending "the Spirit of his Son into [our] hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Ga 4:6) This blessing could only come as a result of Immanuel's death, resurrection, and priesthood. As we love and obey Christ, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom 5:5) **His Law is His Love, and His Love is His Law.**

Jer 31:31 *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

Isa 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

God's desire was that His Law, which is His opinion on the many issues of life, would actually become our opinion as well. This has always been the essence of *Reconciliation* (2Co 5:17-21). God's Word is God's LOVE applied to man's problems. Moses' Law is God's very sentiment and nature expressed in His inspired Word. The *Dabar* (Hebrew) or *Logos* (Greek) that authored the Scripture is God's **WORD** that became flesh and walked

among us as **Immanuel**. It is His Spirit of adoption (*Christ in you*, Col 1:27) whereby we cry Abba, Father to Jehovah. JESUS authored all Scripture, so Moses' writings were Jesus' words (2Ti 3:16; 2Pe 1:21).

Daniel's "70 Weeks" Prophecy (539 BC)

Daniel prayed around 539 BC concerning the future of Israel, which was, at that time, in Babylonian captivity. In answer to his prayer he received an incredibly detailed prophecy telling the very year that Messiah would be anointed over 500 years in the future!

Dan 9:24 *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

Bible students understand these as weeks of years that began most likely in 458 BC when Ezra arrived in Jerusalem (Ezr 7). The 483 years which make up the first 69 weeks lead us directly to AD 26 (since there is no zero year), which is the year Jesus was baptized and anointed, being "about 30 yrs of age" (Lk 3:22-23) in the 15th year of Tiberius (12 AD – 26 AD counting inclusively as Jews do). Klassen's chronology makes this 4000 years after Adam was created a full grown man. The 70th week includes Christ's ministry (3.5yrs) and the years of the powerful apostolic ministry in Jerusalem before the scattering began with the death of Stephen (3.5yrs). When Jesus died the veil of the Temple was rent in two, desecrating the Holy of Holies, and showing that the Temple was left desolate with the new covenant heavenly priesthood of Christ being inaugurated (Mt 23:38, Lk 13:35, Heb 10:20). The earthquake, rending of the veil, darkness, and

other signs at Jesus' death foreshadowed the coming destruction Jesus predicted (Lk 19:41-4; 21:20-24). After 40 years of mercy, God sent the Romans and "that determined" was "poured upon the desolate". The people of the prince (Romans with Titus) destroyed the city and the sanctuary (AD 70).

Malachi Introduced the Coming Messiah (397 BC)

The prophetic book of Malachi was the last revelation of God before a long gap of silence (about 400 years). The next event on God's Calendar, according to Malachi, was the forerunner of the Messiah, said to come in the Spirit and power of Elijah. Malachi, God's messenger, foretold what the Messiah would accomplish and what He would preach.

Mal 3:1 *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. 2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. 4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. 5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. 6 **For I am the LORD, I change not;** therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. 7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.*

How did Malachi know that 400 years in the future there would still be God's Temple in Jerusalem or a working Levitical priesthood...or even the city of Jerusalem? God knew it; but realize that, within 45 years of the fulfilled prophecy, the Temple, the city, and the priesthood were all destroyed just like Daniel said! An Amazingly tight window of time!

Just as Malachi prophesied, the Lord Jesus purified Judaism:

1. By restoring a proper view of God's Laws (Mt 5:17-20);

2. By exposing their religious sorcery (making the Word of God of none affect by their traditions - Mk 7);
3. By denouncing their adulterous misuse of God's Law (divorce and remarriage contrary to Moses' Law – Mal 2:8-14);
4. By rebuking their system of false swearing (man-made oaths contrary to God's Law);
5. By revealing their hypocrisy and religious oppression (using religion for personal gain and glory);

Restoring a proper view of God's Law (*always the wisest, most appropriate, and most loving protocol*) was necessary before giving the Holy Spirit to help write this glorious Law in the hearts of God's people; the parameters of the New Covenant. Jesus was very successful in His mission to purify a remnant in Judaism, and 29 years after His resurrection, we find that in Jerusalem alone there were many thousands of Jews, including priests, who worshipped Jesus as the Messiah, and were zealously obeying God's Law from the heart (Ac 6:7; 21:20).

After describing the cleansing mission of Israel's Messiah; God, through Malachi, instructs Israel to carefully obey Moses' Law (*over 1000 yrs old*); because it was designed to configure men's hearts so as to recognize and appreciate the coming Messiah (Ga 3:24). God closes this prophecy by telling Israel He would send Elijah to help prepare the nation for their Messiah, lest this visitation be a curse instead of a blessing (Lk 19:44).

FACT: Everything Messiah taught about divorce, remarriage, loving enemies, swearing, war, taxes, relationship to government, self-defense, and LOVE was 100% in line with Moses' Law and the Prophets. (*Mt 4:4; 5:17-19; 7:12; 23:1-3*)
Moses' Law is God's Law

Mal 4:4 *Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: 6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

Gabriel Appears To Zacharias (6 BC)

Though Zacharias, the aged priest, had likely been pressured by fellow Sons of Aaron to find *another wife* who could bear him a priestly heir, he had patiently prayed and waited until he and Elizabeth were both too old. After many years of unanswered prayer and desire for a son, we still find Zacharias faithfully obeying God's Word and serving in his appointed place in the Temple. A priest typically had only one opportunity to offer incense during his life since only those who had never done so would be in the lot for that most honorable service when it was cast each morning during their week of service.

Ex 30:7 *And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. 8 And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.*

Only after every priest present had taken his turn to offer incense could others again be in that lot. Each course served one week, twice a year, and also on major feast days.

Lk 1:5 *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. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. 8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.*

Zacharias was not the High Priest, and this was not the Day of Atonement. Every morning the priests cast lots concerning the duties of that day, and the course of Abijah likely served once in the spring and once in the fall. Listen to Alfred Edersheim describe the daily event:

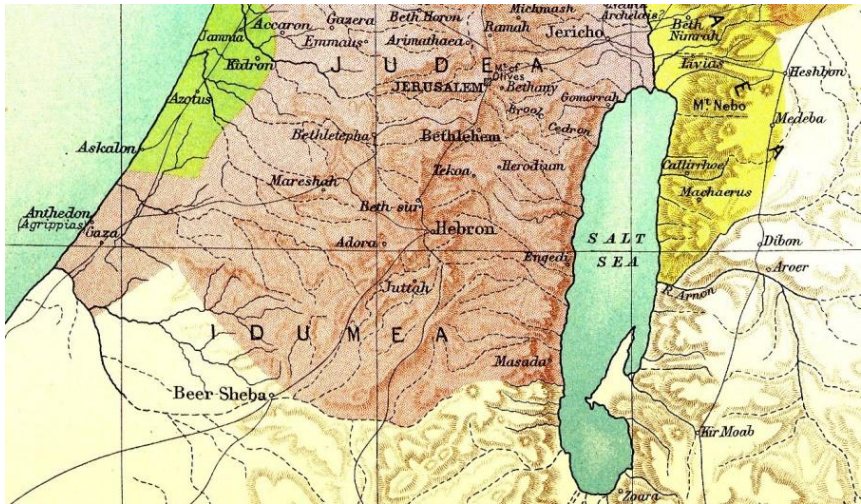
"The incensing priest and his assistants now approached first the altar of burnt-offering. One filled with incense a golden censer held in a silver vessel, while another placed in a golden bowl burning coals from the altar....Slowly the incensing priest and his assistants ascended the steps to the Holy Place, preceded by the two priests who had formerly dressed the

altar and the candlestick, and who now removed the vessels they had left behind, and, worshipping, withdrew. Next, one of the assistants reverently spread the coals on the golden altar; the other arranged the incense; and then the [incensing priest] was left alone within the Holy Place, to await the signal of the president before burning the incense... As the president gave the word of command, which marked that 'the time of incense had come,' 'the whole multitude of the people without' withdrew from the inner court, and fell down before the Lord, spreading their hands in silent prayer... Deep silence had fallen on the worshippers, as if they watched to heaven the prayers of Israel, ascending in the cloud of 'odours' that rose from the golden altar in the Holy Place. Zacharias waited, until he saw the incense kindling. Then he also would have 'bowed down in worship,' and reverently withdrawn, had not a wondrous sight arrested his steps."

Lk 1:11 *And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 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. 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 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. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17 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.*

After casting the incense on the prepared coals, Zacharias was alone watching the smoke ascend in the Temple. Suddenly a presence stood before him on the right side of the Altar of Incense. The Angel Gabriel was there with a message from God!

It is impossible to know the exact date Zacharias was confronted by Gabriel. After this amazing encounter, and when his duty was complete, Zacharias walked the approximately 20 miles to Hebron or further to Juttah (cities for the priests-see map). Imagine Zacharias trying to explain all this to Elisabeth without being able to speak! Sometime after this Elisabeth conceived and realized she was carrying a very special baby boy: John the Baptist, God's forerunner to announce the Messiah.



Gabriel Appears To Mary (6 BC)

Lk 1:26 And in the sixth month (Of Elisabeth's pregnancy) the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. [Imagine Mary relating this story to Luke] ...30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 **He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.** 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, **The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.** 36 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. 37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

Six months after Elisabeth conceived, the same angel, Gabriel, startled a godly young Jewish maiden by the name of Mary, who lived in Nazareth of Galilee, about 100 miles north of where Zacharias and Elisabeth lived (Lk

1:26-38). Shortly after Mary's conception, she traveled the many miles to stay with Elisabeth for the remaining three months until the birth of John the Baptist. We don't know if Joseph went with her or when it was that Joseph heard from the angel and took Mary as his wife (Mt 1:18-25); but it was probably important for her to leave rather than trying to explain to everyone in Nazareth. This part of Mary's story must have been a very difficult test for her as well as Joseph. The testimony of the aged Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth, with their own miraculous encounter, would have given assurance to anyone who cared to investigate.

Birth of John the Baptist (6 BC)

John the Baptist, born six months before Jesus, was to fulfill the role of Elijah spoken of by Malachi. Jesus clearly taught this in Mt 11:14 and 17:12. In Luke we have the prophecy of Zacharias, which gives us important information about John and Jesus.

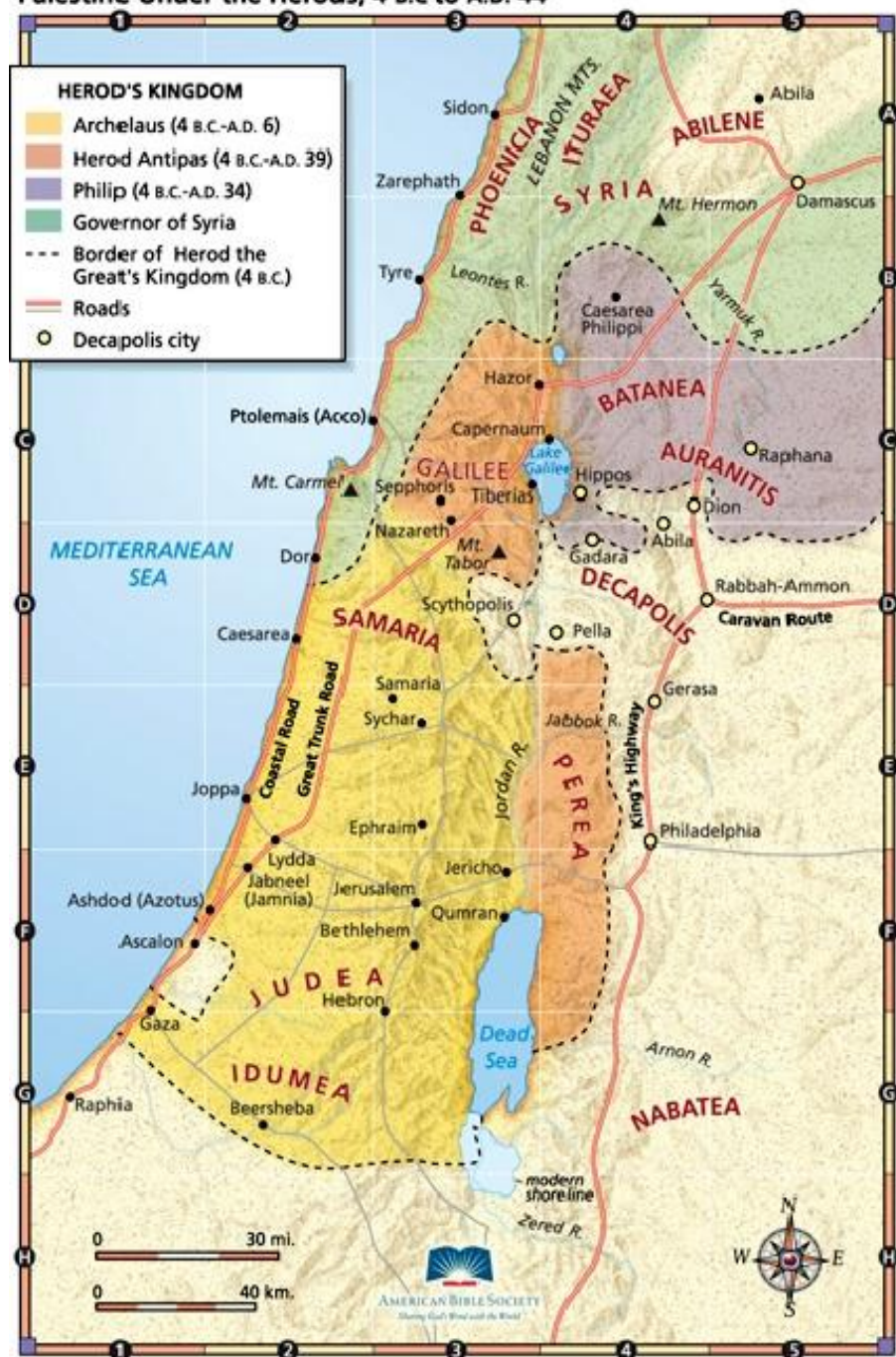
Lk 1:67 *And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; 73 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. 76 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; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

Study Questions for Chapter 2

- 1. What type of deliverance had God promised to His faithful people, according to Zachariah's prophecy and Gabriel's message to Mary? Will this become a reality on earth? (Lk 19:11-28; Mt 19:28; 2Ti 2:12; Rev 2:26,27; 5:10)**

- 2. Why was Jesus called the Son of God?** (Ps 2; Lk 1:35; Joh 5:18; Phil 2:6-7; Heb 1:8-12)
- 3. What does Immanuel mean? Why is this important?** (Isa 9:6; Col 1:15-17; 2:9; 1Ti 3:16; Heb 1:1-3)
- 4. What would happen if the nation of Israel did not heed John the Baptist's preaching?** (Mal 4:6; Dan 9:26-27)
- 5. Enumerate the ways Jesus would purify Judaism, according to Malachi.**

Palestine Under the Herods, 4 B.C. to A.D. 44



Chapter 3

The Word Becomes Flesh

Spring 5 BC

Lk 2:1 *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 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:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. 8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

It is highly doubtful that a government would call for a census and make the entire populace travel many miles during the cold winter or rainy season. Joseph and Mary had to travel about 90 miles to Bethlehem. It is very doubtful that a mother would wrap a baby and lay it in a manger during the winter months, rather than keep it tucked into her bosom. The traveling, the taxing, the shepherds in the fields, and the baby in the manger all testify of warmer weather. Would the sheep have any pasture during the middle of winter? If not, then why abide in the field? Lambing season in Israel was late March into April, and shepherds would definitely be out in the fields watching and protecting the lambing ewes. We know that Passover, in the middle of April/Nisan, is aligned with barley harvest (First-fruits), and that means the pastures are also growing in March.

FACT: December 25th being used as the date of Jesus' birth didn't even begin until about 300 years after His birth, and by churchmen in Rome, not in the East where it took place. Christmas is not part of the Faith Once Delivered to the Saints.

Mary traveled possibly 100 miles to see Elisabeth and then later made the same trip back north being 3 months into her own pregnancy. These trips must have also been during decent weather, as these trips were by walking

or riding a donkey (like Moses used to transport his family to Egypt - Ex 4:20) through rugged hills where the terrain averages about 3000 feet above sea level.

The Reese/Klassen chronological model has Jesus being born on April 1, 5 BC. This day is chosen because April 1st is the New Year God gave to Israel and is the day the veil of the tabernacle was first raised – a type of Christ's human body. If Jesus were born the first part of April, then Mary's travels to see Elisabeth and back home would have been around the end of June and first of October (John's birth) respectively – also in decent weather. The Tabernacle was raised on the God ordained *New Year*, April/Abib/Nisan 1st (Ex 40:17-35), and the glory of the LORD filled the house. The Tabernacle and later the Temple were types of Christ's flesh. When Jesus died the veil was rent, and later the Temple was also destroyed to avenge His murder (AD 70 - See: Mt 22:7, Lk 19:43-44, 21:22).

Mk 15:37 *And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. 38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.*

Heb 10:20 *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*

Joh 2:19 *Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up... 21 But he spake of the temple of his body.*

I have merged the dates of the Klassen chronological model with F. N. Jones' dates. It seems moving from BC to AD, which adds a year to the AD date line (there being no zero year) has caused some confusion. If Jesus was born April 1st (Jewish New Year) 5 BC, then He turned 30 on April 1st, 26 AD, not 25 AD as Klassen states. Jones says that if Jesus was 30 in 26 AD, then He was born 4 BC (only 29 years); but this also means Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt and back during her 40 days of purification, which I deem unlikely. I believe it is more probable to say Jesus was born April 1st, 5 BC; Herod died in March, 4 BC; Jesus turned 30 in 26 AD, and began His ministry that Fall in the 15th year of Tiberius, counting from 12 AD inclusively (when Tiberius reigned as co-regent with Augustus).

It seems Joseph and Mary were both of the lineage of David, as expressed in Matthew and Luke's genealogies respectively; and thus needed to travel about 90 miles to Bethlehem where their family estates would be. The Romans wanted to know how many people there were, what they owned,

and who was fit for military service. Other Jews protested the taxing as “against God”, but God actually used this Roman taxation to fulfill the prophecy that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem!

Joseph and Mary most likely stayed with relatives, as they surely had some in this area; but due to the crowding, they stayed in the lower level of the house in the stable area, rather than in the “guest-chamber”. The same word used for “inn” in this place (Lk 2:7) is used for “guest-chamber” (Mk 14:14 & Lk 22:11). Jewish homes in those days are said to have had two or three levels, with the animals stabled in the first level where the entrance was. The tradition of the birth in a separate stable/cave is also possible.

After Jesus was born, and the crowds diminished, they were most likely moved upstairs, or into a house; and stayed there until Mary’s 40 day purification was completed according to the Law of God. Mary most likely had midwife assistance available from other ladies in the house; and the news of the birth in the lineage of David was probably spread around the neighborhood to those who knew Mary was close to deliver. Many in Bethlehem had also heard about John’s miraculous birth 6 months earlier and possibly only about 14 miles away. Remember Zacharias was mute for 9 months and then prophesied at John’s birth. Zacharias and Elisabeth KNEW about Mary’s baby and who He was.

Interesting: *If* Jesus was born on April 1st, (Jewish New Year) then His conception was about June 25th. *If* John was **exactly** 6 months older, then his birth would be on Oct. 1st (Feast of Trumpets), and his conception about December 25th.

Lk 1:63 *And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. 64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. 65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: **and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. 66 And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be!***

Imagine with me a moment: *“Mary sits looking into the sleeping face of her baby boy resting in the fresh straw of the manger. It had been nine months since the exciting visit of the angel, and though she had no doubt this little boy was a miracle of God, yet life had been pretty stressful because of the predicament of expecting a baby without being married. Not everyone could be convinced of the miraculous*

nature of the event, and she and Joseph had to face mountains of misunderstanding, slander, and condemnation. Joseph had originally not believed her story either. Now, the precious child had arrived: the seed of the woman to bruise the serpents head; the long awaited hope of all Israel; the Son of David; the Seed of Abraham; the Messiah!...yet who knew? Who believed? Who cared? Why was it so silent? Where was God? As Mary, who was mentally, emotionally, and physically weary with all that had happened, sat caressing the head of baby Yeshua; she wanted so much to speak her thoughts to Joseph, but did not know how to start. Suddenly a tumult outside was heard. Mary covered the baby better and Joseph stood tense listening. He felt the weight of taking care of this special child. What would he do if bandits tried to take advantage of those carrying money to pay their taxes? The men were obviously searching for something or someone. They looked like shepherds, and when one discovered Mary and Joseph in the stable his eyes quickly scanned to the manger and widened seeing the baby wrapped up and asleep. His excitement knew no bounds as he called his fellows. Mary looked at Joseph with anxious eye as he was obviously bracing for some action. Realizing the concern he was causing, the first shepherd began, after a quick apology, to spill out the whole story of the heavenly announcement. The other shepherds were rushing in, kneeling at the manger, worshipping, weeping, and rejoicing. At the sight of this, Mary's thoughts come flooding back to her along with the news she has just heard, she melts into tears and silent sobs. It was all too much! It was so like God to do it this way! Joseph puts his arm around her and draws her close. His head begins to nod, his eyes become wet, and a smile breaks on his face – he understood.”

When the shepherds came into town with their story, it wasn't hard to locate the baby by just asking around. Their news, no doubt, stirred the hearts and minds of the believers in the area even more and also spread over the hill country of Judea. Interestingly the lineage of David had been providentially gathered for the census, and thus given first opportunity to receive this great news.

Jesus was circumcised on the 8th day, according to the Law of Moses; and, after Mary's purification time (40 days), He was presented in the Temple at Jerusalem (6 miles north) with the proper sacrifices to redeem the firstborn (Lk 2:21-24; Le 12:2-8). The Sacrifices offered (*A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons*) reveal the poverty of the family **at this time before the visit of the Magi.**

The Magi (wise men) came most likely from the area of Babylon where a large Jewish community existed. Mary's 40 day purification time which kept them in Bethlehem rather than traveling back to Nazareth, would have given sufficient time for the eager and anxious Magi to travel the approximately 550 miles from Babylon to Jerusalem by Camel. They were probably sages or rabbis who studied the ancient prophecies concerning the coming Messiah, including Daniel's seventy weeks. They knew by this that the time was near, and were watching for a sign. Balaam prophesied by the Spirit of God and was recorded by Moses thus:

Nu 24:17 *I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: **there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel***

We don't know how many men actually came; but the caravan was sufficient to arouse the interest of Jerusalem and get Herod's attention. These men didn't know exactly where Messiah would be born, but the scribes of Jerusalem supplied the lack of information from the prophecy of Micah.

Mic 5:2 *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

When the Magi left Jerusalem for the 6 mile walk to Bethlehem, the supernatural star (an angel?) led them to the house where Joseph and Mary were staying (Mt 2). Being that Jerusalem was only 6 miles from Bethlehem, it would be impossible for a natural star in the sky to be of any help in locating the baby Jesus; but the Scriptures clearly say, "*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.***" **Mt 2:9**. This proves the star was no constellation in the heavens, as even the moon is too far to give this type of direction.

Mt 2:11 *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.*

Can you imagine the stir in Bethlehem when this prestigious caravan arrived and these noble sages began to worship the baby boy as the long

awaited Messiah? Imagine Joseph and Mary watching, emotional and awestruck! After presenting their gifts and hailing Jesus as the King of Israel, they were warned that night by an angel to return to their own country another way without telling Herod the baby's location. As soon as the Magi were departed, the angel of the Lord told Joseph to "get up" and flee by night to Egypt until the death of Herod. God had just financed the trip to Egypt and the journey back home to Nazareth.

When Herod realized the wise men had despised his instructions, he immediately assumed a conspiracy against his dynasty, and sent soldiers to slay all the little boys from two years old and under in the whole vicinity of Bethlehem. How many that included we are not told; but God somehow protected John the Baptist who was only six months older than Jesus. Maybe Zacharias lived too far from the Bethlehem area.

Adam Clarke notes: *This cruelty of Herod seems alluded to in very decisive terms by Macrobius, who flourished toward the conclusion of the fourth Century. In his chapter De joci Augusti in alios, et aliorum rursus in ipsum, he says, "When [Augustus] heard that among those male infants about two years old, which Herod, the king of the Jews, ordered to be slain in Syria, one of his sons was also murdered, he said: 'It is better to be Herod's HOG than his SON.'" Saturn. Lib. li. C. 4. The point of this saying consists in this, that Herod, professing Judaism, his religion forbade his killing swine, or having anything to do with their flesh; therefore his hog would have been safe, where his son lost his life.*

Fleeing to Egypt sounds like an amazing task; but it was really the quickest way to escape Herod's jurisdiction. Whereas Nazareth was 90 miles to the north *past* Jerusalem, Egyptian territory was only southwest about 60 miles (Barnes); and *away* from Jerusalem. From Bethlehem to Raphia at the border of Egypt south of Gaza is said to be about 80 miles.

Just as Luke leaves Paul's 3 year stay in Arabia out of his condensed narrative of Paul's conversion; so he also leaves out the flight to Egypt after Jesus is presented in the Temple; but that is the most likely time for it to have happened (Compare Ac 9:23-26; Gal 1:17,18). Jesus was likely born in April; presented at the Temple in May; and the flight to Egypt was probably in this same spring (5 BC). Matthew says clearly, "**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**", not a year later.

The holy family would then stay in Egypt until the next March when Herod died (Between March 12th and Passover, 4 BC); and come back to Nazareth in April or May when Jesus was a year old. The weather at this time would also be again suitable for traveling. Matthew 2:22 seems conclusive that the family steered clear of Jerusalem on this return trip, and took the straight route from Egypt to Nazareth (approx. 130 miles). Don't believe all the Roman Catholic superstitious tales about this trip to Egypt. They seem to embellish all the Bible stories with fanciful myths. Joseph and Mary probably found a humble abode to quietly live until the LORD gave them instruction to come back.

Nazareth was not isolated from the world; but well situated on the great caravan trade route between the East and the West; and was also a station for Priests meeting to travel up to Jerusalem for service.

Notice in the maps (chapter 2) the possible escape routes from Herod's jurisdiction from Bethlehem through Hebron and Beersheba on the border or through Gaza to Raphia as well as the most likely return routes.

Mt 2:19 *But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 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. 21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 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: 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.*

"The people of Galilee were the most religious Jews in the world in the time of Jesus. This is quite contrary to the common view that the Galileans were simple, uneducated peasants from an isolated area...But this is certainly a bias against Galileans by the people of Judea and other countries due to the very strong and passionate religious commitments of the people of Galilee. Besides, the Galileans had more interaction with the world living on the "way of the sea" (the trade route, see Matt. 4:15) than the Jews of Jerusalem who were more isolated in the mountains. The Galilean people were actually more educated in the Bible and its application than most Jews. More famous Jewish teachers come from Galilee than anywhere else in the world. They were known for their great reverence for Scripture and the passionate desire to be faithful to

it. This translated into vibrant religious communities, devoted to strong families, their country, whose synagogues echoed the debate and discussions about keeping the Torah.” -- Ray Vander Laan

Study Questions for Chapter 3

- 1. What are the indications that Jesus was born in warmer weather?**
- 2. Why would God tell Joseph to flee to Egypt, rather than some other place?**
- 3. Why could not the moon or a natural star lead someone from Jerusalem to a house in Bethlehem?**
- 4. What indicates that the wise men visited Joseph and Mary after the presentation in the Temple? Where then was Mary during her 40 days of purification?**
- 5. How far did Mary have to travel to see Elisabeth?**
- 6. What would cause the wise men to be watching for a star at that time in history; and relate it to the Messiah?**
- 7. Why is 5 BC to 26 AD a span of 30 years?**
- 8. How did Jesus have contact with the world and Jerusalem in His childhood years.**
- 9. Did Jesus or His apostles ever teach anyone to celebrate Jesus' Birthday? (Answer: NO)**

Chapter 4

Favor With God and Man

Lk 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

We know that Jesus was raised in a carpenter's home and was taught the trade. Every Jewish father was expected to teach his son a trade along with him learning to read and write at home or in the local synagogue classes. The Mishnah (Redacted 3rd century AD) tells us that a Jewish child of five began learning the Scriptures; then at ten, they were ready for Mishnah (oral Torah, interpretations); at thirteen for "fulfilling the commandments" and their first Passover; at fifteen they were ready for the Talmud (making Rabbinic interpretations); at eighteen for marriage; at twenty they should be pursuing a vocation, and at thirty they would be considered ready for authority i.e. teaching others (Also the age required to enter the priesthood). It seems Jesus at twelve years old began attending the feasts at Jerusalem with His parents, and at this time had most likely joined the Nazareth Synagogue as a "son of the Law" (Bar-Mitzvah)

The following account of a Bar Mitzvah Ceremony refers to the modern practice: *"A few days ago I attended a very interesting service in a Jewish synagogue. A boy just twelve years old was brought by his father to be admitted as a member of the synagogue; there were present the parents of the boy, his brothers and sisters, his friends, and some few strangers. After several ceremonies had been performed, the priests read a portion of the law in Hebrew; the boy then stepped forward to the desk or platform, near the center of the building, and read from a roll of parchment, in a clear distinct voice, a short psalm. A pause ensued, and then the old man addressed the boy in a few brief sentences, telling him that he had attained to years of discretion, and knew the difference between right and wrong, great responsibility rested on him; that it was his duty to follow the good and shun the evil; that it became him to show that the instruction he had received had not been given in vain; that he must diligently practice that which he knew to be right; be obedient to his parents, kind and affectionate to his brothers and sisters, charitable to those who needed his help, and*

faithful to the religion he had been instructed in. Then, placing his hand on the boy's head, he prayed earnestly that the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, would bless the lad, would preserve him from danger and from sin, and make him a wise and good man, if he should be spared to enjoy length of days; or, if his life should be short, that he might be admitted to the presence of God in heaven." (Biblical Things not Generally Known.)

What did Jesus know when at 12 years old He told his parents that He must be about His Father's business? He obviously knew more about who He was than they expected; but yet the Scriptures record that He was *subject* unto them. It is vital to understand that Jesus lived within all the boundaries of God's Law His entire life. He never assumed the right to transgress as a youth, young man, Jewish adult man, Rabbi, or as the Messiah. The very temptation of Satan about making the stones into bread was focused on Jesus *exerting His rights* and *stepping outside the bounds of submission to God's order*. Jesus directly answered from the Scriptures that *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**"* Jesus never violated this, or taught contrary to those *words out of the mouth of God* – the Tanakh / O. T. Scriptures.

As a Jewish young man, Jesus followed not only His understanding of God's ways; but lived within the teaching of His God ordained authority where it was not sinful or wrong. Jesus never gave anyone a legitimate occasion to fault Him, because He always did what was appropriate. He obeyed and followed Scriptural Judaism and respected the establishment of human authority. Why would we expect this of Jesus; but think that *teenagers* in our day have to be rebellious? Rebellious teenagers, who would not honor their parents, would have been publicly flogged; and if that didn't work, they would be stoned to death. Did Jesus believe this way? Listen to His own words as a Rabbi rebuking the Pharisees:

Mt 4:4 *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."*

This is how Jesus lived. This means Jesus fully agreed with and obeyed ALL the "Old Testament" Scriptures. How does this FACT affect your doctrine?

Mk 7:9 *And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. 10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth (dishonors) father or mother, let him die the death: 11 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. 12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; 13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition,*

Jesus is called “the carpenter’s son”; “the carpenter”; and later, “Rabbi/Master”. He learned the carpenter trade from his father and humbly fulfilled the expected role of a faithful son. Tradition says that Joseph and Jesus made farm implements, like wooden plows and yokes. If Jesus had not been called to public ministry, he would have labored to help support the family and then establish his own household. It was all about *working* to be a productive part of a godly society, not *playing, seeking adventure, or looking for a thrill* and thus causing trouble. Foolish youth would be flogged and given a job to do. You were never *too old* to get the whip in Israel; and adults who trespassed were also flogged.

Jesus did not enter public ministry until after He was baptized by John the Baptist (the son of a Priest) and tested in the desert around the age of 30. When Jesus was asked by what authority He was teaching the people, He immediately asked them concerning the Baptism of John, whether it was from heaven or of men – referring to it as his public ordination rather than a baptism of repentance, like it was for others. It marked the beginning of His public ministry (AD 26).

Lk 3:2 *...the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; 4 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. 5 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; 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. 7 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? 8 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. 9 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....23 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, 22 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. 23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age,

For His entire life, Jesus obeyed Moses' Law along with the applications and instructions of His earthly authorities. He went to the Synagogue, He observed the necessary Feasts, Sabbaths, and ceremonies; He tithed and paid tax; He dressed like the Law told Jews to dress; He ate what Jews were supposed to eat; and He never taught anyone to live contrary to this.

Jesus wore the standard short hair of a Jewish man because He was not under the Nazarite Vow as possibly John the Baptist was. Jesus was called a *Nazarene* because of the lowly town where He was raised, not in relation to the Nazarite Vow. Even those under the Nazarite Vow would typically shave their head when the time was complete (Ac 18:18; 21:24). Jesus lived like the Law abiding Jews of His day – Like Zacharias and Elisabeth (Lk 1:6; 2:51, 52). In the very last week of His life and ministry He gave the following public instructions:

Mt 23:1 *Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2 Saying, **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.***

Jesus came to purify God's program just as Malachi had written, not militate against it. The fault of Judaism in that time was not so much what was *commanded*, but what was *allowed*. Jesus did not conflict with the commands and order of Judaism, but rebuked hypocrisy and abuses which were allowed, like Corban (Mk 7). All Jesus' disciples were law-abiding Jews for their entire lives. They only evangelized and baptized circumcised Jews and Jewish proselytes during Jesus' ministry and for the first twelve years after Jesus' resurrection. **Jesus' life and ministry did not mandate any changes in obedience to or the proper practice of Moses' Law for Jewish people.** Gentile believers were grafted in 12 years after Pentecost, and this allowed Jews to eat and fellowship with believing Gentiles; but

that was the only change in their obedience to Moses' Law and Judaism (Ac 21). This will be discussed in more depth as we go along. These historic facts are more important to doctrine than most understand.

Study Questions on Chapter 4

- 1. How did Jesus spend the first thirty years of His life?**
- 2. Did Jesus go to Synagogue every Sabbath during His youth?**
- 3. Did Jesus dress, eat, and worship like other sincere law-abiding Jews during His life?**
- 4. How could Jesus "be about His Father's business" while working as a carpenter?**
- 5. Why do we first hear about Jesus, as a young man, at the Temple at age 12?**
- 6. What event qualified as Jesus' earthly ordination for the ministry?**
- 7. Did Jesus, in His life and teaching, change anything concerning the faith and practice Moses' Law required of the Jewish people? What statement in the last week of His life proves this? (Mt 23)**
- 8. Did God ever tell His people to dress, act, or live like the *world* so as to *win the world*? Did Jesus dress like a Jew or like a heathen?**
- 9. Did Jesus believe God's Law should be abrogated in order to "reach" men easier?**
- 10. What was the primary message of John and Jesus?**

Palestine in the Time of Jesus, A.D. 6 to 30



Chapter 5

The Ministry Of Messiah Begins

Fall AD 26

In Luke 3 we have some very important chronological notes concerning the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry (AD 26). This would likely be the same year that Jesus was baptized, since Jesus and John would both begin their ministries in their 30th year. Thus it seems that the 15th year of Tiberius (12 AD to 26 AD counting inclusively with the co-regency included) would be the year that John began his ministry and the year that Jesus was baptized.

After Jesus was baptized by John, most likely in the early summer of 26 AD, He spent 40 days being tempted of the Devil. Immediately after this temptation in the wilderness Jesus again encounters John the Baptist. John publicly declares Jesus to be the Lamb of God, and some of John's disciples attach themselves to Jesus.

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

of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 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. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. 35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; 36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! 37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they

F. N. Jones: *"This date is also somewhat confirmed by the statement of the Jews (John 2:20), made soon after Jesus' baptism: "Forty and six years was this temple in building." The rebuilding of the Temple by Herod was begun in the 18th year of his reign which is c.20 BC. Although Josephus possibly contradicts himself elsewhere (not uncommon) by mentioning work that was done on the Temple in Herod's 15th year, he says that the Temple was begun the year that the Emperor came to Syria. Dio Cassius places this visit in BC 20 or 19. If we presume that the 46 years had elapsed when the remark in John was given, we come again to 26 AD."*

followed Jesus. 38 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? 39 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. 40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 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. 43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. 44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 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. 46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! 48 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. 49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

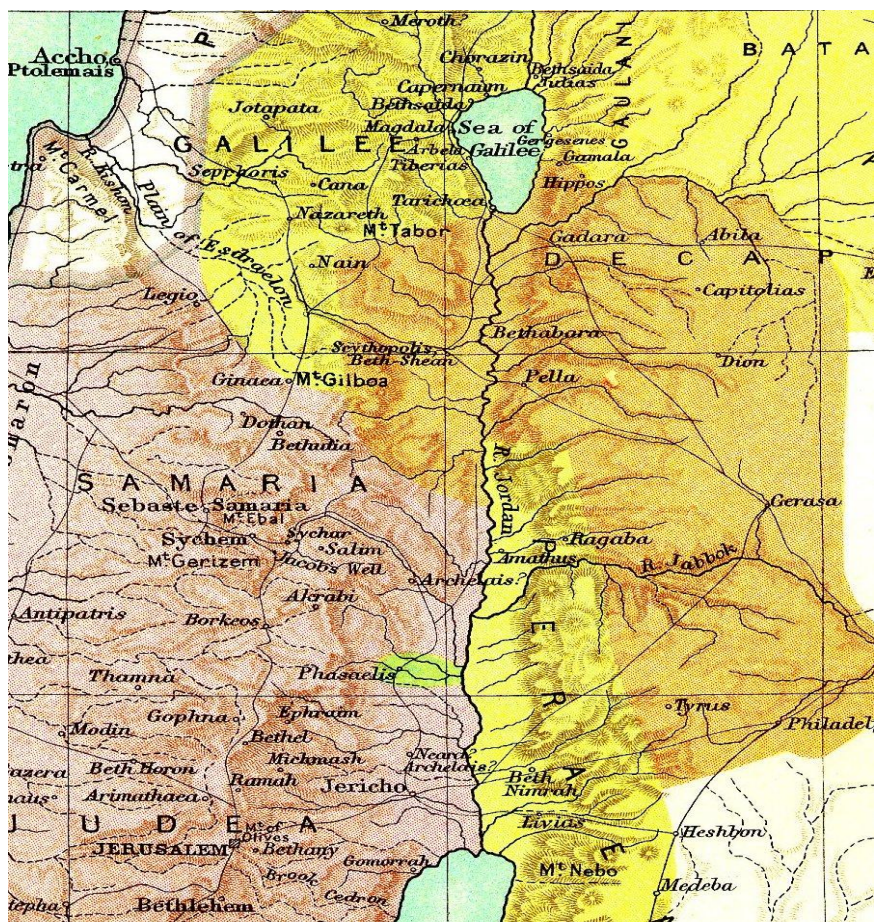
After John the Baptist's declaration of Jesus as the Lamb of God, it seems John (who doesn't name himself) and Andrew followed Jesus and began to inform their relatives and acquaintances. It is important to understand that God was drawing to Himself the most spiritual young men in the nation at that time. Men so alert and sensitive to God and the Scriptures that they had already, in just six months of ministry, become John the Baptist's disciples. These comrades of faith and zeal, believing John the Baptist's testimony, quickly became Jesus' disciples. John and Andrew heard the declaration of the Baptist and spread the news to their fellows, who then came and met Jesus. These first disciples who became "the twelve" were all from Galilee (Acts 1:11), except Judas Iscariot, who seems to be from Judea. After Jesus' baptism, temptation, and John's declaration in John 1:36, Jesus heads toward Galilee and begins His ministry there.

Adam Clarke: *It is worthy of remark, that it was a regular tradition among the ancient Jews, that the Messiah should begin his ministry in Galilee.*

Lk 4:1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 Being forty days tempted of the devil...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. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

Mt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, **Repent:** for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

At this time, these disciples were still working in their family businesses and were not full time in ministry with Jesus; but soon He calls them away from their fishing business into full-time ministry with Himself. Much of Jesus' ministry was focused around the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias and the Lake of Gennesaret. In Joshua it is called Chinneroth.



Mt 4:18 *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. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. 21 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. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.*

They left their business to follow Jesus on a preaching tour. It seems at this time that Joseph had passed away, for we find Jesus, His mother, His brethren, and His disciples all coming to Capernaum after the water was turned to wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. This was a short stay before they headed to Jerusalem for the first Passover of Jesus' Ministry.

John says the marriage of Cana was the place of Jesus' first public miracle; but it is clear that His statement to Nathanael was indeed miraculous too; and it seems Mary may have seen some miraculous power exhibited before this (John 2:3-5). His public ministry began in the fall of the year before His first Passover in the spring (John 2:13).

Did Jesus make real wine out of the water? Jesus used the pots of water that had been carried from the well for drinking and washing; and He created real fermented wine in an instant. This was an act of creation, revealing divine power. Does this miracle justify alcoholic beverages and social drinking as is practiced today? Jesus was a law abiding Jew who upheld the lawful ways of His people. According to the Jewish Rabbis, wine must be diluted with at least three parts of water or it was unclean, and the people considered barbaric for drinking it. They served the wine in bowls after having diluted it sufficiently with water. Jesus created the safe lawful beverage which would have been considered righteous, and would not intoxicate without much over-indulgence. (See Appendix A)

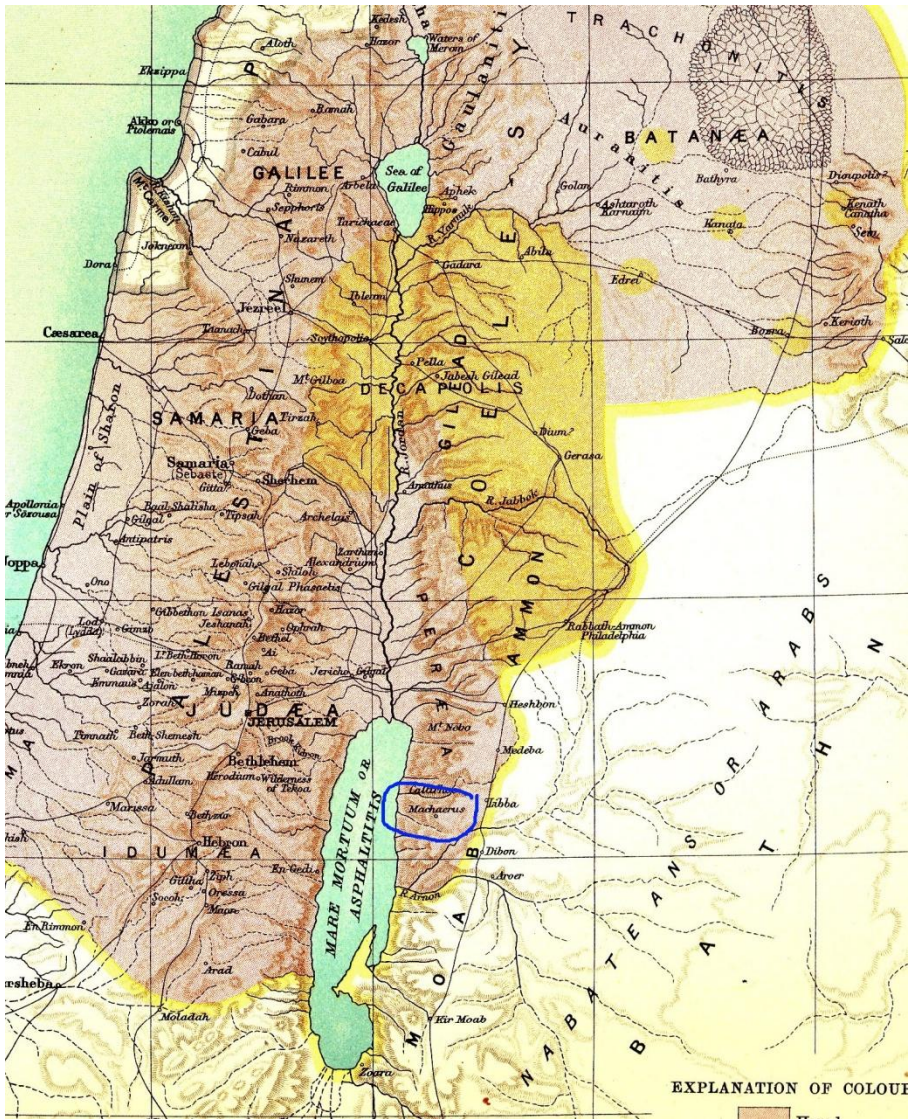
John the Baptist was likely a Nazarite for life; but Jesus was not (Lk 7:33,34). Jesus lived according to God's Law as a righteous Israelite; and this meant He could eat and drink like normal Jews, and not as the Nazarite Vow dictated. When they reviled Jesus for "eating with publicans and sinners" it was because these sinful people were repenting and desiring to hear Jesus teach. Jesus did not join in their sinful party so as to "relate" to

them. Jesus, the sinless and perfect Lamb of God, never transgressed God's Law at any time. Christ's enemies even acknowledged his faithfulness to God's Word (Mt 22:16).

Study Questions on Chapter 5

- 1. If Jesus was a faithful law-abiding Jew, then why do people today say that He drank with the sinners as though He endorsed their lifestyle?**
- 2. Who obeyed God's Laws with more strictness: Jesus or the Pharisees? (Mk 7:1-13)**
- 3. Did Jesus come to redeem man because He disagreed with God's Law or sympathized with sin? (Mt 5:17-20; 7:12-23; Heb 1:8-9)**
- 4. Name two out of three "proofs" that AD 26 was the beginning of Jesus' ministry.**

Note: Machaerus where John the Baptist was put in Prison circled by the Dead Sea.



Chapter 6

The First Passover of Christ's Ministry

Nisan 14, AD 27

Joh 2:13 *And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, 14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: 15 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; 16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. 17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*

At this first Passover of Jesus' ministry He cleansed the Temple and worked so many miracles that Nicodemus (a member of the Sanhedrin) came to him by night (John 3), saying, "*Rabbi, we ("we" honest elders of Israel) know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*" After the feast, Jesus preached throughout Judea and His disciples baptized disciples. This was before John the Baptist was cast into prison, but was also still baptizing in the area.

F N Jones: "Further, Biblical chronological studies with regard to the years of Jubilee (especially note Isa. 37:30) yield the result that 27 AD was a Jubilee year (again, Josephus concurs). This is manifestly confirmed by Jesus' message at the synagogue at Nazareth near the onset of His ministry when He read from Isaiah 61:1-2a. This portion of Scripture is an undeniable offer of Jubilee (i.e., the Kingdom; viz., "to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord", Lk 4:18-19). Jubilee begins on the 10th day of the Jewish 7th month (Lev.25:8-12). This computes to the Gregorian date of Monday, September 27, AD 27 according to astronomical computer calculation, six months after the first Passover of our Lord's earthly ministry (John 2:13). The beginning of the ministry of Jesus the Christ (**AD 26**) seems to be firmly fixed by this data."

Jesus went up to Jerusalem numerous times during His ministry and twice it is recorded that He cleansed the Temple. Do you think Jesus ever tolerated these abuses when He was at the Temple? Why would He cleanse it twice and allow abuses at other times? I believe He always set things in order when He visited the Temple. "*The zeal of thine house*"

would be a consistent part of Jesus' character and example. It certainly was not considered "un-Christ-like" for a zealous prophet to make a scourge and whip trespassers out of the Temple of God.

Christ, in His inspired Scriptures, demands that men use force to protect innocent blood and purity of life when they have jurisdiction. Consider the grand examples in His Word: Moses, Joshua, Ezra, Nehemiah, Samuel, Phinehas, etc. There is no need to soften what Jesus did here like modern pacifists try to do, it was perfectly in line with Scriptural righteousness, and every Jew knew it.

Joh 3:22 *After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. 23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. 24 For John was not yet cast into prison. 25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. 26 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. 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29 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. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease.*

Sometime shortly hereafter John was cast into prison; so Jesus departed from Judea and began ministering again in Galilee. John had reproved Herod for breaking Moses' Law with Herodias while claiming to practice Judaism. John the Baptist's ministry probably began in the early spring of AD 26 and continued until the summer or fall of AD 27 before he was, according to Josephus, imprisoned at Machaerus, Herod's desert fortress on the east side of the Dead Sea.

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

Mt 4:12 *Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;*

Joh 4:1 *When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, 2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) 3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. 4 And he must needs go through Samaria.*

Mt 4:23 *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. 24 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. 25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.*

On this journey back to Galilee is when Jesus “must needs go through Samaria” and there meets the woman of Sychar at Jacob’s well and offers her living water. The Samaritans practiced circumcision and Moses’ Law; but followed a corrupted and confused version of Judaism with paganism mixed in. Jesus did not baptize Gentiles; but He did convert many of these Samaritans. Jesus plainly tells this woman:

Joh 4:22 *“Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23 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. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. 25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. 26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.”*

After ministering in Samaria, Jesus continues his journey into Galilee. During this time the Lord heals the nobleman’s son (Joh 4:46); preaches in Nazareth enraging the bigots (Lk 4:16-30); and then moves His ministry base to Capernaum where He seems to be staying at Peter’s house. It was Peter’s roof, most likely, that was torn up to let the paralytic down before Jesus to be healed. From the Capernaum “ministry headquarters” Jesus would travel on preaching tours throughout the land of Israel.

Specific Miracles recorded during His first year and a half of ministry:

1. Turns the water into wine (John 2)
2. Many miracles at Passover (John 3)
3. Heals the nobleman's son (John 4)
4. Draught of Fishes (Mt 4; Mk 1; Lk 5)
5. Heals man with unclean spirit (Mk 1; Lk 4)
6. Miracles in Capernaum (Mt 8; Mk 1; Lk 4)
7. Cleanses a Leper (Mt 8; Mk 1; Lk 5)
8. Heals the paralytic (Mt 9; Mk 2; Lk 5)

This List does not include words of divine knowledge like those to Nathanael and the Woman of Sychar.

Study Questions on Chapter 6

1. **Why did Jesus choose to teach in the Jewish synagogues?**
2. **What did Jesus expect Nicodemus to understand, being he was a master of Israel? (Ez 18:1-32; 36:25-31)**
3. **What did Jesus teach that made the people of Nazareth so angry?**
4. **What authority did Jesus claim for cleansing the Temple and teaching the people in the Temple?**
5. **Why did Herod cast John the Baptist into prison?**
6. **Did John and Jesus preach the same message of repentance?**
7. **What act of initiation was standard in becoming a disciple of John or Jesus?**
8. **Were John and Jesus in competition?**
9. **How long was John's ministry before being cast into prison?**
10. **According to Malachi, John and Jesus both had the same goal for Israel. What did Malachi say that goal was?**
11. **In the New Testament in many Bibles there are words printed in Black and words printed in Red. Which ones did Jesus author?**

Answer: Jesus personally wrote none of them, but He authored ALL of them, because the Bible was written by the inspiration of Jesus, the Word of God.

Chapter 7

Second Passover

Nisan 14, AD 28

Joh 5:1 *After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 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. 5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. 6 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? 7 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. 8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. 9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.*

Here in Jerusalem again, Jesus stirs the wrath of the religious hypocrites by healing a man on the Sabbath Day. Did Jesus break the Sabbath? Absolutely not; He simply observed it according to the Scriptures and the Jews' own teaching. The events of John 5, Luke 6, Mark 2:23-3:7, and Matthew 12 were probably during this trip to Jerusalem and back; and help determine that this feast was likely the Passover.

During this year of Christ's ministry He chose 12 Apostles, and later chose 70 disciples to go out and preach (Lk 10). These numbers reflect the order of God's people under Moses with the 12 tribes and 70 elders (Ex 24; Mt 19:28).

Lk 6:12 *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. 13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles; 14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew [Nathanael], 15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus [Cleophas or Cleopas], and Simon called Zelotes [the Zealot], 16 And Judas [Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus] the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.*

We have 4 sets of brothers among the Apostles: Peter and Andrew; James and John; Philip and Nathanael; with James and Jude. There are many questions which cannot be answered concerning the duplicate names, the family connections, and the parentage of many of the men named in the New Testament. Most likely James and Jude were sons of Alphaeus and cousins of Jesus; were also the writers of the books which bear those names; and this James was the bishop of Jerusalem.

Matthew's "Sermon On The Mount" (Mt 5-7) is very similar to Luke's "Sermon In The Plain" (Lk 6:17-7:1); but Jesus most likely preached these principles everywhere He ministered and taught for 3 ½ years. He was cleansing Judaism as Malachi stated; and preparing a people for the New Covenant ratified with His own blood. His introduction in Mt 5:17 and His conclusion in Mt 7:12 reveal his perfect agreement with the Torah – His own inspired Word.

Mt 5:17 *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 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. 19 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.*

Mt 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.*

Jesus declared that God's Law was LOVE, and that God's definition and priorities of LOVE were to be learned from the Torah. "Loving God with all our heart, and Loving our neighbor as ourselves" has been the message of the "law and the prophets" from the beginning (Mt 22:37-40). To interpret Jesus, in the *Sermon on the Mount*, as teaching contrary to the Torah is blasphemy.

(See our book, **Did Jesus Correct Moses?** For a further study of this important subject)

During this year, it seems, Jesus empowered the twelve Apostles and sent them out two by two on ministry tours. Also during this year of ministry

Jesus commends John the Baptist to the people, and tells them that the straight and forthright manner of John's preaching was to be expected of a prophet. John was no "reed shaken with the wind" or "softy"; but a fiery messenger of God who so energized the common people that they were pressing into the Kingdom of God and taking it by storm. John could work no miracles; but the power of the Holy Spirit upon his life gave his preaching an energy that people were stirred by. God reserved the miracle working power to be a witness that Jesus was the Christ. The fact that Jesus could also empower his disciples should have been proof enough for the nation; but they wanted a political deliverer who didn't convict and expose their sin.

Even John, in his Messianic expectations, sent disciples wondering if Jesus was to be the deliverer or if there was another doing that; but Jesus displays His miraculous powers and encourages John to be patient and not to stumble because things were not happening as he expected. The fact that Jesus would suffer and die before later returning to reign was not to be explained fully to John at this time. Man's expectations can greatly stumble him. Blessed in the man who does not stumble over God doing things His own way and in His own time!

Specific Miracles Recorded During the Second Year:

1. Heals impotent man at second Passover (Joh 5)
2. Heals man with withered hand (Mt 12; Mk 3; Lk 6)
3. Heals the centurion's servant (Mt 8; Lk 7)
4. Raises the widow's son (Lk 7)
5. Heals the demoniac (Mt 12; Mk 3)
6. Calms the storm at sea (Mt 8; Mk 4; Lk 8)
7. Heals the demoniacs of Gadara (Mt 8; Mk 5; Lk 8)
8. Raises Jairus' daughter and heals afflicted woman (Mt 9; Mk 5; Lk 8)
9. Heals two blind men and a demoniac (Mt 9)

Study Questions on Chapter 7

- 1. What statement of Jesus indicates that people with the faith of the Centurion of Mt 8 would go to heaven? Did Jesus have a problem with this man being a Centurion?**
- 2. How do we know that Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, is comparing the proper usage of God's Law to the faulty usage of the Pharisees? (Mt 5:17-20)**
- 3. Can it be proved that everything Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount is consistent with obedience to God's Law through Moses? (Mt 7:12; 22:40)**
- 4. What are some practical reasons that Jesus did not want the healed demoniac to travel with Him from Gadara?**
- 5. After Jesus returns to Capernaum from Gadara, He is invited to dinner with Matthew the publican. At this feast Jairus comes requesting help. Who was Jairus; what was the request; and why is this all significant? (Mr 5:22; Lu 8:41)**
- 6. Did Jesus claim that He had not broken the Sabbath? Where?**
- 7. At Jesus' trial, did anyone accuse Him of violating the Sabbath or Moses' Law?**
- 8. Did John's disciples report to him in the prison? (Mt 11)**

Chapter 8

Third Passover

Nisan 14, AD 29

While the disciples are on preaching tour in the late winter of AD 28 (April or Nisan being their first month/new year), Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great and brother of Archelaus, murders John the Baptist to please Herodias, his brother Philip's adulterous wife, who charmed Herod with the dancing of her daughter Salome. John had possibly been in prison for 1½ years. Herod then becomes alarmed at the reports of Jesus' miracles and declares that this must be John the Baptist raised again from the dead. Herodias was the granddaughter of Herod the Great, the one who slew the infants when Jesus was born. She was the niece of both Herod Philip, to whom she was married, and Herod Antipas, with whom she lived in violation of Moses' Law. Herodias hated the convicting

Jamieson, Faucet, and Brown (JFB)

commentary: *"This Philip, however, was not the tetrarch of that name mentioned in Lu 3:1 (see on JFB for Lu 3:1), but one whose distinctive name was "Herod Philip," another son of Herod the Great--who was disinherited by his father. Herod Antipas' own wife was the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia; but he prevailed on Herodias, his half-brother Philip's wife, to forsake her husband and live with him, on condition, says JOSEPHUS [Antiquities, 18.5,1], that he should put away his own wife. This involved him afterwards in war with Aretas, who totally defeated him and destroyed his army, from the effects of which he was never able to recover himself."*

power of John's preaching and wanted to Kill him (Mk 6:19), even as Jezebel hated Elijah and wanted to kill him. Jerome, relating her hatred of John's Words, says when Herodias received John's severed head ***"she drew out the tongue, and thrust it through with her bodkin"*** (bodkin: awl or dagger).

During this spring, shortly before the Passover of AD 29, the apostles returned from a preaching tour and reported to Jesus. Around the same time John's disciples, who buried John's body, came and told Jesus about the murder of their faithful leader. Being bereaved of their master, they

most likely joined Christ's disciples. On hearing of John's death, Jesus takes them all to the solitary grassy hills near Bethsaida across the Sea of Galilee to the northeast from Capernaum, to be alone and rest; but He could not be hid (Mt 14; Mk 6; Lk 9; Joh 6).

Joh 6:1 *After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. 2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. 3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. 4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. 5 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? 6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, 9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? 10 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. 11 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. 12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. 13 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.*

Adam Clarke on John 7:1:

St. John passes from the preceding discourse of our Lord, which he delivered a little before the passover, John 6:4, to the Feast of Tabernacles, which happened six months after, and thus omits many things mentioned by the other evangelists, which our blessed Lord said and did during that time. He had already gone over Galilee four or five times; and he continued there, because he found that the hatred of the Jews was such that they would kill him if they could meet with him in Judea; and his time to suffer was not yet come.

On this very night Jesus walks on the water across the stormy sea and manifests His divinity to His disciples. Since the Sea of Galilee and Capernaum are about 90 miles from Jerusalem, it seems Jesus may have avoided the Feast of Passover this year, possibly because of the recent

death of John the Baptist; but later in John 7 we find Him at the Feast of Tabernacles.

During this last year of ministry, Jesus speaks more of cross-bearing; and begins preparing His disciples for the coming crucifixion. The revelation on the Mount of Transfiguration happens a week after the following interaction and thus fulfills the words of Jesus in verse 28.

Mt 16:21 *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. 22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23 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. 24 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. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 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? 27 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. 28 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. 17:1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, 2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4 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. 5 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. 6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. 9 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.*

Peter gives clear testimony to this event and explains the significance as a personal preview of the “power and coming” of the Lord. Marcionites have tried to use this sacred event to create a conflict between Jesus’ teaching

and that of Moses; as though God is discounting His own Holy Word. Peter sets this also straight by declaring the Scriptures to be “more sure” than even an eye witness account. Jesus was indeed a greater **man** than Moses (Heb 3); but Moses’ **WORDS** (recorded in Scripture) were not the invention of Moses; they were Jesus’ words inspired by the Spirit of Christ!

2Pe 1:16 *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were **eyewitnesses of his majesty**. 17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, **when we were with him in the holy mount**. 19 We have also a **more sure word of prophecy**; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation (human invention). 21 **For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.***

Ps119:160 *Thy word is true **from the beginning**: and **every one** of thy righteous judgments **endureth forever**.*

Irenaeus against Marcion CHAP.XII. “But since the writings of Moses are the words of Christ, He does Himself declare to the Jews, as John has recorded in the Gospel: “If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, neither will ye believe My words.” (3) He thus indicates in the clearest manner that the writings of Moses are His words. If, then, [this be the case with regard] to Moses, so also, beyond a doubt, the words of the other prophets are His [words], as I have pointed out.”

Feast of Tabernacles (Fall AD 29)

Joh 7:2 *Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. 3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. 4 For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. 5 For neither did his brethren believe in him. 6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. 7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. 9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee. 10 But when his*

brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

Jesus' brethren were good Jewish men; but not all were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah because He wasn't taking charge like they thought He should; which is similar to John the Baptist's confusion. James and Jude would be among the brethren/kindred of Jesus, it seems; but they did believe and were chosen as Apostles. The others became believers and were with the disciples after the Resurrection (Acts 1:12-14). These *brethren* were most likely not sons of Joseph and Mary. James, the author of the epistle of James; and Jude (called Lebbaeus and also Thaddaeus) who wrote the epistle that bears his name, were probably Jesus' cousins and sons of Cleophas (Alpheus) and Mary (John 19:25). On the cross, Jesus gave the care of His mother into John's hands (Son of Zebedee *and Salome?*); but this would not have been necessary or proper if she had other sons to care for her who were also Apostles (John 19:26,27). If Salome was Mary's sister, then John was also Jesus' cousin. Jewish family situations were often complex with the Levirate marriage, marrying within tribes, and adopting children from relatives who died, etc. With these dynamics we can see how "brethren" and "sisters" may not be from the same parents. It is hard to distinguish in the Scripture who was related to whom, as many people also had two names. Who was Mary's sister (John 19:25)? Who was Salome? Was Martha's sister the same as Mary Magdalene? These questions cannot be answered conclusively with the information we have.

At this fall feast the Scribes and Pharisees bring to Jesus a woman caught in adultery. They knew Jesus always upheld God's Law, so they wanted Him to command her execution by stoning, which would entangle Him with Roman authorities. At this time the Romans had taken away the Jews' power to execute people according to their own laws; but required they get the judgment of a Roman court. They claimed they *caught her in the very act*, which was an attempt to avoid a fair trial. Jesus, knowing God's Law better than these Jews, put the matter back in their laps. The Law required the just and righteous witnesses (at least two) to cast the first stones; He tells them that *whoever are the just witnesses in the case, let them first cast a stone at her* (De 17:7). Jesus also knew that this case was

a “set-up”, for, *where was the man? Where was the angry husband pressing charges?* The men, seeing their predicament and being convicted that none of them were *without sin*, but actually bearing “false witness”, slowly abandoned the woman (De 19:17-19). Without two honest witnesses Jesus could not lawfully condemn her to death even if He had jurisdiction. He reproves her and sends her away. Jesus again proved that He was always faithful to God’s Law.

Jesus had departed from Galilee for the last time and now spends the rest of this year in the vicinity of Jerusalem and east of Jordan in Perea. This may be when Jesus commissions the seventy and sends them out to preach. Jesus visits Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (Lk 10); heals the man born blind (John 9); and attends the Feast of Dedication (Dec 14-15) in the late fall of AD 29. In the winter of this year is likely when Lazarus turned ill; died; and was raised from the dead. Jesus is approximately 30 miles away near Bethabara when the message arrives concerning Lazarus’ illness in Bethany. John 11 records the raising of Lazarus and the reaction of the religious rulers in Jerusalem:

Joh 11:43 *And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44 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. 45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. 46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. 47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 48 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. 49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. 51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; 52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. 53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. 54 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.*

Jesus withdrew from Jerusalem to the small village of Ephraim on the border of the wilderness about 16 miles northeast of Jerusalem and stayed there until Passover AD 30. On Jesus' walk to Jerusalem for the last time, He heals the ten lepers, confronts the "rich young ruler", heals "blind Bartimaeus", and then converts Zaccheus while passing through Jericho (15 mi. N.E. of Jerusalem). On this leg of the Journey, Jesus spells out plainly that His earthly Kingdom is not to be expected at this time; but after He returns from a long absence. This message He had given numerous times, but the people's expectations caused their ears to miss it and continue running on their assumptions of *what Messiah would do*. Yes, He would do all that they had heard from the Prophets, but NOT NOW. The glorious Kingdom would occur when He returned after a long journey. (Mt 25:15-19; Mk 13:34, Acts 3:21, etc.)

Lk 19:11 *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.** 12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, **Occupy till I come.** 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. 15 **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. 16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. 17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, **have thou authority over ten cities.** 18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. 19 And he said likewise to him, **Be thou also over five cities.** 20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: 21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou laydest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. 22 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: 23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? 24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. 25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) 26 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. 27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me. 28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

Jesus' disciples understood this to mean that when He returned they would be given authority in an earthly Kingdom and all opposition would be subdued. See: Mt 19:28; 2Ti 2:12; 1Th 1:10; 2Th 1:7,8; Re 2:26,27, 5:10.

Specific Miracles Recorded During the Third Year:

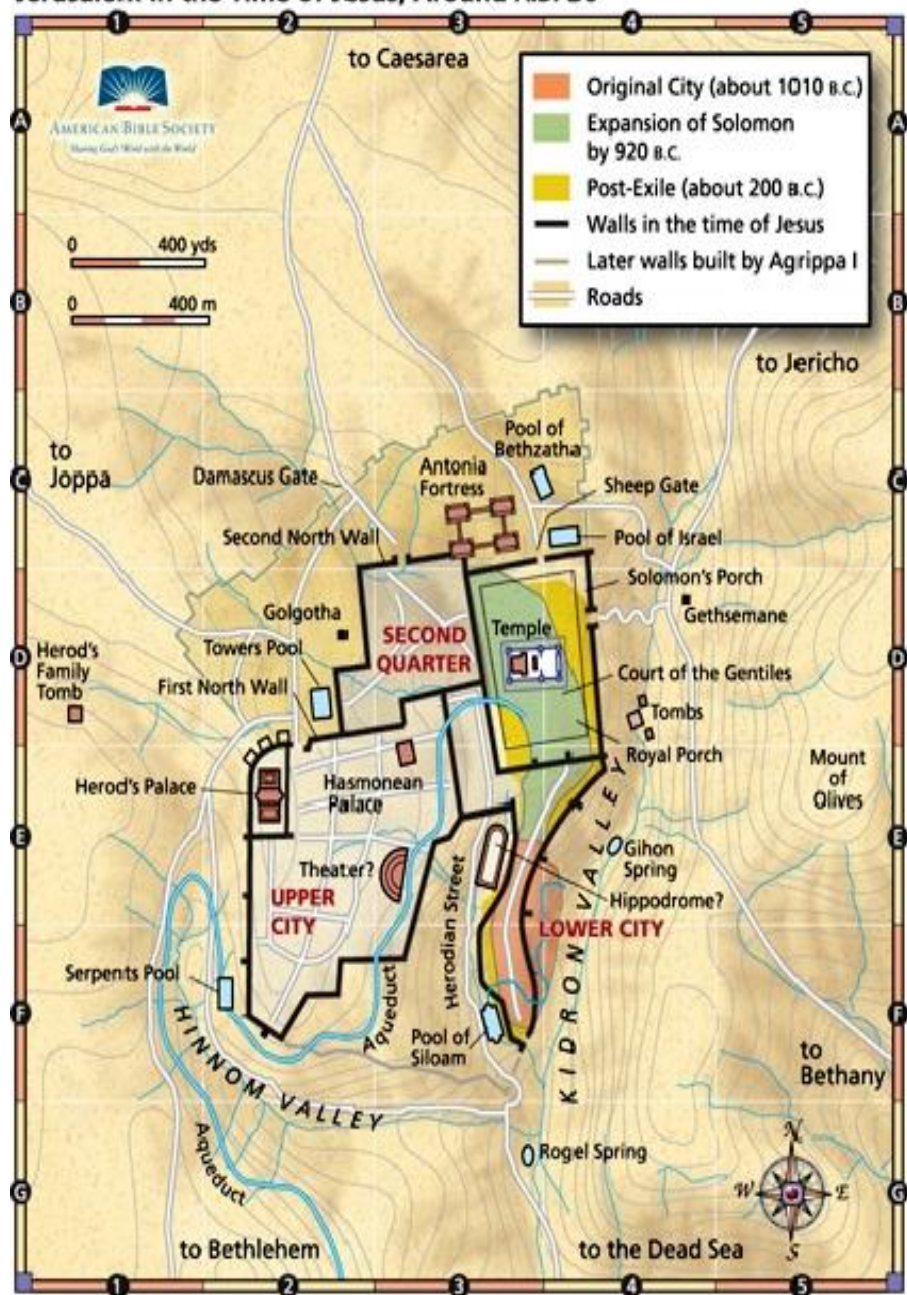
1. Feeds 5000 after John's death during the third Passover season (Mt 14; Mk 6; Lk 9; Joh 6)
2. Walks on the Sea and calms storm (Mt 14; Mk 6; Joh 6)
3. Syrophenician woman's daughter healed (Mt 15; Mk 7)
4. Many miracles by the sea (Mt 15; Mk 7)
5. Feeds the 4000 (Mt 15; Mk 8)
6. Heals the blind man near Bethsaida (Mk 8)
7. Transfiguration on the high mountain (Mt 17; Mk 9; Lk 9; 2Pe 1:16-18)
8. Lunatic boy healed (Mt 17; Mk 9; Lk 9)
9. Tribute money from the fish (Mt 17; Mk 9)
10. Heals man born blind (Joh 9)
11. Dumb spirit cast out (Lk 11)
12. Heals woman on Sabbath (Lk 13)
13. Heals man of dropsy (Lk 14)
14. Raises Lazarus from the dead (Joh 11)
15. Ten Lepers healed (Lk 17)
16. Blind Bartimaeus and friend healed (Mt 20; Mk 10; Lk 18)

Study Questions for Chapter 8

1. **What prominent feature in Jesus' teaching shows up in this last year more than before?**
2. **After being converted how did Zaccheus plan to change the way he conducted his government position.**
3. **What testimony does Peter give about the experience on the holy mount of Jesus' transfiguration?**

- 4. In Jesus' dealing with the woman taken in adultery; did He adhere to God's Law or go contrary to it?**
- 5. What misconception was Jesus correcting with the parable in Lk 19 as He left Jericho to walk to Jerusalem?**
- 6. What time of year did Lazarus most likely become ill and die?**
- 7. Did Jesus ever really break the Sabbath? (Mt 12:12; Joh 7:24)**
- 8. What does it mean that those who were faithful to "occupy" were given authority over cities as their reward? How could that apply to believers?**
- 9. When the King returned who was slain? Who did the slaying?**

Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, Around A.D. 30



Chapter 9

The Lamb Presented

Fourth Passover Of Christ's Ministry (AD 30)

Friday Nisan 8th

Joh 12:1 *Then Jesus **six days before the Passover** came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. 2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. 3 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. 4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? 6 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. 7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. 8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always. 9 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. 10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; 11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.*

Judas was possibly the only one of the twelve that was not a Galilean. After this rebuke, Judas went out to make a deal with the priests and betray Jesus to them in the absence of the multitudes (Mt 26:6-16; Lk 7:36-40). These religious rulers had previously determined **not** to take Jesus during the feast lest there be an uproar of the great crowds in Jerusalem who revered Jesus as a prophet (Mt 26:5; Mk 14:2); but, in the providence of God, they could not pass up this grand opportunity which Judas presented.

Lk 22:1 *Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. 2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. 3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. 4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. 5 And they were glad,*

and covenanted to give him money. 6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

“Palm Sunday” (Nisan 10)

On the first Passover in Egypt, God told His people to take a Lamb from the flock on the 10th day and keep it until the 14th day to observe that it was without blemish and probably to endear it to their affections. They were then to slay it on the 14th, apply the blood to their homes, and eat it before leaving Egypt that night at midnight.

Ex 12:1 *And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, ...5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it...And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S Passover.*

After arriving at Bethany on Friday and resting on the Sabbath, Jesus makes His grand approach to Jerusalem on Sunday the 10th of Nisan. Christians call this **Palm Sunday** and the **Triumphal Entry** because of the exciting prophecies fulfilled and the reaction of the people who believed their Messiah was coming to reign (Mt 21; Mk 11; Lk 19; Joh 12). Jesus went into the city and the temple; and then St. Mark says He returned to Bethany with the twelve. Jesus would spend this week being **observed by all** before the Governor would declare publicly, **“I find no fault in Him”**.

Joh 12:12 *On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. 14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, 15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. 16 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. 17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. 18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. 19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

Monday (Nisan 11)

Monday morning we find Jesus coming again to Jerusalem. On the way He looks for figs on a fig tree which was full of leaves, but had no fruit. This strange fig tree with leaves and no fruit was a type of the Jewish nation; and Jesus pronounced a curse on it. He then entered into the city and cleansed the Temple. Then He proceeded to teach and work miracles while the people proclaimed Him as the Messiah (Mt 21:12-17; Mk 11:15-19; Lk 19:45-48). That evening He returned to the area of Bethany, but didn't pass the fig tree. The Jews evidently took one route to Jerusalem; but took a different route back because of the terrain.

Mk 11:12 *And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: 13 And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. 14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it. 15 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; 16 And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. 17 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. 18 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. 19 And when even was come, he went out of the city. 20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. 21 And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.*

Tuesday – Wednesday (Nisan 12-13)

As Jesus returns to Jerusalem on Tuesday morning, Peter calls their attention to the withered fig tree that Jesus cursed the morning before.

This week Jesus follows a schedule of teaching and healing every day in the Temple, and then sleeping on the Mount of Olives, probably near the Garden of Gethsemane. It is obvious that Jesus was setting the stage for His sacrifice.

Lk 19:47 *And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, 48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.*

Lk 21:37 *And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.*

It is very enlightening to see just what teaching was communicated during this week (Mt 21-26; Mk 11-14; Lk 19-21; Joh 12-13). It was during the very last week of Jesus' life and ministry that He taught the following principle proving that He did not come to change God's Law or tear down the established program; but to cleanse it, just as Malachi prophesied.

Mt 23:1 *Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*

Interesting Possibility:

In the following verse we have John relaying information from the vantage point of many years after the writing of the other three Gospel accounts.

Joh 11:1 *Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)*

With this information, we can make three possible conclusions:

1. There was only one anointing of Jesus, and it was Mary who did it.
2. Or, there were two anointing of Jesus, and it was Mary both times.
3. Or, John, who was familiar with Luke's Gospel, forgot about the previous anointing by another woman. (unlikely)

Now, why is this important? Well, Jesus seems to prophetically indicate that all the Gospel accounts would include Mary's kindness as a memorial

of her (Mt 26:13, Mk 14:9), and the only account in Luke's Gospel is out of chronological order, if indeed it is the same account. Either Luke purposely recorded the event in a different chronological order and left Mary's name out for some expedience in his day, or he recorded a very similar event and left Mary's anointing out altogether, which would seem to go contrary to Jesus' prophetic words in Mt 26:13 and Mk 14:9, as well as John's declaration of **the** woman who anointed Jesus' feet.

Mt 26:13 *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.*

Mr 14:9 *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.*

Chronological order was only a secondary priority it seems when the apostles were writing the Gospel accounts; and it is permissible to include something in another time frame to protect those involved due to dangers or reasons unknown to us.

Why is this important? IF Luke's account is the same story, but placed out of the chronological order, which seems possible; **THEN** The anointing was at Judas' father's house (Simon the healed leper and a Pharisee – Joh 12:4); Judas AND his father were reprov'd about this same incident; and this is the provocation that led Judas to go that very night to bargain with the Jewish leaders (whom his father knew) about betraying Jesus in the absence of the multitude. The Gospel writers reveal that Simon and Judas did not value Jesus as the Messiah of God at the time of this anointing. Compare the Accounts: **Mt 26:6-14; Mk 14:3-10; Lk 7:36-50; Joh 12:1-8.**

If our surmising is correct: that which was hailed as a blessed memorial of a truly grateful forgiven sinner and a fitting anointing of Jesus for burial, was also the spark that led to Jesus' betrayal by the thief, Judas Iscariot, son of Simon Iscariot, an ungrateful healed leper and a Pharisee. Judas was the only disciple that was not a Galilean; but was of Judaea.

Study Questions for Chapter 9

- 1. What is the significance of Jesus' words in Matthew 23:1-3 in this last week of His life? What did this include for Jesus' disciples?**
- 2. What does Mt 22:21 mean to us today?**
- 3. What does a fig tree with leaves, but no figs represent? And why was this cursed?**
- 4. Why did Jesus sleep in the Garden and not with friends?**
- 5. Why were the religious leaders afraid to take Jesus during the Feast days?**
- 6. What does Palm Sunday being on the 10th of Nisan refer to?**

Chapter 10

The Lamb Bound

Thursday Nisan 14 (April 4th Gregorian)

Interestingly, Ussher, Jones, and Reese/Klassen Chronologies all make Thursday of Passion Week the 14th of Nisan; but Ussher has the year as 33 AD; Jones has the year as 30 AD; and Reese/Klassen have the year as 29 AD. Thursday being the 14th of Nisan is established by the Scripture; and it is abundantly clear that Jesus ate The Passover on Thursday, Nisan 14 (Ex 12:6, Mt 26:17, Mr 14:12, Lu 22:7)

F. N. Jones: “...*Thursday the 14th of Nisan (Heb. = Abib = an ear of ripe grain) – Passover day – in the year AD 30 by Jewish reckoning (April 4th Gregorian). Christ Jesus was resurrected triumphantly from the grave...near, but before, sunrise (Mat.28:1-4, cp. Joh.20:1) Sunday the 17th of Nisan (Jewish reckoning = April 7th Gregorian).*”

Jesus ate the Passover on the 14th of Nisan and was delivered into the hands of his enemies that night:

Mt 26:17 *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?***

Mr 14:12 *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?***

Lk 22:7 *Then came the **day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.***

Ex 12:5 *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.*

It is worthy of note that Jesus considered His trial/suffering as beginning when He was “**delivered up**” or “**betrayed**” into the hands of sinful men from whom God had providentially protected Him until this time.

Mt 17:22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, **The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:**

Mt 26:45 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.**

On The Cross:

Mt 27:46 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?**

This expression has the idea **“To what or whom hast thou delivered me up?”** (See Adam Clarke on Mt 27:46)

Ac 2:23 Him, **being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,** ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

This “delivering up” took place Passover night and began the time of Jesus’ sufferings.

Note about John 18:28: The Jews called the whole feast “Passover” and they called the whole feast “unleavened bread” and did not follow the technical separation between the two. Some fail to see the harmony of John’s account because of this very issue. “Passover” in John 18:28 is referring to the continued “Feast of Passover”, not necessarily the Seder Meal.

A.T. Robertson on Jn 18:28 – “*But might eat the passover (alla phagôsin to pascha).* This phrase may mean to eat the passover meal as in Mt 27:17 (Mr 14:12,14; Lu 22:11,15), but it does not have to mean that. In 2Ch 30:22 we read: “And they did eat the festival seven days” when the paschal festival is meant, not the paschal lamb or the paschal supper. There are eight other examples of pascha in John’s Gospel and in **all of them the feast is meant, not the supper.** If we follow John’s use of the word, it is the feast here, not the meal of Joh 13:2 which was the regular passover meal. This interpretation keeps John in harmony with the Synoptics.”

Jesus had his disciples prepare to eat the Passover Meal; and during this meal He institutes the **Lord’s Supper**. He gives his disciples a simple partaking of bread and wine as a memorial of His broken body and shed

blood for the ratification of the New Covenant between God and Israel. This would include the pouring out of the Holy Ghost to write God's Laws in believing hearts and minds. (1Co 11:23-26)

Jer 31:31 *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

Heb 10:16 *This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;*

Just as the sacrifices of Israel were eaten to typify communion/fidelity between fellow Israelites as well as between the covenant nation and God; so the communion Jesus instituted in remembrance of His broken body and shed blood was based on the same principles (1Co 10:16-22; 1Co 5:7-13). Observing the Lord's Supper in a Biblical Church is to be a weekly testimony before God and our brethren that we are abiding in the covenant we professed at baptism. This is what "eating worthily" and "discerning the Lord's body" is all about. The Bishop is responsible to keep the communion clean, lest some eat to their own damnation (1Co 11). It is not to be a yearly remembrance, but a weekly one, "**when ye come together in the church**" on the Lord's Day (1Co 11:17, 20, 34).

1Co 11:26 *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.*

At this Passover meal Jesus identified the traitor to John as being Judas Iscariot. Jesus also gives powerful instruction about brotherly love and His cleansing priesthood when He washes His disciples' feet. Even though at conversion we are clean, we still need our Heavenly Priest to keep us clean as we walk through this life (1Jo 1:7-9). We also need to help keep each other clean as we exhort and wash one another's feet in humble service.

Joh 13:1 *Now before the feast of the Passover (the meal), 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. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; 3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 5 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. 6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 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. 11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. 12 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? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 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. 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. 18 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. 19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

During this time with Jesus, the disciples are warned of coming days of hostility as they are sent out to preach and told to “sell their shirt and buy a sword” in the context of self defense – not against rightful authorities; but against robbers as they travel throughout the land (See App D, pg 201). Peter was reminded in the Garden that the sword was not for insurrection contrary to God’s Law. The use of the sword, which two disciples were carrying at the time, and more would carry later in obedience to Jesus, was in accord with God’s Law. Jesus and the disciples were faithful Jews living by God’s Law, not pacifists as people erroneously hear due to Marcionism, which started in the second century and has plagued the church ever since (See Chapter 22).

Peter and all the disciples declare their willingness to die for Jesus; but Jesus tells them that they would all be stumbled by Him that night; and Peter would actually deny Him three times before the rooster crowed the next morning. Afterward Jesus begins the comforting and very instructive teaching of John 14.

Joh 14:1 *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 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. 3 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. 4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 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? 10 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. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. 12 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. 13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. 15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 17 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. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. 21 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. 22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23 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. 24 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. 25*

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26 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. 27 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. 28 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. 29 And now I have

Adam Clarke: *And when they had sung a hymn: means, probably, no more than a kind of recitative reading or chanting. As to the hymn itself, we know, from the universal consent of Jewish antiquity, that it was composed of Psalms 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, and 118, termed by the Jews llh halel, from hy-wllh halelu-yah, the first word in Psalm 113. These six Psalms were always sung at every paschal solemnity.*

*told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. 30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. 31 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.***

Mt 26:30 *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.*

After they finish the time together eating the Passover, they step out into the night and pass through the streets of Jerusalem in the light of a nearly full moon. As they walk toward Gethsemane, listen to Jesus instruct His disciples and pray (John 15-17).

Joh 15:1 *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 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. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 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. 5 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. 6 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. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. 9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 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. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 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. 16 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. 17 These things I command you, that ye love one another. 18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 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. 20 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. 21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. 23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. 26 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: 27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

Joh 16:1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. 2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. 3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. 4 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. 5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? 6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. 7 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. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment,

because the prince of this world is judged. 12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 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. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 16 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. 17 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? 18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. 19 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? 20 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. 21 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. 22 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. 23 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. 24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. 25 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. 26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: 27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. 28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. 29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. 30 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. 31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? 32 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. 33 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.

John 17 is Jesus' prayer for His disciples before continuing on to the garden of Gethsemane where He was to enter into His agony.

"Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee...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. 12 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. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 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. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 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 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 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. 24 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. 25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. 26 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."

Joh 18:1 *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. 2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, **knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.***

The night of Nisan 14, Jesus, the Lamb of God, enters into His agony just as Jonah did when he entered into the whale. Jesus, knowing that He is being delivered up into the hands of wicked demon controlled men, prays in earnest to overcome and be victorious for the salvation of mankind.

Heb 5:7 *Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto **all them that obey him**; 10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.*

Lk 22:39 *And he came out, and went, **as he was wont**, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. 40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. 41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, 42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. 43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, 46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. 47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. 48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?*

Jesus is bound and taken to Annas, the father in law to Caiaphas the High Priest. Later they lead Him to Caiaphas where a night trial with false witnesses is conducted to avoid the masses of people who are resting after their Passover Meal and have no idea what treachery is taking place in the darkness. They try in vain to find two witnesses who agree so as to condemn Jesus according to Moses' Law. Moses' Law required at least two witnesses who were found to agree under cross examination before someone could be put to death.

If these religious leaders could show that Jesus had been teaching contrary to Moses' Law, they would have their desired verdict; **but that was not the case**. The Son of God never taught contrary to His own Father's Word. The WORD made flesh never taught contrary to His own inspired Word. If they could witness that Jesus had broken God's Laws in any way, they would be glad, **but that was not the case either**. Jesus was the sinless and pure Lamb of God. If He had broken God's Law, He would not be able to die for man's sins. The High Priest in utter frustration puts Jesus under oath to

answer him according to God's Law (Lev 5:1); and our LORD, in obedience to His own Law, answers under oath.

Mt 26:62 *And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? 63 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. 64 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. 65 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. 66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. 67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, 68 Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?*

Jesus essentially tells the High Priest, “YES, I am the Christ, the Son of God; and the next time we meet, I will be the judge.” This sends the counsel into a rage and secures the death sentence. A man who worked so many miracles on His first *ministry* Passover that a member of the Sanhedrin came to Him saying, “*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*” is now condemned to death on the charge of blasphemy for claiming to be the *Anointed One* of God! There were at least two in this Sanhedrin who did not consent to the condemnation of Jesus – Joseph and Nicodemus.

Study Questions on Chapter 10

1. If Jesus changed and corrected Moses' Law, as some teach, then why wasn't this the primary accusation at Jesus' trial based on Deut. 13? What constitutes “another god”? (Ex 32:5)
2. Why did they not accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath, according to Nu 15?
3. Why did they not accuse Jesus of leading people away from obedience to Moses' Law?
4. When did Jesus enter into His agony and trial?
5. Did the Apostles obey Jesus and buy a sword?

6. On what day did Jesus eat the Passover?
7. Where was Jesus *walking from* and *walking to* when the discourses of John 15-17 were spoken?
8. How do we know that Jesus and the disciples walked to Gethsemane in the light of a full moon?

Chapter 11

The Lamb Slain

Friday (Nisan 15), The Preparation

As soon as it was day, the Jews probably got Pilate out of bed to rush this case through before the masses knew what was happening. At this time of year sunrise in Israel would be about 6:30 AM, but it was obviously light earlier. Pilate didn't care to deal with it and sent Jesus to Herod Antipas who didn't care to please the Jews either, so he sent Jesus back to Pilate. Pilate did not want to be at odds with Caesar, but still tried to reason with the Chief Priests, because he knew that Jesus was an innocent victim of their envy. Pilate's wife knew about Jesus, the great and just teacher, and warned her husband to leave Him alone.

Mt 27:19 *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.*

The priests, knowing Pilate's political concerns, threatened to accuse him before Caesar and pushed the issue of Jesus being a king. Pilate wanted to let Jesus go, but more than that he wanted to protect his own position and quiet the mob; so he aborted justice and sent Jesus to be scourged and crucified. The people chose the *notable murderer*, Barabbas, whose name means "*son of abba or father*" over the true *notable Just One*, their Messiah, The Son of The Father, Jehovah.

Mt 27:23 *And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. 24 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. 25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.*

Joh 19:12 *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. 13 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. 14 And it was the preparation*

of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! 15 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. 16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

Jesus Was Crucified on the Preparation (Friday Nisan 15)

Mr 15:42 *And now when the even was come, because it was **the preparation**, that is, the day before the sabbath, (the Sabbath of Passover week)*

Lu 23:54 *And that day **was the preparation**, and the sabbath drew on.*

Joh 19:14 *And it was the **preparation of the Passover (Friday of Passover)**, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!*

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

Joh 19:42 *There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' **preparation day**; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.*

A.T. Robertson on Joh 19:14 *“The Preparation of the passover (paraskeuê tou pascha). That is, Friday of Passover week, the preparation day before the Sabbath of Passover week (or feast). See also verses Joh 19:31,42; Mr 15:42; Mt 27:62; Lu 23:54 for this same use of Paraskeuê for Friday. **It is the name for Friday today in Greece.**”*

A.T. Robertson on Joh 19:31 *“Paraskeuê is the name in modern Greek today for Friday. The Jews were anxious that these bodies should be taken down before the Sabbath began at 6 P.M.”*

People who do not pay attention to these basic and clear statements of Scripture end up fighting for a Wednesday or Thursday Crucifixion, which is a mistake. Jesus was crucified on the Day of Preparation (day before the Sabbath), which was Friday in Judaism (Mt 27:62, Mr 15:42, Lu 23:54). The women could not anoint the wrapped up body because the sun went down Friday (Nisan 15) and the Sabbath began. Therefore they rested on the Sabbath (Nisan 16), waited until Sunday morning (Nisan 17), and arrived as early as possible to finish the anointing for burial (Luke 23:55-24:1). Jesus

rose on the third day (Day of First-fruits) according to Jewish inclusive reckoning (Mt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:63-64, Mr 9:31; 10:34, Lu 9:22; 13:32; 18:33; 24:7; 24:20-21; 24:46, Acts 10:40, 1Co 15:4).

The rushed court proceedings before Pilate were underway very early. The Gospel of Mark tells us the actual crucifixion took place in the section of day between 9 am and 12 pm; which Mark, according to Jewish reckoning, calls the *third hour*. From 12 pm to 3 pm (called the *sixth hour*) there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour, starting at 3 pm. This likely was the primary time Jesus was suspended on the cross.

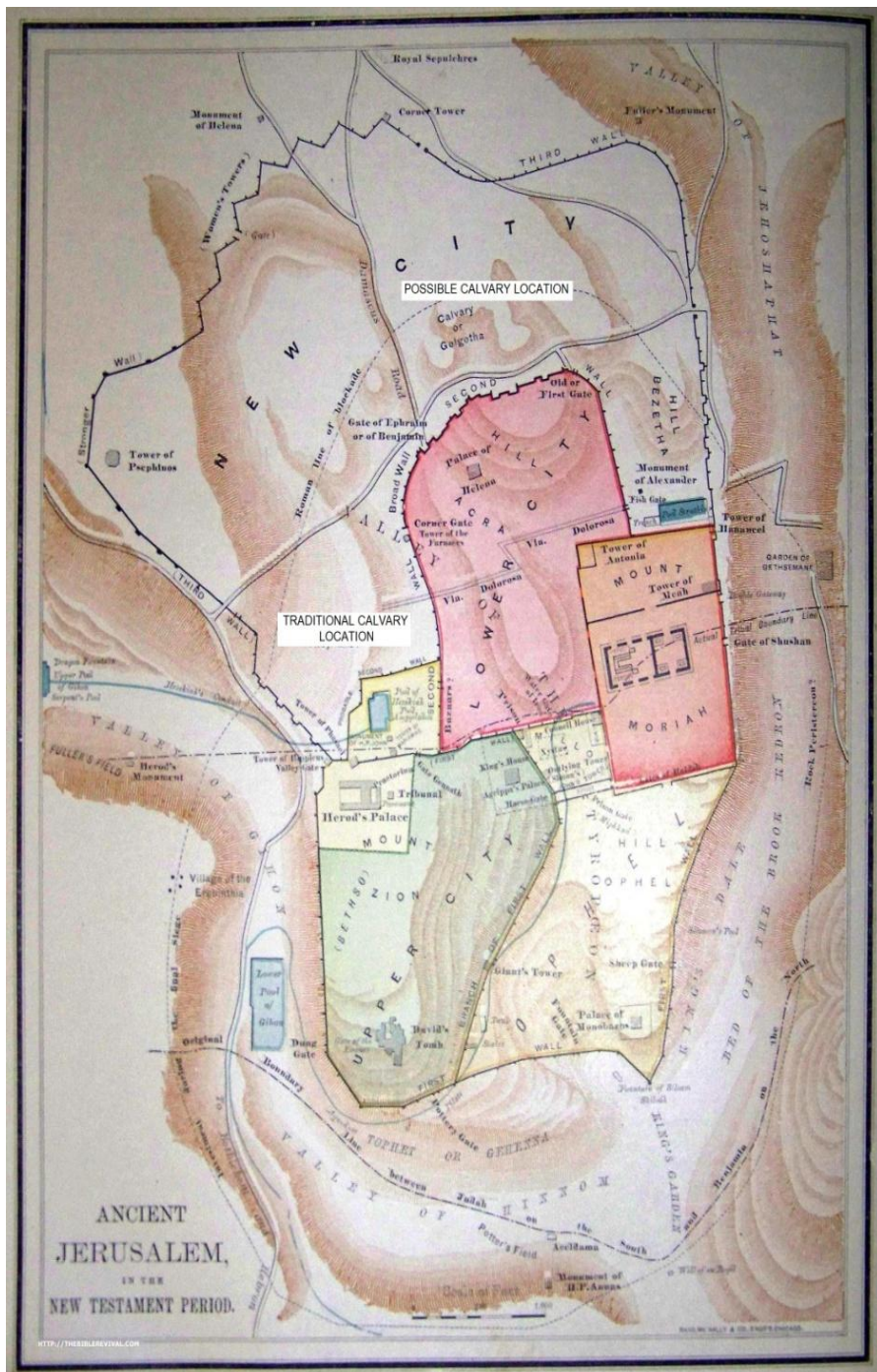
The time it took to lead Jesus to Pilate; then Pilate to Herod; then Herod back to Pilate; then the scourging; the walk to Golgotha; the fastening of three men to crosses; and at last the raising of those crosses into place is impossible for us to know. The Gospel writers had no mechanical watches, but gauged their times by the sun in the sky and divided the day generally into four parts. The 3rd hour, the 6th hour, and the 9th hour **sections** of the day were begun with prayer, and thus there were three “hours of prayer” in the Jewish day (Ps 55:17; Ac 2:15; 10:9). The night was also divided into three-hour sections called **watches**. Obviously the designations in Mark 13:35 include the time until the next designation, **e.g. Mk 13:35** *Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at **even**, or at **midnight**, or at the **cockcrow**ing, or in the **morning**:*

Mk 15:22 *And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. 23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. 24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. 25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. 26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. 27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. 28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. 29 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, 30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross. 31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, **He saved others; himself he cannot save.***

What fools to declare against themselves that they are crucifying a man who SAVED OTHERS! What an admission! What a testimony to their own damnation! They couldn't save anybody!

From 12 to 3 pm there was darkness over the earth, and at 3 pm Jesus cried out and yielded His Spirit to the Father.

Mk 15:33 *And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 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? 35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. 36 And one ran and filled a sponge 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. 37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. 38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. 39 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.*



Seven Sayings of Christ on The Cross

While Jesus was on the cruel Roman Cross in excruciating pain and agony for 3 or more long hours, He spoke sparingly; but gave us seven very meaningful expressions:

- 1. Lk 23:34 *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.***

Jesus, knowing the magnitude of God's wrath upon the soldiers driving the nails, parting the garments, and crucifying the innocent Son of God, asked that THIS TRESPASS not be put upon their record. These men were not forgiven ALL their sins; but Jesus spared them this grand trespass before God due to their ignorance in the matter.

- 2. Lk 23:42 *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.***

While condemned and dying, Jesus had such a bearing of majesty and purity that one of the criminals being crucified was brought to repentance, and called on Jesus to have mercy upon Him. This man, no doubt, was familiar with the great miracle working teacher; and he seemed to understand that the afterlife was all important. Jesus, even in such agony, reached out and saved a lost sinner on the cross next to Him.

- 3. Joh 19:26 *When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.***

Since the Passover Meal, Jesus has had no rest or food and very little drink. The agony in the Garden, the long night of abuse and stress, the Roman scourging and abuse of the soldiers; and then the crucifixion; yet Jesus is caring for others. He sees His mother and commits her into the care of John, who took her into his house and cared for her into old age as history records. This is strong evidence that Jesus was the only biological son of Mary, otherwise Mary should have been cared for by another son. This

does not make her a “perpetual virgin”, though, as some teach contrary to God’s definition of marriage (Mt 1:20-25).

- 4. Mk 15:34 *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?***

Jesus is expressing the same words as in the Psalm that speaks of the crucifixion in amazingly clear words (Ps 22). These words are not to be understood as questioning what was happening; but to the **magnitude** of it; and can be translated as ***“To what hast thou delivered me?”*** See Adam Clarke.

- 5. Joh 19:28 *After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.***

Adam Clarke on the vinegar given to Jesus at this time: *This was probably that tart small wine which we are assured was the common drink of the Roman soldiers. Our word vinegar comes from the French vin aigre, sour or tart wine; and, although it is probable that it was brought at this time for the use of the four Roman soldiers who were employed in the crucifixion of our Lord, yet it is as probable that it might have been furnished for the use of the persons crucified; who, in that lingering kind of death, must necessarily be grievously tormented with thirst. This vinegar must not be confounded with the vinegar and gall mentioned Mt 27:34, and Mr 15:23. That, being a stupifying potion, intended to alleviate his pain, he refused to drink; but of this he took a little, and then expired, John 19:30.*

- 6. Joh 19:30 *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.***

What was finished? People erroneously speak of trusting in Jesus’ “finished work on the cross” for their salvation; but Jesus had to rise and administrate salvation as our Heavenly Priest, or nobody would be saved. What was “finished” was the offering of a perfect sacrifice with infinite and enduring merit for the salvation of all who repent and avail themselves of Christ’s Heavenly Priesthood. The cleansing and redeeming merit of Christ’s Sacrifice must be applied by Christ to those who “Walk in the Light” and “Confess known sins” (Heb 7:25; 1Jo 1:7-9)

7. Lk 23:46 *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.*

This last statement corrects the wrong idea that Jesus was actually questioning God, “Why hast thou forsaken me?” rather than giving an exclamation of the magnitude of what He had been *delivered up to* or concerning the shocking wickedness of the Jewish leaders: “*To what or whom has thou delivered me?*” The false notion that God forsook Jesus or “*The Father turned His face away*” from Jesus, “*because God could not look upon sin*” is gross error. This blasphemy comes from the false notion that Jesus “became sin” (2Co 5:21); rather than becoming a “Sin-Offering” which is what our translation should have said. Jesus offered Himself as a spotless Lamb and was at the height of pleasing Jehovah when suffering on the cross. He took our punishment, not our guilt.

Eph 5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*

Heb 7:26 *For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;*

Heb 9:14 *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

1Pe 1:18 *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

1Pe 3:18 *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:*

The SAME Greek word translated SIN in 2Co 5:21 (Amartia) is translated “*sacrifices for sin*” and “*offering for sin*” in Heb 10:6-7:

Heb 10:6 *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;*

Adam Clarke: "Amartia...it signifies a sin-offering, or sacrifice for sin, and answers to the *chattaah* (khat-taw-aw') of the Hebrew text; **which signifies both sin and sin-offering** in a great variety of places in the Pentateuch....The Septuagint translate the Hebrew word by *amartia* in **ninety-four places in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, where a sin-offering is meant; and where our version translates the word not sin, but an offering for sin.** **Had our translators attended to their own method of translating the word in other places where it means the same as here, they would not have given this false view of a passage which has been made the foundation of a most blasphemous doctrine; viz. (That Is) that our sins were imputed to Christ, and that he was a proper object of the indignation of Divine justice, because he was blackened with imputed sin; and some have proceeded so far in this blasphemous career as to say, that Christ may be considered as the greatest of sinners, because all the sins of mankind, or of the elect, as they say, were imputed to him, and reckoned as his own. ...But that it may be plainly seen that sin-offering, not sin, is the meaning of the word in this verse, I shall set down the places from the Septuagint where the word occurs; and where it answers to the Hebrew words already quoted; and where our translators have rendered correctly what they render here incorrectly....In all, one hundred and eight places, which, in the course of my own reading in the Septuagint, I have marked.**

A correct translation of 2Co 5:21 would look like this: ***"For he hath made him to be a sin-offering for us, who knew no sin; that we might be justified before God in Him"***. Jesus did not take our GUILT, but His suffering was a substitute for our suffering, so His sacrifice would make atonement and God could justly pardon and forgive us. The atoning power of this sacrifice is only applied to those who repent and live in the terms of the New Covenant under Christ's Heavenly Priesthood.

In the last winter of Jesus' ministry (Dec 14-15 AD 29) at the Feast of Dedication, Jesus had said:

Joh 10:17 *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 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. 19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. 20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? 21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?*

When Jesus knew that He had accomplished His mission, the Father was propitiated, and the Law was satisfied, He commended His Spirit to His Father. When Jesus said, "It is finished", He was referring to His offering a perfect sacrifice to God for the redemption of mankind. His work of redeeming mankind was not yet finished, but His priesthood had just begun. Jesus never told anyone to trust His crucifixion, but to **obey and follow Him**. *Trusting in the blood of Christ* demands you obey the High Priest, Jesus Christ, who alone has authority to apply His blood to your case (1Jo 1:7-9).

Pilate was surprised that Jesus was already dead and the soldiers did not have to break His legs to accomplish it. Rather than breaking His legs, which would have voided an important prophecy that **none of His bones would be broken**; they pierced His side, which fulfilled another prophecy.

Joh 19:31 *The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: 34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. 35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. 36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken (Ex 12:46; Nu 9:12; Ps 34:20). 37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced (Zec 12:10; Re 1:7).*

Jesus is Entombed

When Jesus gave up the Ghost at around 3 pm on Friday, the veil of the Temple was rent from the top to the bottom, as it was a type of Christ's earthly body. From what Peter says on Pentecost, there must have been some other visible signs at this time that are not mentioned. The darkness from 12 to 3 pm, the earthquake, and the veil are mentioned; but listen to what Peter reminds the people at Pentecost about as part of his evidence:

Ac 2:16 *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and*

your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. 22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Silly men try to explain all this by natural phenomena, but God threw them a curve here: You cannot have darkness from a total eclipse during the day of the crucifixion and a Blood Moon that very night by natural processes. There was always a full moon at Passover, and therefore a solar eclipse is impossible. The fire and vapor of smoke may have been due to the earthquake, and may have caused the moon to be blood red that night.

Two members of the Jewish Sanhedrin, who were honest men and had not agreed with the treachery against Jesus, but were secret disciples, now step out boldly and get Pilate's permission to take the body and bury it with dignity. Rather than being buried like a criminal by cremation or being cast into a common grave, Jesus was honorably wrapped with spices and oils, placed in Joseph's own new tomb hewn out of a rock, and properly secured for God's purposes (Isa 53:9). This needed to be done before sundown when the Sabbath began.

The women who wanted to come and add to the anointing process for Jewish burial that Joseph and Nicodemus had begun could not accomplish it before darkness fell, and so had to wait until Sunday morning after the Sabbath was over and the sun was again up so they could see.

John 19:38 *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. 39 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. 40 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. 41 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. 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Lk 23:55 *And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment. 24:1 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. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.*

Study Questions on Chapter 11

- 1. Why could not the full blood moon *and* the darkness during the day be natural phenomena?**
- 2. How do the religious leaders condemn themselves while trying to ridicule Christ on the cross?**
- 3. What did Pilate fear more than God's wrath?**
- 4. What pressured Nicodemus and Joseph to hurry and get Jesus in the tomb?**
- 5. What tomb did they put Jesus in?**
- 6. Why did the women have to wait before anointing the body of Christ?**
- 7. Why did Jesus refuse the vinegar with gall?**
- 8. Why do you think that Judas and Pilate both, according to history, committed suicide?**
- 9. How did the Father view the Son on the Cross? As a guilty sinner or as a lamb without spot and blameless willing offering himself as a substitute to redeem the repentant.**

Chapter 12

The Resurrection of Christ

Jesus Rose the Third Day, Nisan 17, AD 30 (Sunday, April 7th Gregorian)

The Sunday after the Sabbath of Passover was the Feast of First-fruits when the priest waved publicly the sheaf of Barley; which God meant as a thanksgiving offering for the harvest (Lev 23:11). The harvest that God actually was pointing to, though, was the harvest of redeemed souls; and Jesus was the First-fruits of the resurrection of harvested souls.

1Co 15:20 *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the **firstfruits** of them that slept.*

Jesus rose on the **third day** (First-fruits) according to Jewish inclusive reckoning (Mt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:63-64, Mr 9:31; 10:34, Lu 9:22; 13:32; 18:33; 24:7; 24:20-21; 24:46, Acts 10:40, 1Co 15:4). Jewish reckoning includes every part of a day; and Jesus' agony began when God "delivered Him up" Thursday night. Notice how the Jews reckon time in the following examples:

Es 4:15 *Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, 16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink **three days, night or day**: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. ...5:1 Now it came to pass **on the third day** that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: (Also 1Sam 20:5,12)*

Mt 27:62 *Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, 63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, **After three days I will rise again**. 64 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.*

Lk 24:19 *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: 20 And **how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be***

condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, **today is the third day since these things were done.**

The term “three days and three nights”, which is mentioned only once in the Gospels, means three “evenings/mornings” which is a Jewish term for a “DAY”, and does not necessitate what we call three whole days and three whole nights; otherwise Jesus had to rise on the *FOURTH DAY*. The Bible tells us about fourteen times that Jesus would rise the *THIRD DAY*. It is very important to allow the Bible to speak for itself and not to press our ideas upon it.

In Ephesians chapter 4 we find that “lower parts of the earth” is simply used for Jesus becoming man on earth (John 3:13); so the “heart of the earth” in Mt 12:40 does not have to mean “tomb”; but rather the time when Jesus **was delivered into the hands of sinful men on earth**. Jesus entered into his agony and prayed in Gethsemane Thursday night sweating great drops of blood; and that is when God delivered the Son into the hands of sinful men.

Mk 10:33 *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:*

Mt 26:31 *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.***

Lk 22:44 *And **being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.***

Ro 8:32 *He that **spared not his own Son**, but **delivered him up** for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

Mt 17:22 *And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, **The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: 23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.** And they were exceeding sorry.*

Mt 26:45 *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.***

Mk 14:41 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.

Lk 24:7 Saying, The Son of man must be **delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.**

Lk 24:18 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? 19 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: 20 And **how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.** 21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, **today is the third day since these things were done.**

The writers of the Gospels usually do not name themselves when speaking of their involvement in the story; so being that Cleopas is the only one named in this event, which is only recorded in this Gospel, it is likely that the other man on the road to Emmaus was Luke. The young man mentioned only by Mark in Mr 14:52 is likely Mark himself. John refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”.

The resurrection of Jesus is plainly stated to be early Sunday morning, not Saturday night or even in the middle of the night. Pay attention to what is said.

Mt 28:1 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 (they needed light to anoint the body). 2 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. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4 **And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.** 5 And **the angel answered and said unto the women**, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 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. 8 And **they departed quickly from the sepulchre** with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. 9 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. 10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. 11 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. 12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, 13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. 14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. 15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

The same angel that frightened the soldiers also spoke to the women and told them to quickly run and tell the disciples. **AS they were going quickly, some of them met Jesus; and DURING THIS VERY TIME-FRAME, the frightened soldiers are also coming into the city to tell the news.** If Jesus had risen Saturday night, would the soldiers just now be coming into town to report while the women were running to tell the disciples? Not likely. The evidence is clear that Jesus rose early Sunday Morning.

Mr 16:9 *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.*

Lk 23:55 *And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and **rested the sabbath day according to the commandment. 24:1 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. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.*

It is clear that this anointing had to be done in a timely manner or the body would begin to stink. Remember what Martha and Mary were concerned about when Jesus told them to roll back the stone from the sepulchre?

Joh 11:39 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.**

The fourth day of being in the grave was TOO LATE to anoint a corpse; but Jesus had only been in the tomb two full nights and one full day, so it was still acceptable to open the tomb and finish the anointing of the corpse. This was all planned by God for the sake of establishing firm evidence for the resurrection.

Jesus' resurrection proved that God found Him innocent and was satisfied with the offering He presented for the sins of the whole world.

1Jn 3:1 *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

The Resurrected Christ offered His blood on the Mercy Seat in the Tabernacle of Heaven and became the High Priest to intercede for those abiding by the terms of the New Covenant, and to make application of His blood for the remission of their sins. The OT Scriptures taught mankind all about this process through the Tabernacle and Temple. (See Hebrews)

1Jn 1:5 *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Heb 7:24 *But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

Study Questions on Chapter 12

- 1. How could Jesus rise “after three days” and also “on the third day”?**
- 2. Why is it obvious that Jesus rose early Sunday morning about dawn?**
- 3. What feast signified the resurrection of Christ?**
- 4. In what ways did God design the resurrection to have the maximum evidence and credibility?**
- 5. What was the date of Passover and First-fruits, and why is that important?**

- 6. Why is it imperative to proper interpretation to follow the Jewish usage of terms and phrases in the Bible?**
- 7. What could lead men to think that Luke was the companion of Cleopas?**

Chapter 13

The LORD'S DAY

Joh 20:26 *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.*

Jesus met with the disciples the next First Day of the week; a week after His resurrection on Sunday morning.

The term “eighth day” comes from Jewish usage based on the Law (Lev 23:35,36) and became a common alternative term for *one week from today*, or the first day of the week, as it was the “morrow after the Sabbath” (Lev 23:15,16). It is now the expression used in the German language when referring to one week from today, ‘*Heute ueber acht Tage*’ - *today over eight days*.

JFB on Jn 20:26: *...that is, on the eighth day, or first day of the week. They probably met every day during the preceding week, but their Lord designedly reserved His second appearance among them till the recurrence of His resurrection day, that He might thus inaugurate the delightful sanctities of THE LORD'S DAY*

The **Lord's Day** is the day the Lord Jesus has sanctified (made special) with His Triumphal Entry, the Resurrection Day - Feast of First-Fruits, meeting with the disciples the next Sunday, and then pouring out His Spirit on the day of Pentecost, which was also on Sunday. **This Day is the Lord's Day (Rev 1:10)!** It is the day we partake of the Lord's Supper, with the Lord's body, the church. Concerning Christian and Jewish usage, Sunday has nothing more to do with the *Sun* than Saturday has to do with *Saturn*.

Ps 118:24 *This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

God created all the days, so what does this phrase mean? It simply means that the LORD has “set aside” or “sanctified” this day for a sacred purpose and given it special significance.

Have you ever noticed the context of this passage?

Ps 118:19 *Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: 20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. 21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.*

■ Speaking of Justification by Faith

118:22 *The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. 23 This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.*

- This is speaking of the King/Stone which was presented at the Triumphal entry, but refused by the builders – religious rulers; yet by the resurrection Christ has become the Corner Stone in God's Program of redemption and the *Kingdom of David*. (Mt 21:42; Mr 12:10; Lu 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph 2:20; 1Pe 2:4,7-8)

118:24 *This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

- This grand event is commemorated by the day of the week when significant parts took place – the First Day of the week.

118:25 *Save now, I beseech thee, (Hebrew – “Hosanna”) O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. 26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. 27 God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. 28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. 29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Mt 21:9 *And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.*

Mr 11:9 *And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:*

- When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, they cried, **Hosanna** to the Son of David, **Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD**. The people knew how to apply the Psalm.

Mt 23:39 *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.*

- Jesus applied this phrase to accepting Him as Messiah. (Mt 23:39; Lk 13:35)

"...bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." This speaks of binding the Lamb and proceeding until the blood is applied to the horns of the altar, which is where the blood was applied to make atonement (Lev 4).

ALL of this has to do with the DAY which the LORD has MADE, and WE WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT!

The Testimony of the New Testament is this:

1. Jesus Chose Sunday for His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem
2. Jesus Chose to rise from the dead on the first day of the week (Mt 28:1, Mk 16:2, Mk 16:9, Lk 24:1, Joh 20:1; 20:19)
3. He appeared to his disciples on the first day of the week (The resurrection day and the next Sunday - Joh 20:19,26);
4. Pentecost was on the first day of the week (Lev 23:15,16).
5. The disciples came together for communion on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). *Note: Paul stayed in Troas for seven days with no mention of a Sabbath meeting; but rather a meeting with preaching and breaking of bread on the first day of the week, which means there was not a Christian meeting the day before.*
6. Paul admonishes them to take up their collection when they meet on the first day of the week so there would not need to be such collecting of money when he came (I Cor. 16:1-2). *Note: It was the Jews practice to take up such a collection on the Sabbath, which means this was a shift to the first day of the week and was NOT done on the Sabbath as previously done.*
7. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10).

All the early church writings verify the Lord's Day was on the first day of the week, Sunday. Even though we don't build doctrine on these uninspired men, the consistency on this subject is noteworthy.

"Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead" Barnabas 100 AD?

"But every Lord's Day, gather yourselves together, and break bread, and give thanksgiving after having confessed your transgressions, so that your sacrifice may be pure." Didache 140 AD?

"No longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day." Ignatius 107 AD

"And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read....But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which Godmade the world. And Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead on that same day." Justin Martyr 140 AD

John died about 98 AD, so all the previous quotes are possibly within 42 years of John's death. Ignatius was the second bishop of Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians, and knew the Apostles; but this Barnabas was not the same as the companion of Paul.

"In fulfillment of the commandment according to the Gospel, a person keeps the Lord's Day...." Clement of Alexandria 195 AD

Some will contend that the Sabbath was part of the Ten Commandments, and therefore part of the Moral Law. Moral Law is determined by the "nature" of the law, not where it is written (See App B, pg 184). The Ten Commandments were only an outline of hundreds of commandments; and no more important than any others. When Jesus was asked about the "greatest commandment", He gave two that were not even in the Decalogue (Ten Commandments). The Apostle Paul categorized the Sabbath as part of the ceremonial law in Galatians and Colossians.

Ga 4:8 *Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? 10 Ye observe **days, and months, and times (seasons), and years.** 11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.*

Col 2:16 *Let no man therefore judge you **in meat, or in drink**, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

- ✓ **NOTE: Yearly "Feasts", Monthly "New Moons", and the Weekly "Sabbaths" mentioned with "meat and drink".**

This arrangement of naming the yearly, monthly, and weekly Sabbaths together is patterned after the common usage of the Old Testament writers and shows that all these holy days and appointed feasts had the same authority and significance as being part of the same covenant.

1Ch 23:30 *And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even; 31 And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the **sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts**, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD:*

2Ch 2:4 *Behold, I build an house to the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the **sabbaths**, and on the **new moons**, and on the **solemn feasts** of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance for ever to Israel.*

2Ch 8:13 *Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the **sabbaths**, and on the **new moons**, and on the **solemn feasts**, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.*

2Ch 31:3 *He appointed also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the **sabbaths**, and for the **new moons**, and for the **set feasts**, as it is written in the law of the LORD.*

Eze 45:17 *And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and **meat offerings**, and **drink offerings**, in the **feasts**, and in the **new moons**, and in the **sabbaths**, in all solemnities of the house of Israel:*

Neh 10:33 *For the shewbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering, of the **sabbaths**, of the **new moons**, for the **set feasts**, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.*

The Jewish believers in Christ would have observed the Sabbath **and** the Lord's Day; but after they were expelled from the Synagogues, they most likely only gathered for public worship on the Lord's Day and simply rested on the Sabbath. That the Sabbath was given to Israel as part of the Mosaic Covenant is clear from the following passages: De 5:1-15, Ez 20:10-12, Neh 9:13-14

Study Questions on Chapter 13

- 1. How did the LORD *make* the day?**
- 2. Enumerate all the events that Jesus placed on the first day of the week.**
- 3. How do we know the apostolic churches met on the first day of the week?**
- 4. Was the Sabbath part of the moral or ceremonial law? What scriptures prove this?**
- 5. Why is it significant that Paul told the churches to take up their collection for the poor on the first day of the Week?**
- 6. If the Sabbath was not given until Israel came out of Egypt with Moses, and was part of the Old Covenant, did it vanish away with the Old Covenant? Heb 8:13**
- 7. If it was wrong for Jews to keep the ceremonial laws, feasts, sacrifices etc. in a manner contrary to God's commandments before Christ came, can people really keep the weekly, monthly, and annual Sabbaths, feasts, and other ceremonial laws today in a manner pleasing to God without the priesthood or the Temple?**

Chapter 14

40 Days of Kingdom Instruction

Ac 1:1 *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach (Luke referring to his Gospel), 2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom he had chosen: 3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, **being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:** 4 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. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 **When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?** 7 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. 8 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.*

It is amazing to me that Jesus spent 40 days meeting and instructing the disciples about the Kingdom of God, and yet foolish men today think they know more about it than the Apostles did. So, *you know more than the Apostles because you read **their** book?* Those **red** letters in your Bible were written by the Apostles and their associates, not by Jesus. If you cannot trust the black letters, then you cannot trust the red ones. Not only did Jesus meet with these men and instruct them concerning the Kingdom for forty days, they spent 3½ years discussing the issues with Him and preaching about it themselves.

Lk 8:1 *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** (Did they not know what He said?)*

Presumptuous people look upon the Apostles' question in Acts 1:6 as a lack of understanding concerning the *NATURE* of the Kingdom. One commentary said it this way: "***They still held to their old ideas of a worldly restoration of the kingdom of Israel. Their only question was, 'Wilt thou restore it now?' After the Holy Spirit was given, this delusion was dismissed, and they***

understood that Christ's kingdom is not of this world." Another put it thus: *"They were earnest in asking about that which their Master never had directed or encouraged them to seek. Our Lord knew that his ascension and the teaching of the Holy Spirit would soon end these expectations, and therefore only gave them a rebuke"* Nonsense!

Foolish men want to say that their *CHURCH* today is the Kingdom of Christ, and that an earthly reign as promised and declared in the Word of God is not coming. **The Apostles knew well that the Kingdom of Christ on the throne of David WAS YET TO COME** (Mt 19:28, Mt 25:31, Lk 22:28-30, 2Ti 4:1). How ridiculous to say the giving of the Holy Spirit ended the delusion *they received* from Jesus' teaching and instructing! Where else did they get their delusion....maybe from the prophets or the Angel speaking to Mary? I'd rather be "deluded" by God's Word than some common-tator's commentary.

Re 2:25 *But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. 26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him **will I give** power over the **nations**: 27 And **he shall rule them** with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: **even as I received of my Father**.*

Re 5:10 *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and **we shall reign on the earth**.*

The church is in the "occupy till I come" and "hold fast till I come" stage (Lk 19:13, Re 2:25); and striving to be faithful with little, so they can be trusted with much (Lk 19:17). Jesus had taught this clearly on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem before His crucifixion. The message of the Apostles to the believers was that they were waiting for the coming Kingdom, and striving to be faithful so they would be able to rule with Christ (Ac 14:22, 2Ti 2:12, 1Co 6:2-3, Heb 12:28, 2Pe 1:11, Jas 2:5). Jesus is indeed King over His saints now in the same sense as the king in the parable was before his return (Lk 19). However, as Jesus clearly stated, that nobleman went away for a coronation, and would return to reign with authority. The Prophecy of Zacharias at John's birth; and also what Gabriel told Mary concerning the Kingdom of Messiah is still to be fulfilled (Lk 1).

When Jesus comes to conquer and bring peace on earth by ruling with a rod of iron we will experience the safety spoken of in Isaiah 2:4 and Micah

4:3 when **nations** will turn their weapons into farming implements and people will not be afraid. The church age, which is described in Matthew 24 and Luke 21, is totally different, and certainly not happening at the *same time*. Both descriptions are dealing with the NATIONS, not individuals or church groups.

**Ascension Day, Iyar 27, AD 30
(Thursday, May 16th – Gregorian)**

Jesus led the disciples out to the same place where He had mounted the donkey before the Triumphal Entry, where the regions called Bethphage and Bethany meet on the Mount of Olives. This was a Sabbath day's journey (7.5 furlongs or about a mile) from Jerusalem; and here He ascended up into the clouds out of their sight. (See Clarke on Lk 24:50)

Think: *Do you really believe Jesus told His disciples to buy swords so they could beat them into plows? Self Defense and defending the weak are Righteous according to God's Law.*

Ac 1:9 *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 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.***

This is one of the most glorious promises that God has ever made to man!

What a Glorious Promise! This has not happened, and will not until Christ returns to reign (Acts 3:21 compare Mt 19:28). This is the least favorite verse of Preterists who want to believe that Jesus came back in AD 70. However everyone knows that this passage, as well as the teaching about the rapture (1The 4:13-17), has NOT taken place yet.

For the next 10 days the disciples waited and prayed daily in the Temple until the Holy Spirit was poured out from the Lord Jesus on the Sunday of Pentecost. During this time they chose another witness to fill up the number of the twelve Apostles and take Judas Iscariot's place. Peter is obviously acting as the leader of the Apostles as Jesus had ordained. Interestingly they never did this again when an Apostle died; but they only replaced the one who fell away; which makes sense in the light of eternity.

The twelve Apostles were to be eye witnesses of Christ's resurrection; and were given special powers by Christ for the fulfillment of God's work. Many people today feign powers and lie about miracles, visions, etc. trying to be even greater than the Apostles; but no one is given or should expect the power and authority that an Apostle held.

Study Questions on Chapter 14

- 1. Who knew what Jesus meant far more than any man living today?**
- 2. The Apostles asked when the Kingdom would be established, because they already knew what about the Kingdom?**
- 3. What had Jesus already taught about the Kingdom before this time?**
- 4. How many days were there between the resurrection and Pentecost?**
- 5. What does it mean that we are in the "occupy till I come" stage?**
- 6. Who was Lord over those servants while they were occupying?**
- 7. What was the reward for faithfully occupying? How does this apply to us?**
- 8. Who would carry out the command of Luke 19:27? Is that Christ-like?**
- 9. How do we know that Micah 4:3 and Isaiah 2:4 are not the same time frame as Matthew 24 and Luke 21?**
- 10. How will Jesus return?**
- 11. On a scale of 1-10, how foolish is it for men to think they know more than the Apostles because they read *THEIR BOOK*?**

Chapter 15

Pentecost Sunday

Sivan 8, AD 30 (Sunday, May 26th - Gregorian)

Le 23:15 *And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: 16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.*

Fifty days after the waving of the sheaf (first-fruits) on Sunday during Passover, the Feast of Weeks was celebrated on “the morrow after the seventh Sabbath”, which was also a Sunday. This feast marked the beginning of wheat harvest just as First-fruits marked the beginning of barley harvest. (Ex 34:22; Lev 23:15, 16; De 16:10; 2Chr 8:13)

As Passover marked the time of deliverance from Egypt, the Feast of Pentecost coincided with the giving of the Law on Sinai. At Sinai 3000 people were killed in order for the nation to remain in covenant with God; and at the Pentecost after Jesus’ resurrection 3000 people were baptized into the New Covenant, and the unbelieving nation was thereby cut off from God; their covenant having ended with the ratification of the new.

Just as God gave the Law at Sinai to Israel, which brought them into the Mosaic Covenant; so at Pentecost (AD 30) God poured out His Spirit to write His Law in receptive hearts and bring them into the New Covenant under the Priesthood of Messiah. This was supernaturally orchestrated by God, as these two meetings, the numbers, and the results were beyond human invention and spanned approximately 1500 years. The fact that Jesus could empower His followers after He was “dead and gone” to do the same type of miracles that He did while alive on earth could not be explained away by the enemies of truth; and proved Him to be the Son of God, the Messiah. Had Jesus not been able to rise from the dead and empower His disciples, what we know as Christianity would have never gotten off the ground in that environment. Jesus fulfilled the spring feasts; and will yet fulfill the fall feasts in the seventh month when He comes to reign. It would be wise to learn about the Feast of Trumpets, Day of

Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles; and see how they coincide with the Second Coming, Judgment Day, and the Joys of Christ dwelling with us.

Acts 2:1 *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.*

In fulfillment of a prophecy (Is 28:11) God gave a miraculous sign to the inhabitants of Jerusalem by allowing His disciples to speak in all the Gentile languages from the homelands of the Jews and proselytes visiting the Temple for the feast of Pentecost. There were about 120 disciples meeting this Sunday morning to break bread in remembrance of Christ's broken body and shed blood, as was their new custom. They were most likely meeting in a part of the Temple at the hour of Jewish prayer when the Holy Spirit was poured upon them (9 AM - 3rd hour). This accounts for the multitudes that came running together.

The Disciples were immediately able to speak a language they had not learned, and thus began praising God and witnessing to the people; who most likely understood their native country's tongue as well as that spoken by the Jews in Jerusalem. The miracle was not some gibberish which people all understood in their own way, as then they wouldn't even know other languages were being spoken; but each language mentioned in the passage was spoken by one or more of the disciples. These were actual languages understood by the audience they were speaking to. The

disciples knew nothing of some *unintelligible gibberish* erroneously called, “the gift of tongues” in our day. They spoke actual languages and knew what they were saying.

After Peter and the other disciples finished their preaching, 3000 people were baptized ***in the name of*** (by the authority of) Jesus the Christ -- right there in Jerusalem where seven weeks earlier Jesus was condemned to death and crucified for claiming to be the Christ. What an amazing change came over these disciples who previously forsook Jesus and fled for fear of death. 52 days earlier the same disciples were hiding from the Romans and Jews, full of confusion and fear, after they had watched their Master crucified and buried. Now they were fearlessly proclaiming Jesus as Messiah and calling people to repent and be baptized in His name right there in the city!

Confirmed the Covenant for One Week

Ac 5:12 *And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. 13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. 14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) 15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.*

Daniel’s prophecy mentions that the Messiah would confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week He would cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease by His own sacrifice being the fulfillment of all the types and shadows. Jesus ministered 3.5 years before He ratified the New Covenant with His own blood; but what about the other half of the week? My opinion is, that for 3.5 years after Pentecost (AD 30) the Apostles were protected and empowered by God to preach in Jerusalem and Judea before they were scattered by persecution. The first martyr after Christ was Stephen. That event seems to mark the time when the church in Jerusalem was sufficiently grounded in the Faith; and so God allowed many disciples to be scattered to other areas.

The Lord Added to the Church

Ac 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this [crooked] generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 42 And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the Apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

People commonly misunderstand the book of Acts because they forget we are speaking of Law-abiding Jews in a specific historic context. There were many disciples preaching and witnessing in the different dialects, but Peter, being the leader, gave the primary instructions (in Hebrew/Aramaic or Greek) as representative of the church. After his clear call to repentance and faith in Jesus as the Messiah, Peter and the other disciples baptized 3000 converts and added them to the membership of the first Christian congregation in Jerusalem. These were all Jews, were members of their local synagogues, and would continue to practice the Law of Moses. The call to *REPENT* was the primary message of Jesus and all the apostles; and this call was in direct reference to a return to God's Law. Repentance was getting back in line with God's Word and forsaking any and all alternative lifestyles. The believers would now be more zealous of the Law due to this enhanced understanding about the suffering Lamb of God! They would now meet with other Messianic Jewish believers on the Lord's Day, break bread (Lord's Supper), and evangelize in the name of Yeshua/Jesus.

These practicing Jews, who now became Christian Jews, began meeting with the believers "*stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in*

breaking of bread, and in prayers." The disciples met daily in the Temple and taught the new converts all about Jesus Messiah. They prayed at the Jewish hours of prayer, and remembered the Lord by observing the Lord's Supper.

Many of the new converts were visiting Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost from all over the world. As was usual, the visitors were provided for by the locals, and then, according to custom, would leave them the skins from the lambs and vessels used for the feast as compensation. Some visitors, who became Christians, may have been staying with locals who did not convert; so now they needed another place to stay to continue learning. Eventually the visitors would all go back home; but for now they needed to be provided for by the local believers so they could be fully informed before returning to their homes. To supply this need, the local Christians even sold properties which they owned and brought the money to the Apostles, who then took care of the needs.

This is the scenario where Barnabas sold some land and turned the money over to the church leaders to meet the needs. Ananias and Sapphira did the same, but lied to Peter to make the offering more spectacular. Peter exercised his apostolic discipline; and God struck both man and wife dead. This was a powerful lesson for the church. Neither the man nor the wife *in submission to her erring husband* was safe while lying to the church, even concerning their charitable offerings.

This sharing was not some form of Christian Communism; but each still owned his own house or farm; and simply shared to help the cause. This can be proven by Peter's own words to Ananias: "*Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.*" God's Word is opposed to Communism, and rather teaches private ownership of property and personal stewardship. This motivates a good work ethic, personal responsibility for one's own household, and provides an inheritance for the children of the wise and diligent. Communal living is contrary to God's Law for society and the family unit

Baptism **with** water, as a symbolic parallel of Baptism **with** the Holy Spirit, is established in the Scripture as a ceremony of repentance and initiation

into God's congregation. First century baptisms were likely administered by pouring water over the applicant similar to anointing with oil; as both rituals symbolized the Holy Spirit coming upon a person for cleansing and service. The Jews understood baptism as a symbolic rite of purification, and Jesus didn't change that (See App C, pg 190). The apostolic churches practiced membership through repentance and baptism; and when someone was unfaithful to their baptismal commitment they were excommunicated i.e. put out of the communion until they repented.

Membership requirements, as a means of keeping the communion clean, were so important that, when one believer traveled to other churches where they were not readily known, they took "letters of commendation" (2Co 3:1) from one bishop to the other to verify they were in communion and good standing in the congregation from which they came. Otherwise a person could be excommunicated from one church and just move to another location to be in communion without getting right with the previous situation. Obviously this would take the teeth out of church discipline. Just *saying* you were clean was not enough; you needed a recognized minister from a recognized congregation to testify to it. Jesus set up the program for the cause of producing a pure BRIDE; and that is more important to Him than making you happy.

Ministers chose and ordained other ministers, just as Jesus did with the apostles and Paul later did with Timothy. If there was an administrative position in a congregation that needed filled, and there was more than one qualified person to fill that role, then the lot was used to give the choice into God's hands. Matthias was chosen this way. When the seven deacons were chosen (Acts 6) there was no need for the lot, but seven qualified men were endorsed by the congregation and ordained by the elders. There is an important difference between being gifted of God to preach and filling an administrative role in a congregation. God calls and gifts preachers to preach; but before gifted men can fill a role of bishop or deacon they must prove themselves and meet the qualifications. The church should never suppress young men desiring to preach God's Word unless the church can see they are acting contrary to the Spirit and Word of God.

The church was now in the **“Occupy till I come”** stage and was out in the **“highways and hedges”** compelling men to come to the future wedding and prepare for the coming King who would reign on the throne of David, just as the prophets foretold. Jesus never implied that the church was the Kingdom; but clearly taught that He would leave for a coronation and return to reign!

Mt 25:14 *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.*

Mr 13:34 *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.*

Lk 19:11 *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. 12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a **far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return (Second Coming)**. 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, **Occupy till I come**. 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. 15 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...have thou authority over ten cities... **(Saints rewarded with authority positions in Christ's Kingdom)***

Mt 22:1 *And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, 2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come **(Israel)**. 4 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. 5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: 6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. 7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. **(AD 70)** 8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden **(Israel)** were not worthy. 9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. **(Gentiles Grafted In)** 10 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. 11 And when the king came in to see the guests **(Second Coming)**, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: 12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 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. **(Judgment – same as Lk 19:26, 27)***

The *Great Commission* that Christ gave to His apostles was to make disciples in all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and **teach them to observe ALL things whatsoever Jesus commanded them.** Since Jesus' commands to His disciples were purely within the realms of Moses' Law and the Prophets, they had no idea at this point of preaching to Gentile people; but only to Jews throughout the world. Making disciples at this point did not include ANYTHING contrary to Moses' Law and Scriptural Judaism as purified by Jesus.

Study Questions on Chapter 15

- 1. What is significant about the number 3000 and Pentecost?**
- 2. On what DAY was the feast of Pentecost?**
- 3. In what month are the fall feasts? How could this be significant?**
- 4. How do we know church membership was necessary before taking communion?**
- 5. How do we know that communal living or communism was not practiced by the early Christians in Jerusalem?**
- 6. Why were the Jews zealous of the Law? What about the ceremonial laws?**
- 7. How many languages were spoken on Pentecost? How many disciples could have been speaking?** The 12 apostles and the 70 chosen disciples would have been part of the 120 which number also included women, who would not be preaching, and Jesus' "brethren". So at least 82 chosen preachers were in the number.

Chapter 16

The First Twelve Years

AD 30 – 42 – Acts 1-9

The first century apostolic church prior to Cornelius was a completely Jewish congregation meeting in the Temple, zealously obeying Moses' Law, observing the Feasts, and attending the synagogue worship every Saturday unless excluded by persecution. Jesus' disciples also met every Sunday to observe the Lord's Supper and commemorate the Resurrection of the Messiah; but otherwise they were JEWS. Jesus had showed them a purified Judaism, and they were living it.

They were fully in the NEW COVENANT as God's New Covenant was made with **Israel** to write His Law in their hearts and minds. They were also full of the Holy Spirit, and being led by the Spirit unlike those today who claim that following the Spirit releases them from the written Word and Law of God. They understood that God is Love, His Law is Love, and His commandments are not grievous. These people knew the gospel better than **anyone** today!

These believers were saved by GRACE through FAITH, not by works; yet they fully obeyed Moses' Law – moral and ceremonial. They understood that "saved by works" had to do with "what made atonement", i.e. the "blood of bulls and goats" or "the blood of Jesus"; and knew their obedience to God did not atone for anything. They were fully looking to the Lamb of God for atonement; but they also knew that obedience to God made them ELIGIBLE for that atonement; and so was absolutely necessary.

The principle of justification by grace through faith had been clearly taught in the proper context by God's Law; for any Jew who was not obeying the Law (showing faith in God) was cut off and did not benefit from the Day of Atonement (Grace). This is still the plan concerning Christ's atonement. You are only eligible for Christ's priesthood intercession and cleansing blood when walking in the light (Heb 7:25, 10:26).

1Jn 1:5 *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have*

fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Yes, they were saved by grace through faith; but understood this required “fulfilling the righteousness of God’s Law” (Ro 8:4; Tit 2:11-12; Isa 1:16-20). They understood how faith “establishes the Law” and doesn’t void God’s Law (Ro 3:31; Gen 26:5). They learned about GRACE and FAITH from the Scriptures they had (Old Testament); and those Scriptures were from a God who NEVER changes (Mal 3:6), inspired by “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*” (Heb 13:8) Much error and heresy today could be exposed if people would define their terms according to ALL God’s Word: *Genesis to Revelation*.

The core beliefs and ethics of these Jewish believers would be the foundational beliefs in all the churches later established throughout the Roman Empire. Their beliefs about women’s modesty, head veil, submission, etc. would be taught and practiced by Christians throughout the first century. If one today has questions about particulars that are not spelled out in the New Testament Scriptures, they can get their answer by searching out what the Scriptural Jewish belief and practice was in the first century.

The first century church order and government would be similar to the synagogue, which was the God-ordained order the Jews had known for about 500 years. Jesus fully used and endorsed the arrangement.

Adam Clarke: *Not less than ten persons of respectability composed a synagogue; as the rabbins supposed that this number of persons, of independent property, and well skilled in the law, were necessary to conduct the affairs of the place, and keep up the Divine worship (See Lightfoot). Therefore, where this number could not be found, no synagogue was built; but there might be many synagogues in one city or town, provided it were populous...This need not be wondered at, when it is considered that every Jew was obliged to worship God in public, either in a synagogue or in the temple. The chief things belonging to a synagogue were: 1st. The ark or chest, made after the mode of the ark of the covenant, containing the Pentateuch. 2dly. The pulpit and desk, in the middle of the*

synagogue, on which he stood who read or expounded the law. 3dly. The seats or pews for the men below, and the galleries for the women above...The synagogue was governed by a council or assembly, over whom was a president, called in the Gospels, the ruler of the synagogue. These are sometimes called chiefs of the Jews, the rulers, elders, the governors, the overseer....Synagogue, among the Jews, had often the same meaning as congregation among us, or place of judicature, see Jas 2:2.

When there was not a Synagogue, the local Jews would go to a “place of prayer” called a *proseucha* as we find in Philippi (Acts 16:13). Jews from the local synagogue or *proseucha* were the first believers and core members of every congregation started throughout the world at that time as we learn from the book of Acts. All of these NT churches were patterned after the churches of Judea and obeyed the decrees sent out by the Apostles from the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15-16).

1Th 2:14 *For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus:*

The apostolic churches, established by Apostles after the pattern of the church in Jerusalem, would have a bishop and then a body of elders to help the bishop. The bishopric was an office of *overseer*, like the *president* in the synagogue; and the elder-body was the “presbytery” filled with men called deacons/ministers. *Bishop* and *Deacon* were the two distinct office *titles*; but these men were generically called *leaders* or *elders* in the church. The church at Jerusalem was the model for all the other churches that would eventually be established, and the order of that church is clear with James as the bishop and a body of elders to help.

Ac 21:18 *And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. (see also Acts 12:17;15:13; Ga 2:12)*

The “angels” (messengers) of the churches in the book of Revelation are the bishops of those churches, and this is proved by the fact that they were held responsible for what was allowed in the church (Rev 2, 3). The bishop was probably expected to be supported by the church, and eventually the other ministers would be as well.

Ac 6:3 *Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*

1Co 9:6 *Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? 7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*

During this first twelve year period of the New Covenant Church of Jesus Christ, the evangelism was strictly reaching circumcised Jews and Samaritans, just as Jesus' ministry had been. The Ethiopian Eunuch was a Jewish proselyte who had come up to Jerusalem to worship. He probably had heard about Jesus in the previous three years; but needed to understand what had happened. The Apostles, who were obeying Moses' Law, would not have even been allowed to go into the house of a Gentile. Listen to Peter's explanation when entering the house of Cornelius. This was about TWELVE years after Pentecost and after a direct vision from God.

Ac 10:28 *And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?*

During the first twelve years we read of the ordering of the church; taking care of the widows; Philip's ministry; the imprisonment of the Apostles; the

powerful answer to the Sanhedrin; the beating; the rejoicing; the prayer; the miracles; the bold testimony to the authorities; the martyrdom of Stephen; and then an amazing event happened...the prime persecutor is miraculously converted.

Saul of Tarsus Meets Jesus of Nazareth

(Likely AD 33-34; 17 years before the Council of Jerusalem - Ga 2:1)

Did Paul kick against the pricks concerning Stephen for 2.5 to 3 yrs...or...was he converted in 33 or 34 and the 14 yrs mentioned in Ga 2:1 refers to 14 yrs after his trip to meet Peter 3 yrs after His conversion? This seems more in line with what one would expect from Paul's testimony.

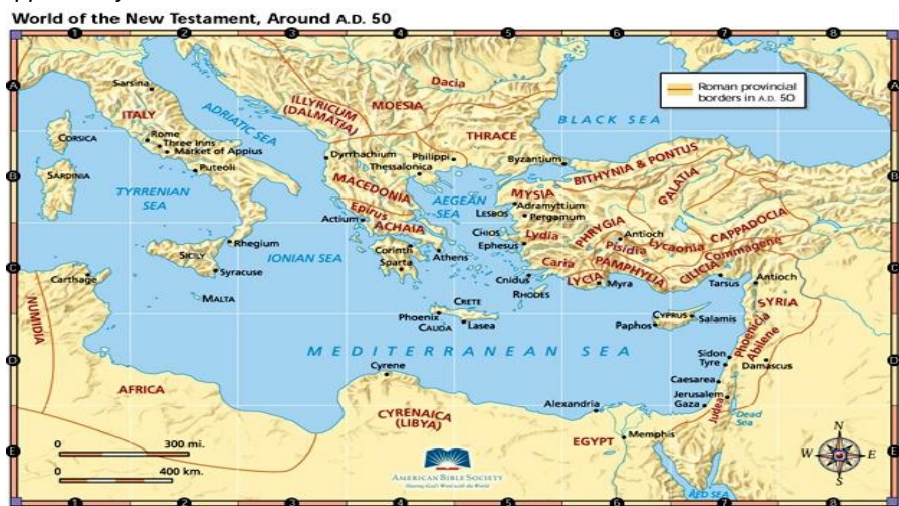
Saul of Tarsus, who was taught at the feet of Gamaliel as a student of the great Rabbi (the president of the Sanhedrin and grandson of Hillel) had probably only heard the bad press about Jesus, and may have been in Tarsus during Jesus' 3 ½ year ministry. Paul, the Apostle, never gives any indication that he had ever met or seen Jesus during His ministry on earth. By his own testimony, he had labored to have always a conscience void of offence before God and man even before his conversion (Acts 23:1). IF Jesus was not the Messiah, but an imposter, like Saul had been told, then his persecution was in zealous obedience to God's Law. Jesus, knowing the Jew's tendency for misplaced zeal, had predicted this very scenario (De 13).

Joh 16:2 *They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.*

Paul later gives testimony to the terrible persecution which he spearheaded for the Sanhedrin. They may have called him down from Tarsus to help cleanse Judaism of this pestilent sect of the Nazarene in AD 33-34 - 3½ years after Christ's resurrection and His "confirming the covenant with many" for the second half of Daniel's 70th week).

Ac 26:9 *I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. 11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.*

Ac 22:3 *I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. 4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. 5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. 6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. 7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. 9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.*



It seems from Paul's testimony in Acts 22:20 that Stephen's sermon greatly troubled him and may have been a large addition to the "pricks" tormenting him. Stephen had rehearsed before the Sanhedrin, with Paul present, the Jew's rebellious history; and proved that Jesus was their Messiah whom they had murdered. Just as they had initially rejected Moses and Joseph, the very ones God had ordained to save them; so now they had rejected the Lamb of God.

Ac 7:51 *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. 54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

Saul (Paul) was probably about 30 years of age with possibly already a seat in the great Sanhedrin. According to Deuteronomy 13, a zealous child of God was to root out and expose all error to the proper authorities to be punished; and Saul was furiously doing just that. Is it possible that, had not Stephen released these men from this great sin by his dying prayer, Saul would never have become Paul? One of the greatest advances for the early church was the conversion of Saul the persecutor into Paul the Apostle. Stephen's sermon and prayer was not in vain!

1Ti 1:13 *Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

When the converted Saul (called Paul) calls himself the "chief of sinners" it is not because he knowingly was in rebellion to God; but was ignorantly the enemy of God's own Son and people. When Paul understood his error, which must have been devastating, he worked the other direction for the cause of God's Son with more fervor than others (I Co 15:10). As God is no respecter of persons, Paul's salvation and ministry was fraught with great suffering. If you have not been zealous for God, in truth or ignorance, you are actually in worse shape than Saul of Tarsus in his zealous ignorance.

Ac 9:13 *Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority*

from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Ac 26:19 *Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. 21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.*

2Co 11:24 *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?*

Study Questions On Chapter 16

- 1. If the first Christians were law-abiding Jews, then how does that affect ideas today about “legalism” and “living under law” and “salvation by grace”?**
- 2. Were these first Christians in the New Covenant?**
- 3. What Bible did these first Christians read? Was that enough to find the truth?**
- 4. How does God show in Paul’s miraculous conversion that He is no respecter of persons? Does this principle apply to us?**
- 5. Is it OK for Christians to have church buildings? Did the first Christians?**
- 6. What church leadership arrangement did the first Christians have?**
- 7. Did Jesus approve of the synagogue order and arrangement?**
- 8. Why was Saul of Tarsus the prime persecutor?**
- 9. Why did Saul receive mercy?**

Chapter 17

The Conversion of Cornelius

AD 42 - Acts 10-11

The next grand event after the conversion of *Saul of Tarsus* to *Paul the Apostle* was the shift in God's evangelistic program to allow uncircumcised Gentile believers to be baptized into the church and take communion without being circumcised and coming under Judaism. Being that at this time the Jewish believers were under persecution and being kicked out of the synagogues of Judea; it would not even be wise to bring Gentile believers into Judaism under the Sanhedrin. When Judaism excommunicated Jesus, they actually excommunicated themselves. The same thing happened when local Synagogues excommunicated the followers of Jesus. God had waited for this perfect time; and now would fulfill His prophetic word concerning the Messiah drawing to himself a remnant from among the Gentiles by "grafting" not "proselytism".

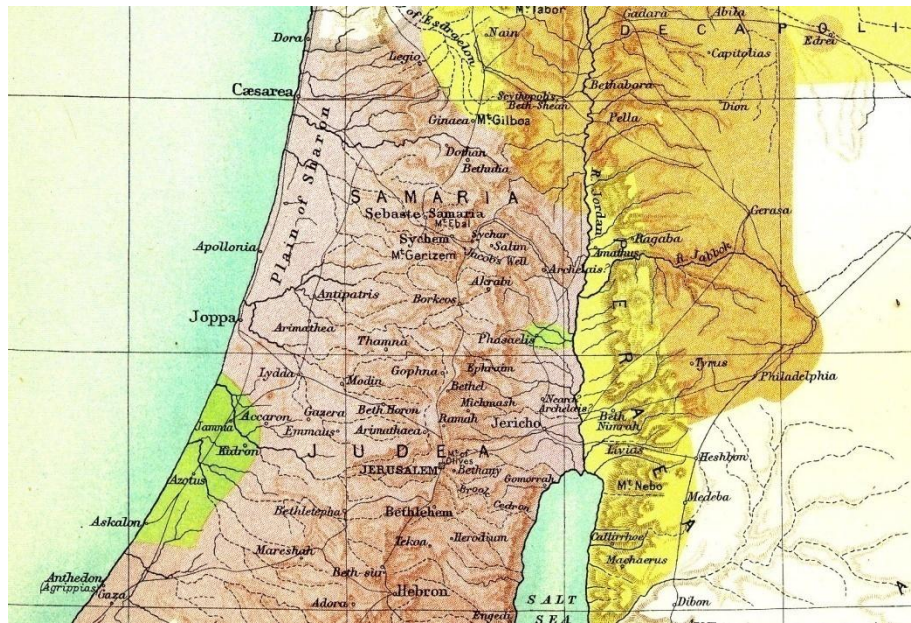
Ac 15:13 *And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:*

When Bishop James of Jerusalem spoke the words above, it was about AD 50; but what he states about Simeon/Peter happened around AD 42. After the miraculous raising of Dorcas, Peter had stayed in Joppa by the sea with a tanner to minister to the surrounding area. God was about to do something that no Jewish believer or Apostle expected. God was going to open the gates of salvation to the uncircumcised without them coming under the ceremonial laws of Judaism (the Earthly Priesthood); but by repentance toward God's moral law and believing in Jesus, they could

come under Christ's Heavenly Priesthood. Like Abraham before he was circumcised (Rom 4:9-11), they would walk in righteousness before God and be justified by Faith. They would be Jews inwardly, but not outwardly as discussed in Ro 2:25.

God chose a man for this colossal event who was not only a Gentile, but a Roman Centurion, like the one Jesus blessed for his excelling faith. Of all the Gentiles in the world, Cornelius was God's choice as the pattern of what kind of Gentile He would accept and save. It would be very interesting to know if these two centurions knew each other, or were actually the same individual about 14 years later.

When you read Acts 10 you should notice that Cornelius was a devout believer in the God of the Jews already; was praying at the Jewish hour of prayer; and giving much alms. Why he had not become a Jewish proselyte at this time, we don't know; and it is possible that for some reason he *could not*. No doubt he heard about Jesus' ministry and crucifixion; that would be reason enough to not trust your life to the Sanhedrin.



Ac 10:1 *There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, 2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. 3 He saw in*

a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. 4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. 5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: 6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. 7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; 8 And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

Cornelius sent a soldier with his servants because it was not safe to travel without some form of self-defense. He had influenced those around him to be devout like he was; and thus it says that the soldier he sent with the messengers was also *devout*. The danger of traveling at this time is the very reason Jesus commanded the disciples the night of His arrest to sell their shirt and buy a sword, and one reason why He sent them 2 by 2. He knew they would be traveling much and needed to protect themselves from murderous thieves. This was fully in line with God's Moral Law, which was in full force then, *and always will be*. Protecting the innocent blood, which the law commands, also requires self-defense; for if we are killed we cannot protect the weak and fulfill our duty.

Pr 24:10 *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small. 11 If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; 12 If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?*

Mt 24:43 *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.***

Paul tells us that in his long travels, he dealt with “perils of robbers”. Did he use self-defense? There is no reason to suppose otherwise. When Paul was in custody, he demanded that the authorities defend him, even with the military; and sued for protection from Caesar. Pacifism is NOT in the Bible anywhere, nor is it according to God's Law or His Son.

This issue MUST be looked at through the eyes of a Law-abiding Jew who followed the ONLY Scriptures available at this time, which is what we call

the Old Testament. Jesus authored the Old Testament as the Logos/Word of God that became flesh (John 1:1-14) and didn't change it. God's concept of separation of church and state was *Samuel anointing Saul and David, and not being king himself*; but he is clearly no pacifist. Uzziah was king, but could not burn incense in the temple, and was withstood by 80 priests said to be valiant men. In Israel ALL the government officials HAD to be *faithful believers*, according to God's Law (Deut 1:16-17; 17:8-13; 2Ch 19:8-11); and most of the judges were Levites, especially the supreme court. SO WHY would anyone think that the author of all this, *JESUS*, would turn it all on its head and teach pacifism? He did not, nor did any Apostle!

The Biblical Jewish/Christian goal in evangelizing the heathen would be to eventually convert public officials to the faith and lead all society to godly law and order (1Ti 2:1-4). This was obviously the message to Zacchaeus, Felix, Agrippa, Cornelius, Sergius Paulus, the jailor in Philippi, etc. Biblical Judaism ALWAYS desired rulers to be converted and follow the faith. In Israel God demanded it; and Jesus believed fully in His own Law and order.

Though God called Cornelius "righteous and devout" in life and conduct at this time as a Roman Centurion, he still needed the blood of Jesus to save his soul. For this he must come into the covenant of reconciliation that Christ provided. The Angel could have instructed Cornelius, but instead God brings him into the care and oversight of the church program which Christ had set up for this purpose. As God sends Cornelius to Peter, God also must prepare Peter for this new arrangement. God's Spirit is still working today to bring seeking souls into the care of a Biblical church; which is God's program for salvation and spiritual rehabilitation.

Jesus had chosen Peter as the head Apostle (Mt 16:19) and God used Peter to open the doors of salvation to Jerusalem and Judea at Pentecost (Acts 2:14); to Samaria about 6 years later (Acts 8:14-20); and now to the "uttermost parts of the world" – the Gentile nations, about 12 years after Pentecost.

Ac 10:9 *On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: 10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, 11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as*

it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. 14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. 15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven. 17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, 18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. 19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. 20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. 21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? 22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. 23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

Notice that Peter had never eaten anything common or unclean. He had lived a devout Jewish life, and was not some coarse fisherman as people try to imply. Jesus didn't choose a bunch of uncouth ignorant men as His disciples; but as a master of wisdom, Jesus chose the best for the job. Just because the "uppity" world looks at God's servants as "unlearned" does not mean they are in God's estimation. God sees this world's "wisdom" as foolishness (1Co 1:20).

These men from Cornelius had travelled the 30 miles from Caesarea, and now Peter lodges them for the night before the journey back. This vision had nothing to do with Peter starting to eat unclean food; but was showing Peter to accept the Gentiles whom God cleansed. That cleansing was going to be demonstrated with the pouring out of God's Spirit upon Cornelius and his friends. Christ led Peter to take 6 Jewish brethren with him, and this proved invaluable as there would be 7 Jewish witnesses to this demonstration of God's will to accept believing Gentiles.

Ac 10:24 *And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends. 25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. 26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. 27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. 28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? 30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. 33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. 34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. 36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all) 37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. 44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.*

Peter now understood that God was willing to bring into the New Covenant churches men from every nationality without them first becoming Jews; but simply through repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ: *“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that **God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.**”* This was Peter’s opinion of this Roman centurion and anyone whom God could receive.

As Peter begins to expound on Jesus (whom they were familiar with – Vs 37), on the resurrection from the dead, and on the salvation that comes through this Christ of God; suddenly God pours out His Spirit upon these believing hearts. Peter and the 6 other Jewish Christian brethren are shocked when they hear these Gentiles magnifying God likely in Hebrew. What other language would these Jews understand to be supernaturally given to a Gentile and yet be understood by themselves? Just as on Pentecost when Jews from Galilee could suddenly speak in many Gentile languages, so now this must have been a gift of praising God in the Hebrew or Aramaic tongue.

Peter was supposed to understand that **since God gave the Holy Spirit to these believers without them being circumcised and coming under Judaism, they did not need to.** He “gets it” and then calls for water to be brought for baptizing them. This baptism meant they were accepted into the local assembly of believers and eligible for communion. What an incredible shift in the evangelism of the early church. Listen to Peter explain this to the Jewish Christian elders in the Church at Jerusalem. Notice the fact of Cornelius being a Roman Centurion is **never** a concern; but only that he is uncircumcised. John the Baptist baptized Jewish soldiers and told them to be content with their wages. Being a soldier or governor is never said to conflict with worshipping God, being in His covenant, or following Jesus. It is perfectly consistent with God’s Word in the Old Testament and the New.

Ac 11:1 *And the Apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. 2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, 3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. 4 But Peter rehearsed the matter*

from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, 5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me: 6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. 8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. 9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. 11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me. 12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house: 13 And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; 14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. 15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. 16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. 17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? 18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Though Jewish believers would continue to practice Scriptural Judaism, now they could preach Jesus Messiah to the Gentiles, baptize the believers, and then take communion with them on the Lord's Day when all believers met in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection. This would greatly enhance the need for teaching and instruction on the Lord's Day, rather than just worshipping and remembering. God granting repentance was not "God giving them a repentant heart"; but God allowing a Gentile to come into the covenant through repentance without first becoming a Jew.

This all happened around 12 years after Jesus' Resurrection. The dynamics of this ongoing relationship in the churches with Jews practicing Judaism, Gentiles only following the moral requirements of God's Law, and **both** following New Covenant Baptism, Communion, and worship; is much of the subject matter in Paul's Epistles. Romans 14 must be interpreted in this light or it will be misused to justify much worldly and pagan influence.

When this dynamic is understood in the light of the historic situation, Romans, Galatians, Colossians, and Ephesians will no longer be abused as they often are. Questions concerning modesty, head covering, musical instruments, marriage, family life, child training, church order, church authority, and so much more are easily answered when you understand that the foundational thinking and teaching of all the churches was *Jewish*. The *Tanakh* (OT Scriptures) was God's Word, inspired by Yeshua Ha'Mashiach (Jesus Messiah); and the apostles read the Scriptures with Jewish eyes as God intended. Gentile Christians must *LEARN* to read them with Jewish eyes also, or they abuse them.

Study Questions on Chapter 17

- 1. Who was eligible for baptism prior to Cornelius' conversion? Why?**
- 2. What is the difference between a Jew and a Gentile?**
- 3. If prior to Cornelius a Gentile had to become a Jew before baptism, then how was salvation by grace and not of works?**
- 4. In what ways would the life of a Christian Jew look different than a Christian Gentile at this time?**
- 5. What chapters in Paul's Epistles deal specifically with the challenges of Jews and Gentiles worshipping together in the same congregation?**
- 6. If up to this point Jewish believers were obligated to live according to all Moses' Law, moral and ceremonial, then how can people say that Jesus did away with the Law or changed it?**
- 7. Was Cornelius living a righteous life before his conversion? Why then did he need conversion?**
- 8. Did God and Peter declare that Cornelius as a Roman Centurion was a devout man working righteousness? What implications does this have?**
- 9. Was Cornelius eligible for communion after baptism?**
- 10. Did Cornelius begin to meet on the Lord's Day with the disciples to eat the Lord's Supper?**

- 11. Was Peter to understand that since God poured out the Spirit upon Cornelius while uncircumcised, he did not need to be circumcised?**
- 12. Did not God pour out the Holy Spirit upon a Centurion? What does this mean?**

Chapter 18

The Church at Antioch in Syria

AD 42-47 – Acts 11-14

After the conversion of Cornelius with God thus grafting the Gentiles into the Christian Faith (Acts 10-11), a church is planted in Antioch of Syria, about 300 miles north of Jerusalem, which will prove to be a center for evangelism to the Roman Empire. This was one of the most celebrated cities of the east with a population of about half a million, and had a large Jewish community. When the news about the conversion of Cornelius and the acceptance of the Gentiles into the Faith reached Antioch, the believers immediately began reaching out to Gentiles. Barnabas sees the potential here and goes to Tarsus seeking the converted Saul of Tarsus, who soon begins to use the name Paul.



Paul had gone home to Tarsus to evangelize his native country (about 350 miles north of Jerusalem across the Mediterranean); but now comes back to Antioch with Barnabas (43 AD). 14 years later in AD 57, when writing to the Corinthians, Paul shares some sacred information which he had kept mostly to himself; and which probably occurred around this time in Tarsus or after coming to Antioch.

2Co 12:1 *It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I knew a man in Christ **above fourteen years ago**, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

Paul's vision possibly occurred around AD 43, and Peter's vision concerning Cornelius was approximately AD 42; so likely Paul's vision had to do with giving the Gospel to the Gentiles, which concurred with Peter's experience. Notice that they were the primary defenders of the engrafted Gentiles in Acts 15. Also compare what Paul says in Galatians.

Ga 1:11 *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ...2:2 And I went up **by revelation**, and **communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles...2:7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.***

For many days after arriving in Antioch, Barnabas and Paul labored in the church and taught the converted Jews and Gentiles. Upon hearing about the dearth in Judea, the church in Antioch sent relief to be distributed by the elders in Jerusalem; and sent the gift by Barnabas and Paul.

While Paul and Barnabas are at Jerusalem, James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John, is apprehended and killed with the sword (beheaded) by

Herod Agrippa. Because Herod saw it pleased the Jews, he also put Peter in prison intending to execute him after Passover week. However, it wasn't God's time for Peter to perish, and so the angel of the Lord broke him out. It is very possible that Paul and Barnabas were at the prayer meeting when Peter was delivered and came to the house of Mary, mother of John Mark. Barnabas and Paul were in Jerusalem at this time while the church was in earnest prayer, and John Mark's mother was Barnabas' sister. When Paul and Barnabas leave Jerusalem after Peter's release, they take John Mark with them. (Acts 12)

Herod Agrippa is shortly hereafter smitten of God and dies a painful death around AD 45 (Acts 12:23). Josephus gives a very similar account to Luke's:

St. Luke: "And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

Josephus: "The king did not rebuke, nor disagree with the flattery of the crowd . . . Shortly afterwards he experienced a violent attack with a severe pain in his stomach . . . The king was carried quickly into the palace and word of this account reached the ears of all his subjects, and that it would not be long before he died . . . And when he had suffered for five straight days from the pain in his stomach, he died at the age of fifty-four after ruling for seven years."

The General Epistle of James – AD 45

This would likely be the season when the General Epistle of James (son of Alpheus and cousin of Jesus) was written and sent out to believers. This is possibly the first "New Testament" writing. Interestingly, James refers to the Christian meeting as a "synagogue" (*Assembly* – Jas 2:2). Both the word "church" and the word "synagogue" refer to an assembly or meeting. Notice how James sends out this epistle to "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad". The Christian community was indeed the *true vine* of God (Ro 11) or *Israel of God* (Ga 6:16); and thus James recognized that, in writing to Christians, he was actually writing to the faithful sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ga 3:29). His words could also be a clue to an early date for the epistle:

Ac 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were **all scattered abroad** throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, **except the apostles**...⁴ Therefore they that were **scattered abroad** went everywhere preaching the word.

Ac 11:19 Now they which were **scattered abroad** upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

Jas 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are **scattered abroad**, greeting.

James is one of the apostles NOT scattered by the persecution; and he is not writing to Jews; but Christian Jews who are scattered abroad preaching Christ in the synagogues. This would date James' epistle quite early possibly before AD 42 and Peter's meeting with Cornelius.

If you stop and read through the book of James, you will find him speaking about being **"doers of the Word"**, **"looking into the perfect law of liberty"**, and saying, **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law."** Remember now, the Old Testament Scriptures are the ONLY Scriptures that existed at this time. James also states clearly in harmony with everything else he writes, that **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."**

With this in mind, we know that when James tells the people to "swear not", he is in complete agreement with the unchanging God, the unchanging Law of God, and being "doers" of this Law of God. James speaks about swearing in the exact same manner as Jesus did: **preaching against "false swearing" in common conversation with man-made, unscriptural oaths like Malachi predicted (Mal 3:5).** This epistle being to Jews who were notorious for their home-made oaths makes sense as well. James is preaching the same message as Jesus to the same people.

Paul and Barnabas on First Missionary Journey (AD 45-47)

Paul and Barnabas are now called of God and sent out by the Church of Antioch on their first missionary journey. They departed from Antioch and headed for the seaport at Seleucia about 15 miles to the west, and five miles still from the Mediterranean shore, on the river Orontes. From here they sailed southwest about 100 miles to the island of Cyprus and to the city of Salamis where was a Jewish community and a synagogue. This was the native country of Barnabas, who surely had relatives in the area who needed instruction concerning the Messiah.



Their best approach to evangelism was through the local synagogues, *to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile*, as God ordained (Ro 1:16). The Apostles knew that if a person's heart was open to the true God, they would already be in touch with the local synagogue to learn the Scriptures, even if they were not yet a Jewish proselyte.

From Salamis they ministered across the 100+ miles of Cyprus to the city of Paphos to preach in their synagogue as well. Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor, was one of those who were interested in the one true God, as was Cornelius. He called for Paul and Barnabas and wanted to hear what they were preaching.

Ac 13:6 *And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: 7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. 9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, 10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.*

When this Roman proconsul believed the Gospel, he was baptized and joined with the local believers; but he was still the governor. This was perfectly in accord with God's Law, Jesus' teaching, and Paul's beliefs; just as when God baptized Cornelius with the Holy Ghost while still a Roman Centurion. The "powers that BE" are ordained of God for our benefit (Ro 13); and our responsibility is to honor them, obey them when appropriate, and witness God's truth to them as did Joseph, Daniel, Paul, and all God's prophets. The foolish idea that Christians must cease their participation in government when converted stems from Marcionite heresy, which did not exist until the second century. The foundational beliefs of the Christians and Jews were the same at this time, except for the controversy over Jesus being the Messiah and the engrafting of the Gentiles into fellowship.

After this time in Paphos, they sailed to what is today called Antalya, but then called Attalia, in the region called Pamphylia, about 175 miles northwest over the Mediterranean Sea. The rest of this first missionary journey would be in the south central part of what is now called Turkey. Turkey in the time of Paul included Asia, Lycia, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia, Pontus, Pisidia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia. Notice that this is the region to which Peter addressed his epistle many years later.

1Pe 1:1 *Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,*

From this port on the south edge of Turkey, they travelled to Perga in the region of Pamphylia; and this is where John Mark departed and returned to Jerusalem. After John departed, they traveled north about 100 miles to Antioch of Pisidia, which was also considered in the region of Galatia. This city is called Antioch, but do not confuse it with the Antioch of Syria where Paul and Barnabas started their journey.

Paul and Barnabas attended Antioch's synagogue on the Sabbath. After the service the rulers of the Synagogue, seeing foreigners in the crowd, asked them to share if they had any beneficial news or information.

Ac 13:15 *And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. 16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. 17 The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it. 18 And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. 19 And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot. 20 And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. 21 And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. 22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. 23 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: 24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said,*

Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose. 26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. 27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. 28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. 29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. 30 But God raised him from the dead: 31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. 32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, 33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. 34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. 35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. 38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: 39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; 41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

That following week Paul and Barnabas did much teaching and sharing with those who were interested; and the next Sabbath “*came almost the whole city together to hear*” what they had to say. The unbelieving Jews, who were jealous for their “ism” became adversaries and “*expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.*”

Iconium was about 85 miles to the east of Antioch and was still a part of Galatia; but was in a region called Lycaonia. Here they had great success and many converts; but again the Jews attempted to do them evil and wanted to stone them. Then, as Jesus had taught them to do when

persecuted (Mt 10:23), they fled south about 30 miles to Lystra, and then another 30 miles to Derbe (still in Galatia)

While preaching in this region of Lycaonia Paul healed a lame man. This healing caused the idolatrous people of Lystra to call them gods (Mercurius and Jupiter). When the idolatrous priest tried to capitalize on this and lead the people in an idolatrous sacrifice, Paul and Barnabas ran in among them and rebuked their idolatry. Antagonistic Jews also showed up at this time from Antioch and Iconium. Paul's enemies raised a mob, stoned him, drug him out of the city, and left him for dead. As the believers stood around Paul's body weeping and praying, God raised him up and healed him enough to walk back into the city that day and walk 30 miles the next day to Derbe. A young man named Timothy was probably there watching this whole event. On the next missionary journey Paul ordains Timothy to travel and preach with him in this dangerous enterprise for Christ.

After preaching in Derbe for a while, they began a return trip through the areas where they had previously been persecuted. Unless you have ever suffered real bodily damage, you cannot understand the courage this required.

Ac 14:21 *And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra (30 mi), and to Iconium (30 mi), and Antioch (85 mi), 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to **continue in the faith**, and that **we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.** 23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. 24 And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. 25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia (100 miles south of Antioch): 26 And thence sailed to Antioch (In Syria 335 miles to the East), from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. 27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. 28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.*

These people were not looking toward a future "tribulation". They were living in tribulation because of their faith. This first missionary journey lasted about 2 years with approximately 1235 total miles being traveled by land and sea.

Study Questions on Chapter 18

- 1. Why does it seem Paul was personally instructed about the engrafting of the Gentiles, and didn't just receive this information from Peter?**
- 2. What was Paul's strategy in every city? Why?**
- 3. Why was it important that the Gospel go out to the Jew first? (Rom 1:16)**
- 4. Why was it vital to have a Jewish core of members at the start of each church in Gentile lands?**
- 5. Why were the Jewish people the prime instigators of persecution? Did Jesus predict this? Did Paul understand this? (Acts 22:3)**
- 6. Who was Paul's first convert on his first missionary journey? Why is this significant?**
- 7. When Sergius Paulus believed the Gospel, what would he have done? What was the Gospel and what did it require?**
- 8. Why would the leader of a Jewish synagogue ask visiting Jews if they had any word for the people?**
- 9. What was the primary message of Paul to the people in the synagogue?**
- 10. Was Paul telling the Jews in the synagogue to stop following Moses and traditional Judaism? (Acts 21)**
- 11. How did God avenge the death of James?**
- 12. What is the chance of you preaching again in the next synagogue, after being beaten or stoned by antagonistic Jews?**
- 13. If church life causes people pain, does that excuse them for avoiding church membership or church work?**

Chapter 19

The Council of Jerusalem

AD 50 – ACTS 15

After being back at the home-base in Antioch of Syria for some time, there arose an argument about Gentile converts needing to be circumcised and keep the ceremonial laws. This should have already been settled by the conversion of Cornelius; but evidently some didn't fully accept that truth.

Ac 15:1 *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and elders about this question.*

It was very hard for some Jews to accept the baptism and communion of Gentile believers without them having to be circumcised and come under Judaism. They had a hard time separating Ceremonial Law from Moral law (See App B, pg 184), and understanding how one could be a Jew on the inside (practicing the moral laws) without being a Jew on the outside (practicing ceremonial law) (Ro 2:24-29; 8:1-13). This was an acid test for the Jew's faith in Jesus as Messiah and His chosen Apostles. It was also good for them to be reminded of God's priority of moral law over ceremonial law; and also reminded that God is no respecter of persons. Abraham's faith and friendship with God was before circumcision and Moses' Law; but was based on a living, obeying faith which "fulfilled the righteousness of God's Laws" (Gen 26:5, Rom 4).

The church at Jerusalem was the most appropriate place to meet and make decisions, as it was the *first* church, with Apostles being there at this time. James, a relative of Jesus and an Apostle, was the bishop of Jerusalem. Bishop James presided over the meeting and gave the final proposal, which was adopted and confirmed. At this meeting, called the Council of Jerusalem, Peter shared what happened with Cornelius and Paul shared what miraculous ministry God had given him among the Gentiles in Galatia. After all the discussion was completed, Bishop James, seeing that there were some legitimate concerns on the side of the Jews, and yet not

compromising God's will for the Gentiles, proposed that the acceptance of Gentiles at Baptism should be accompanied by some "entrance requirements" to assure a clean break with common idolatrous practices that would bring reproach upon the Christian Church in the eyes of the Jews who were spread over the world and familiar with Moses' Law. Cornelius, a devout seeker of Israel's God, did not need such requirements; but later Gentile converts proved to be problematic in their pagan ignorance. Devout Gentiles had been allowed to attend the Synagogues and listen to the reading of Moses' Law, so they were already acquainted with God's directives on these matters.

Ac 15:13 *And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.*

Everyone saw at once the appropriateness of Bishop James' conclusion and proposal; so being led by the Holy Spirit they all adopted it and sent out a decree for all churches to follow it. They also sent Judas and Silas, elders from Jerusalem, to witness by mouth to the church at Antioch what had occurred.

Ac 15:23 *And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The Apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: 24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: 25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who*

shall also tell you the same things by mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

Just as circumcision and coming under all the dietary and ceremonial laws were “entrance requirements” into Judaism, so these “necessary things” replaced Judaism’s entrance requirements for the Gentiles coming into the Christian churches. Holiness of heart and life in obedience to God’s Law of Love was still necessary for all men who would be disciples of Jesus. Paul’s second missionary journey includes the delivering of these “decrees for to keep” (Ac 16:4) to all the Christian congregations.

THINK: If Jesus would not accept the religion of the Samaritans (Joh 4:22), who were circumcised and revered Moses’ Law, because they mixed it with paganism; then the Apostles surely knew that Gentile converts could not mix pagan ways with their Christianity. When teaching Gentiles **to observe ALL things** that Jesus commanded, they had to teach the heathen a Scriptural lifestyle: proper dress; proper worship; proper singing; proper marriage; proper family life; proper work ethic; proper respect for authority; proper attitudes; proper speech, etc...**and this they did.** Almost every epistle was a missionary letter to a mission church. The Judeo-Christian ethics that became prominent in western society were a result of Christians overcoming the pagan culture on the mission fields and planting God’s ethics.

Do preachers need to do the same today? If we are to fulfill the Great Commission in our day to make disciples **and teach them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus commanded**; then certainly we must make rules, boundaries, and applications. We must train people to live a Christian life based on the definitions and discernment of the Jewish Apostles with a foundational world view from God’s Word in the Old Testament Scriptures. The only BIBLE that existed at this time was the Old Testament and maybe the Epistle of James. If that is all you had, with also the teachings of Judaism (*applications of the OT – Acts 21:21*), which the Apostles agreed with; what views would you have of Christian doctrine and lifestyle? The

Entrance Requirements set down at the Council of Jerusalem were just the beginning of the Gentile's discipleship training as can be seen in the commands and instructions given in the Epistles.

We see that church doctrine and practice was established by godly leaders, not "every man doing that which was right in his own eyes". Matters of right and wrong could not be left to individual conscience, but all members had to follow the same policy so the testimony of the church would be consistent and Biblical. Moral issues had to be decided upon corporately and thus affect every member. The matters left to individual conscience were amoral issues, as we learn from Romans 14.

Eph 4:11 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:*

Study Questions on Chapter 19

- 1. Why would certain men be teaching that Gentiles had to be circumcised and follow Judaism to be saved at this time?**
- 2. Who presided over the meeting in Jerusalem? Why?**
- 3. Why did the Apostles show James the respect that they did when they were in Jerusalem?**
- 4. What information did Peter share at this church council?**
- 5. What information did Paul share?**
- 6. After all the information was given out, who made the final proposal?**
- 7. What does this proposal tell us about the concerns of Jewish believers at this time?**
- 8. Why did all the church and Apostles agree with and appreciate James' proposal? What did this signify?**
- 9. What were the "necessary things" meant to replace concerning Gentile converts?**

10. Who was expected to obey the decision made by the council in Jerusalem? Is their decision binding upon believers today?
11. What did Paul expect Timothy to do in the churches when he gave the instructions in I Tim 2:9? Who had to define the terms? Who had to make applications?
12. How is “teaching them to observe all things Jesus commanded” different than telling them to “follow Jesus”?
13. How are “entrance requirements” and “perfecting of the saints” different?





Chapter 20

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

AD 50-54 – Acts 16-18

Some days after the Jerusalem Council, Paul suggests to Barnabas that they visit the churches which they started 3 to 4 years previous, and *see how they do*. They would also be delivering the decree given at the council in Jerusalem. Barnabas (John Mark's uncle) determines to take Mark again; but Paul decides that would not be good, since Mark had not continued with them before. Because of this disagreement, two missionary journeys emerge. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to his native land of Cyprus, where the first journey had begun. Paul, on the other hand, took Silas and traveled north through Syria to Cilicia. Here Paul could check on the missionary work in Tarsus, which he had been doing when Barnabas found him about 7 years previous. Paul and Barnabas were still brothers in communion, filled with the Holy Spirit, and preaching the same Gospel.

Paul's second missionary journey not only revisited the churches of Galatia: Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch; but he continued on for three years and travelled approximately 2700 miles. After traveling through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches, they came to Derbe and Lystra. This would have been a journey of about 270 miles. In this area Paul had found a faithful young man, named Timothy, whose mother and grandmother were Jewesses, but his father was a Greek. Paul circumcised him because he was Jewish by his mother and therefore, if circumcised, he could go with Paul into the synagogues and even the Temple at Jerusalem.

From this area they traveled through Galatia and all the way across what we know as Turkey west to Troas at the Aegean Sea. This could have been a 300-400 mile journey depending on what course they took.

God knew that Asia and Bithynia were not ready yet, but led them across the Aegean Sea to Macedonia where the chief city was Philippi (150 miles from Troas). Paul's manner was to find people with a heart for God, not just preach at men who couldn't care less. Here is the account in Acts 16:

Ac 16:13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. 14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. 16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. 19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, 20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. 22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. 23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: 24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. 25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. 35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. 36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. 37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us*

openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. 38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. 39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. 40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

This possessed woman was telling the truth, but also laying the groundwork for associating Paul's message with her own bad testimony and evil work. Paul exercises his apostolic power and smashes Satan's efforts, but also suffers severe backlash. Their clothes were ripped off, baring their back and legs, and they were flogged to the satisfaction of the mob. God's Law required the Jews to stop at 39 stripes; but these were Gentiles who didn't care.

Adam Clarke *"The Jews never gave more than thirty-nine stripes to any criminal; but the Romans had no law relative to this: they gave as many as they chose; and the Apostles had, undoubtedly, the fullest measure. And perhaps St. Paul refers to this, where he says, 2Co 11:23: en plhgaiv uperballontwv, in stripes beyond measure or moderation."*

If the prisoners had fled when the cells were opened, the keeper would have been put to death, which is why he considered suicide. Through the pain and shameful treatment Paul and Silas experienced as faithful Apostles, God orchestrated the salvation of this jailor. What if Paul and Silas had not been humble and faithful? What an example and victory!

Notice the jailor at Philippi was baptized the same hour of the night within the jail and was still the jailor the next day. Jewish Christians had no false ideas of pacifism at this time. Paul was incensed that these rulers were breaking the law and abusing his rights as a Roman citizen. Even though still in danger himself, Paul put them in fear knowing he could report this to Roman authorities. Interestingly, Paul and Jesus both reproved the unlawful proceedings of the Jewish court in Jerusalem. Upholding Law and Order is part of a Christian's responsibility as the *"salt of the earth"*.

From Philippi they now traveled south about 105 miles to the prosperous city of Thessalonica, now called Thessaloniki. As usual Paul went into the

synagogue on the Sabbath. Listen closely to the primary point that needed to be made to sincere Jews awaiting their Messiah:

Ac 17:2 *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that **Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.** 4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.*

If a devout Jew would believe this report, he would become a New Covenant Christian without ceasing to be a Jew. The Messiah was for the Jews, and the Gentiles were simply grafted into their covenant. After the unbelieving Jews made a city-wide uproar, Paul and Silas travelled 50 miles south to the city of Berea where there was another Jewish synagogue. Paul, even after all the abuse he has received, boldly attends the synagogue and preaches Christ, not knowing what pain it might bring to him. What a challenging example of determination.

Ac 17:11 *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. 12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. 13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.*

What Bible did these people have? The Scriptures they searched were what we call the *Old Testament* Scriptures. Most likely the only “New Testament” writing was the “decrees for to keep” and the general epistle of James (which these Bereans would not consider Scripture). The Jew’s beliefs and Paul’s beliefs were the same except for “**Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.**” Other than this, and allowing Christian Gentiles to be in fellowship with Jewish Christians, Paul lived and believed like other Jews.

Some Bereans built their beliefs by knowing the Scriptures and some stuck with the establishment which had rejected Christ. You have this same choice to make! Stand on the Word of God or bow to the establishment you are in. Which Bereans were noble?

Stirring the Jewish community was like stirring a hornet's nest; and how appropriate of God to convert the *chief hornet* from Jerusalem and send him to stir the nests throughout the Roman Empire. Likely to save his life, Paul now goes to the coast and sails south to Athens (270 miles). Silas and Timothy do not accompany him, but he asks that they follow as soon as possible. When Timothy arrives in Athens, Paul, in concern for the church at Thessalonica, sends Timothy back to check on them. Athens was a city wholly given to idolatry (*full of idols*), as Paul clearly witnessed.

Adam Clarke: Bishop Pearce produces a most apposite quotation from Pausanias, which confirms the observation: *ouk hn allacou tosauta idein eidwla*. **There was no place where so many idols were to be seen.** PAUS. in Attic. cap. xvii. 24. PETRONIUS, who was contemporary with St. Paul, in his Satyr. cap. xvii., makes Quartilla say of Athens: **Our region is so full of deities that you may more frequently meet with a god than a man.**

Ac 17:17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. 18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. 19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

The Epicureans didn't believe in God, but were humanists or hedonists; and believed the chief good consisted in the gratification of the appetites of sense. The Stoics were the original "Fatalists" who ultimately agree on one point: that *all human affairs are governed by fate* or what Augustinians and Calvinists call *predestination*. How interesting that what Paul said to the original fate-mongers destroys the heretical Calvinist doctrines of our day. Paul's "Setting forth strange gods" in Athens was actually against the law. They took Paul to the Areopagus (Athenian court), and wanted to know about this "foreign demon". *You cannot present the truth or the true God, but you can follow any of our gods that we have available for you.*

Adam Clarke: A setter forth of strange gods] *xenwn daimoniwn*, Of strange or foreign demons...this was strictly forbidden, both at Rome and Athens...There was a difference, in the heathen theology, between *yeov*, god, and *daimwn*, demon: the *yeoi*, were such as were gods by nature: the *daimonia*, were men who were deified.

This distinction seems to be in the mind of these philosophers when they said that the Apostles seemed to be setters forth of strange demons, because they preached unto them Jesus, whom they showed to be a man, suffering and dying, but afterwards raised to the throne of God.

Because Paul knew the laws and the allegation against him, he skillfully defuses the bomb by building upon their own established altar to “The Unknown God”.

Ac 17:22 *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are **very religious**. 23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE **UNKNOWN GOD**. Whom therefore ye **unknowingly** worship, **him declare I unto you**. 24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and **hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation**; (Emphasis and alterations added for clarity)*

Times and Bounds are the only parts of life that are predestined. The general program is predetermined by God, but what about man's choices? Listen close – No predestination here:

Ac 17:27 *That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. 30 **And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent**: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which **he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead**. 32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite (**one of the judges**), and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.*

Paul in Corinth for 1½ Years (AD 52-53)

Ac 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth (**50 miles west**); **2** And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. **3** And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers. **4** And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. **5** And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. **6** And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. **7** And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. **8** And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. **9** Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: **10** For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. **11** And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.



It is interesting how God could have so many potential converts whom He knew were “Feeling after God” in such a wicked environment. Corinth was a city of considerable trade, lying between the Aegean and Ionian seas. It was the capital of the province of Achaia and the chief commercial city of Greece. The sailors that came through filled the many wine shops. The city was notorious for immorality, which sin was also termed ‘*to Corinthianize*’; and a ‘*Corinthian Damsel*’ was a prostitute. The very religion of the city was built around temple prostitution, which was practiced and praised without a blush. Being a great trade city, it also attracted a large Jewish community.

1st & 2nd Thessalonians were written from Corinth

(AD 52-53)

It was during this extended stay at Corinth that First and Second Thessalonians were written. Timothy returns from Thessalonica and finds Paul at Corinth. After receiving Timothy’s report, Paul writes to the church to encourage them and answer questions. At this late date (AD 53), we still have the primary Scriptures being the *Old Testament*; and this was sufficient as God’s ordained school-master to bring men to Christ. All Paul’s Epistles were written while he was a law-abiding Jew believing and observing God’s Law and writing to congregations where law-abiding Jews were the core members and leaders. This FACT must be kept in place when reading or interpreting Paul’s Epistles. With these historic facts in view, people will not interpret Paul contrary to foundational Christian beliefs which worked in harmony with foundational Jewish beliefs. Listen to Paul’s words to the Thessalonian Christian congregation:

1Th 2:14 *For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus:*

After being in Corinth ministering for a year and a half, Paul begins to work his way back to Jerusalem to observe a feast – most likely Passover.

Ac 18:18 *And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. 19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with*

*the Jews. 20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; 21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. 22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up **(to Jerusalem)**, and saluted the church **(at Jerusalem)**, he went down to Antioch **(Syria)**. 23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.*

It is a point of authenticity for Luke to state that going to Jerusalem is “going up” and going anywhere else from Jerusalem is “going down”. This is Jewish speech, and is one proof that Luke lived in the time of his writing. Luke also designates Jerusalem as a separate district from Judea, and doesn’t include Caesarea with Judea; which, according to Edersheim, is a “striking” evidence of Luke’s early composition and Rabbinical views. A fraudulent story, written years later from a different land, would have missed these small, but important factors, and would thus expose the charlatan.

Study Questions on Chapter 20

- 1. What was one of the purposes in revisiting the churches? (Acts 16:4)**
- 2. When Paul and Barnabas departed in separate ways, does that mean they were not still working in the same cause out of the same church?**
- 3. Why would Barnabas go to Cyprus and Paul to Tarsus?**
- 4. Where did Paul find Timothy? Had they met previously?**
- 5. Why did Paul have Timothy circumcised?**
- 6. Why did God keep Paul from preaching in Asia and Bithynia; but rather led him to Philippi?**
- 7. Was the Philippian Jailer eligible for communion after being baptized? Was he still the keeper of the prison? Was this a problem?**
- 8. Why did the Jews only give 39 stripes as the maximum penalty when flogging was prescribed?**

9. In Judaism you were never too old to get a “spanking”. Was this God’s idea or man’s?
10. What was the primary difference Luke noted between the Jews of Thessalonica and Berea?
11. What Scriptures did the Bereans search to see if Paul’s message was true?
12. What Scriptures existed at this time?
13. Why does Paul stay in Corinth for a year and a half?
14. What is one thing Paul accomplished during this time in Corinth?



Chapter 21

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

AD 54-58 – Acts 18-21

After Paul visits Jerusalem and Antioch, we see him going through Galatia and Asia again. This is his third time to visit this region since he first embarked with Barnabas 9 years before. Unlike his second missionary journey, this time he spends over 2 years in Ephesus (Asia), and has great success in this large city of about 225,000 inhabitants.

1 Corinthians Is Written From Ephesus (AD 56-57)

Ephesus became an important hub for ministry in the surrounding areas. Asia was now ready for Paul's preaching.

Ac 19:10 *And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. 11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 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. 13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. 19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

During this time in Ephesus, Paul wrote **1st Corinthians** in response to problems brought to him by some elders. The troubles in Corinth are not surprising when you consider the environment there. *Arrogance in valuing eloquence over humility, carnal sectarianism, immorality, false gifts, faked tongues, women removing their veils and speaking out in the worship services, and the false liberty to eat meat offered to idols* can all be attributed to the pagan ideas and practices in the city of Corinth. This was all contrary to Jewish Christian belief as taught by the Apostles; and justifies the “entrance requirements” set down in Acts 15. There were indeed prophetesses among the Jews, like Anna; but they never spoke out in the synagogues.

Adam Clarke *“It was a custom, both among Greeks and Romans, and among the Jews an express law, that no woman should be seen abroad without a veil. This was, and is, a common custom through all the east, and none but public prostitutes go without veils.”*

In like manner, Paul forbade such in the churches (1Co 11; 14:34, 35; 1Ti 2:11,12). Paul vigorously addresses these issues and calls the church to repent and to exercise church discipline. Acts 19 records the events during Paul’s ministry in the area of Ephesus. With his mighty teaching and miracles, he shook this center of idolatry to its foundation and, as usual, caused a riot.

1Co 16:9 *For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.*

2Co 1:8 *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: 9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;*

Ac 19:23 *And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. 24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; 25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. 26 Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people,*

saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: 27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. 28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. 29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. 30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. 31 And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre. 32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. 33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. 34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. 35 And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? 36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. 37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. 38 Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. 39 But if ye enquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. 40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. 41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

The Christians could not be accused of publicly reviling the pagans or their goddess; but had been simply preaching the gospel in a respectable manner. It is important that we have a testimony of upright conduct as would be expected from ambassadors of the Great King.

1Co 16:5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia. 6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. 7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. 8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

In the spring of AD 57, after the uproar, Paul left Ephesus and traveled to Macedonia for the summer and fall; and then spent the winter in Corinth. Paul decided to go through Macedonia and give Corinth time to get things right before he arrived for church court. He writes **2nd Corinthians** from Macedonia; and swears by God that the only reason he had delayed going to Corinth was mercy on them so they had more time to get right with God and avoid disciplinary action from an Apostle.

2Co 1:23 *Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.*

Paul used **swearing** and **adjuring** by God according to Moses' Law at least 13 times in his Holy Spirit inspired writings. This is undeniable proof that Jesus never taught against Lawful swearing; but just as Malachi said, He preached against "*false swearing*" with man-made oaths, which Jesus enumerated (as did James). Swearing and adjuring were vital ingredients in the Judicature God established where God's people put Him in the judgment seat for their life issues. Jesus Christ taught and commanded lawful swearing in His inspired Word, and didn't come to preach against what He had commanded (De 6:13, 10:20). See our book ***Did Jesus Correct Moses?*** for an in depth study on this important subject.

There were false teachers in Corinth who were presenting "another Jesus" by changing the Word of God for their own agenda; and Paul, naturally, was their prime target of criticism. *Wolves* always shoot at the *shepherd* first. The imposters were trying to win the church over to their views by using fake "tongues". They were allowing women to remove their veils and "prophecy" like the pagan priestesses did; allowing fornication in the church; promoting prosperity instead of cross bearing; and allowing people to eat "meats offered to idols" at pagan feasts.

Most people in churches of America would be critical of these Corinthians while doing the same things in principle. Just think of all the entertainments and amusements created for the ungodly and not for God's people; but "Christians" still drink them in. Are not these things "meats prepared for idols"? Is it not "drinking the cup of the LORD and the cup of devils" when God's people partake in worldly "feasts" prepared for the devil's crowd? Does the Holy Spirit within believers enjoy carnal

entertainments, sports, movies, music, and amusements created for ungodly tastes? What about feasts developed by Roman churchmen for political interests, like Christmas filled with pagan relics? What would Paul say if he visited your church and saw your *man-made traditions*?

1Co 10:21 *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. 22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?*

2Co 6:14 *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

Paul made it clear that if he showed up for church court, he would excommunicate and discipline at the mouth of two or three witnesses, as Moses' Law stated. Excommunication in the first century church meant you lost your hope of heaven, unless you repented (Mt 18:17,18). Jesus taught that being excommunicated out of a Biblical church for Biblical reasons would be honored in heaven and leave you as a *heathen man*.

2Co 13:1 *This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. 2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare: 3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me,*

Paul Stayed at Corinth through the Winter (AD 57-58)

Ac 20:1 *And after the uproar was ceased (at Ephesus), Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. 2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece (Corinth), 3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for*

him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia (Berea, Thessalonica, Philippi).

Galatians and Romans is Written at Corinth (AD 57-58)

During these winter months Paul most likely wrote his letter to the churches of Galatia (*Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and possibly others*) as well as the amazing epistle to the church at Rome (Romans). The epistle to the churches of Galatia rebuked the Judaizing (trying to bring Gentile Christians under Judaism) that was taking place. This issue was supposed to have been settled back at the Council of Jerusalem, but some Jews were trying to mutiny God's program. Galatians is greatly abused by the antinomian interpretations I was taught in college and raised with.

The Epistle to the Romans is an overall treatise concerning the Gospel: how it affects the Jew; how it affects the Gentile; and how they are supposed to follow it together in harmony. No Apostle had been to Rome; but Paul was hoping to go when possible. It was yet further West and Paul was the only apostle pushing westward at this time. The legends of Peter preaching at Rome are likely false Romanist propaganda. The evidence is against Peter ever being at Rome. Clement of Rome (AD 100) makes this statement about 30 years after Peter and Paul died:

Clement *"But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labors and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After **preaching both in the east and west**, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, **having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects**. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience."*

The subject of "Justification by faith" is clearly taught in **Romans**; but due to men's ignorance of the first century faith, they are now teaching that "Jesus' righteousness being imputed to man" is the means of justification.

Jesus' righteousness was necessary for Him to be the spotless Lamb to DIE for man. His DEATH is vicarious, not His DEEDS. Jesus did not OBEY for men, He DIED for them so He could apply His blood to wash their sins clean when they repent and come to Him as their Priest. He owed obedience to God's Law and did not obey in my place. Since He obeyed perfectly, He could die in my place. See our Romans video series online.

Because the Jews laid wait for Paul when he planned to leave, he didn't go to the coast, but returned north through Macedonia. After visiting the churches on the way and sailing across to Troas, we get a peek into one of Paul's church services. The brethren came together on Sunday to observe the Lord's Supper and Paul preached and answered questions all night.

Notice there was no *rock band*, or even *special singers* to *entertain* and *draw a crowd*. We all can see that would have been totally inappropriate back then. The synagogue service was very reverent without any musical instruments or sensationalism; and this was the pattern for the churches. What about today? What do you think Paul or James would have thought about "Super Bowl Sunday"? What do you think they would say about the immodesty, fashion, casualness, gimmicks, foolishness, and sensuality of *YOUR* church? What will Jesus say? Paul was in Troas for seven days.

Ac 20:7 *And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. 8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. 9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. 10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. 11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. 12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.*

If one pays close attention to the New Testament progression, they will find that originally the Christians were all Jews going to synagogue on the Sabbath and then meeting to celebrate Christ's resurrection and observe the Lord's Supper on Sunday. The Gentiles were later grafted into this Sunday Service; but did not necessarily attend the synagogue. Many

devout Gentiles did attend Synagogue and most likely sat in the section marked off for them (As in the Temple there was a court for Gentiles). Later, when the believers were kicked out of the synagogue (Acts 19:9), their primary time of worship was on Sunday with the Gentile believers (Acts 20:7) to celebrate the resurrection, observe the Lord's Supper, and take up their collection (1Co 16:1-3). The Christian meeting on Sunday would naturally be similar to the Jewish meetings in the Synagogue on Saturday with the same foundational ideas of order and authority. Paul had been in Troas for seven days; yet there's no mention of a meeting on Saturday; but only on Sunday. Since the people likely had to work on that day, the meeting was in the evening.

Paul travels to Jerusalem

From Troas, Paul and his company traveled southeast about 250 miles to Miletus, which was about 30 miles south of Ephesus. Here He called the elders of the church to come to him and delivered a very touching message to them.

Ac 20:18 *And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, 19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: 20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. 25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. 26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking*

perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. 32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. 33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. 34 Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. 35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. 36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. 37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, 38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

Paul now sailed across the Mediterranean Sea passing Cyprus on the south to the sea port at Tyre (600 mile trip). Paul and his companions would then stay in Tyre for 7 days with fellow believers.

Ac 21:4 *And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. 5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. 6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again.*

Twice Paul is warned that he will meet with more suffering at Jerusalem; but responds that he is ready to die at Jerusalem for the Lord Jesus. Sailing 25 miles south to Ptolemais, and then another 30 miles to Caesarea, which was 65 miles from Jerusalem; Paul made his way to visit the church he had so persecuted about 26 years earlier. This completed Paul's third missionary journey of about 2500 miles.

Study Questions on Chapter 21

- 1. Where was Paul's ministry base when ministering in Asia?**
- 2. What country is this "Asia" today?**
- 3. Were Gentiles allowed to attend Synagogue and listen to the reading of the Scriptures?**
- 4. What influences seem to be affecting the church in Corinth?**

5. Why would women who wore veils whenever they were in public (Jews, Greeks, and Romans) believe they could remove them and speak out in the church meeting?
6. When the Bible says that Paul was in Greece or Achaia, what is the primary church there?
7. When the Bible says that Paul goes to Macedonia, what churches would that include?
8. What does Paul warn the Ephesian elders about?
9. When Paul arrived in Jerusalem in Acts 21, how long had it been since he was persecuting Christians in that same city?
10. Would women speak out in the synagogue? Then why would they think it OK in Corinth during worship?
11. What false gifts were being displayed in Corinth?
12. If “speaking in tongues” was a spiritual phenomena controlled by the Holy Spirit, then why is Paul daring to correct it in Corinth?
13. We know Jews used musical instruments for worship in the temple at certain times; but why would they avoid using them in the synagogues?
14. If the churches throughout the Roman Empire at this time were filled with both Jews and Gentiles, were they saved by the same Grace and Faith? Did they believe the same Gospel?

Chapter 22

Paul's Arrest and Trials

AD 59 – Acts 21-22

In Acts 21, which is about 29 years after Pentecost, we learn some very important truths as Paul and James talk about the state of the church at this time, and what they believed.

Ac 21:17 *And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. 19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. 20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. 22 What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. 23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; 24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. 25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.*

What do we learn from Paul's encounter with James?

1. James, the bishop, and a body of elders were the God-ordained leaders of the church. "Elder" is a generic term for "leader". Both the Bishop and Deacons were leaders/elders. There are only two offices of leadership spoken of with qualifications: that of Bishop (overseer) and that of Deacon (minister) (*See 1Ti 3*). The Bishop was the "head minister"; and the Deacons/ministers helped the Bishop "oversee" the church. They all worked together for the same goals; but God always has one head at the top, which is wise. A board or committee needs a chairman, but they all work for the same goal. God never made a two

headed animal or a kingdom with two kings, or a home with two fathers, etc.

2. James told Paul that many thousands of Jews had believed on Jesus and were very zealous of Moses' Law; which is exactly what God wanted from them as believing Jews (Mal 3:1-6).
3. These zealous believers had been misinformed about Paul. They had been told that Paul was not keeping Moses' Law himself; and was also teaching Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses' Law, Judaism, and circumcision – **all of which was false 29 years after the Resurrection!**
4. In order to disprove this falsehood, James recommended that Paul join in the Nazarite Vow with four men from the Jerusalem Christian Church, and thus display his loyalty to Moses' Law. This was wise counsel, and it came in very handy for Paul's defense later against the unbelieving Jews (Acts 24:18).
5. James makes it very clear that Gentile believers grafted into Christianity were NOT REQUIRED to observe circumcision and Judaism as entrance into the church (where all Christian Jews at this time *were* observing Biblical Judaism), but only the entrance requirements set down at the Jerusalem Council. Judaism's entrance requirements had been necessary for entrance into the Christian church for Gentiles prior to Cornelius; but God changed that in Acts 10 and confirmed it in Acts 15. Note: Jesus did not change any of this while on earth; but lived and preached perfectly consistent with Scriptural Judaism.
6. Here we find Paul, James and all the Jewish believers keeping Moses' Law AFTER the writing of Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans, James, and 1 & 2 Thessalonians. THIS MEANS that the typical Protestant interpretation of those books is WRONG. Those books NEVER tell Jewish believers to forsake Moses' Law; and they do not release Gentiles from God's moral law (God's Love); but only from circumcision and the ceremonial laws.

While Paul is worshipping as a Nazarite in the Temple, certain non-Christian Jews recognize him as the one that has been preaching throughout Asia

Minor. They immediately begin calling out false accusations against him to stir up the Jews at Jerusalem. This naturally leads to mob action with Paul being drug out of the Temple for the purpose of beating him to death.

In the Temple there were signs written in Greek on large slabs of Limestone which read, ***"No foreigner may enter within the balustrade around the sanctuary and the enclosure. Whoever is caught, on himself shall he put blame for the death which will ensue."*** Some of these stones have been found and placed in Museums. Paul was, among other things, being accused of taking a Gentile into forbidden areas of the Temple.

Ac 21:33 *Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. 34 And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle. 35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. 36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him. 37 And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? 38 Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? 39 But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. 40 And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying,*

This is a much grander opportunity than Paul had expected. He has everyone's attention, and is also surrounded by Roman soldiers to protect him as he gives his testimony at the Temple in Jerusalem. Some modern preachers tell stories of men preaching with the power of God and having miraculous results of powerful conviction, etc.; however, when we see Holy Ghost filled Apostles preaching, it usually ends with persecution and suffering. God's Word is the only reliable source of information concerning *God's Ways*; and we are told to judge all preachers with the measuring stick of the Apostles of Christ (Phil 3:17).

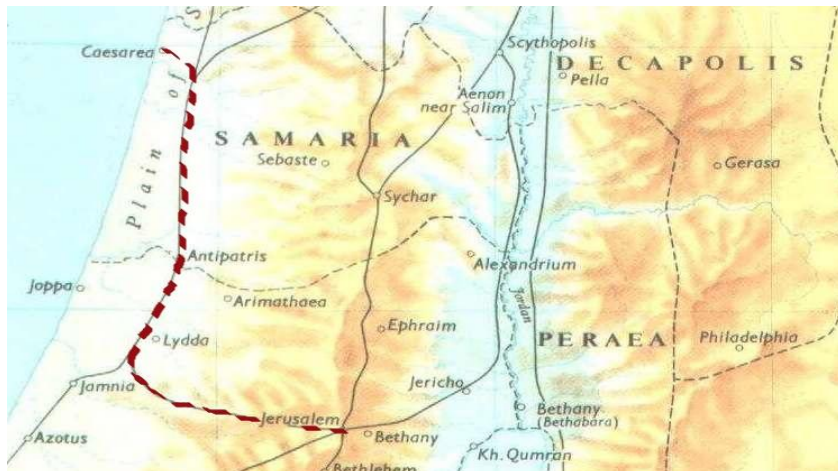
Ac 22:1 *Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you. 2 (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they*

kept the more silence: and he saith,) 3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. 4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. 5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. 6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. 7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. 9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. 11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. 12 **And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there,** 13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see **that Just One (Jesus),** and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. 16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. 17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; 18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. 19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: 20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. 21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. 22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. 23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, 24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

Paul escaped a scourging by appealing to his Roman rights as a free born native of Tarsus. The next day in the council Paul truthfully claims to be a Pharisee, which he still was. This did not mean he was a hypocrite, a legalist, or wrongly judgmental, but it only meant that, as a Jew, he believed God's Word concerning the existence of angels, spirits, and the resurrection of the dead. The Pharisees were the conservatives in Judaism.

Ac 26:4 *My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; 5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the **most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.***

Even though Paul is told by God that he should “*fear not*” with the assurance that he would testify also at Rome; Paul also knew that he had a part to play; and thus was careful to fulfill his responsibility of working through God ordained government. He thereby authorized the use of military force to protect him from criminal assault. Paul “votes” many times and uses legal rights and legal channels to forward the cause of righteousness and defend himself against injustice. (Acts 16:37, 22:25, 25:11, 27:9, 10, 21)



Paul is sent to Caesarea (64 miles northwest) escorted by 470 soldiers after dark about 9 PM. Paul defends himself before the Governor, who can see that Paul is innocent; but he doesn't want to upset the Jews, and so leaves

Paul in custody for two years until Porcius Festus is appointed Governor (AD 60).

Luke was with Paul during this time; and given the location near Jerusalem, this would have been an ideal time to write his Gospel. Most believe that **Matthew, Mark, and Luke** were written between AD 58 and AD 64. This means that the Bible of the “early church” for at least the first 20 to 30 years was primarily the Old Testament. The writings of the Apostles, which include the gospel records, were NEVER intended to supplant or compete with the existing Scriptures of the Old Testament. The Apostles saw perfect cohesion in God’s message from the Old Testament Scriptures, from their Messiah, and from the Holy Spirit inspiring them.

A verse by verse study through Acts, Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians, can be found at www.thefaithoncedelivered.com

Study Questions for Chapter 22

- 1. Name some important issues about Christianity 29 years after Christ’s resurrection that are misunderstood today.**
- 2. When Paul joins some men with the Nazarite Vow, what is he trying to prove?**
- 3. What were the accusations leveled against Paul by the non-Christian Jews who attacked him?**
- 4. What part of Judaism does Paul declare the Pharisee to be?**
- 5. What is the form of church government in the Jerusalem church?**
- 6. Is there a difference between voting in elections and reminding government officials what is lawful and what is not? Is it right to use legal channels to defend what is right and appropriate or protect ourselves?**
- 7. How did the attack on Paul lead to a grand opportunity?**
- 8. What tongues did Paul speak in Acts 22?**
- 9. Did God’s assurance to Paul that he was going to Rome mean that he could be passive? Did Paul see it that way?**

Chapter 23

Paul in Rome and Beyond

AD 60-70 - Acts 27-28...History

After Paul is forced to appeal unto Caesar (the Supreme Court) to protect his rights; he is sent on a ship with other prisoners headed to Rome. Through the amazing voyage in the storm, and the shipwreck on the Island of Melita (Malta), about 1500 miles west of Caesarea, Paul won the confidence of the centurion by his superior judgment, dependable prophetic statements, and miracles of healing. God set Paul up for a position of power and influence by the bite of the viper and healing the sick natives, including the chieftain's father. The entire crew is benefited by the blessings received from Paul's valuable services. What a work of God!

What could God do through you if you were paying attention, dependable, and willing to obey at all cost? Paul had written the Epistle to the Romans about 3 years prior, and here we see the grateful and loving Christians excited to meet and escort the beloved Apostle.

Ac 28:11 *And after three months (Wintering on the Island) we (Luke was there too) departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux. 12 And landing at Syracuse (85 miles north), we tarried there three days. 13 And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium (85 miles north again): and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli (200 miles north): 14 Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome. 15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us (From Rome) as far as Appii forum (90 miles north of Puteoli), and The three taverns (10 miles north of Appii forum and 30 miles south of Rome): whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. 16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.*

Paul in Rome (AD 61)

Ac 28:17 *And it came to pass, that after three days (In Rome) Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of*

our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. 18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. 19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. 20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. 21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee. 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against. 23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. 30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Luke Finishes *The Acts Of The Apostles* (AD 63)

Through much of the narrative of Acts you find Luke saying “we” did this and that, which proves at least that Luke was with Paul at these times. This stay in Rome is the most likely time for Luke to write Acts, and maybe even his Gospel record, which we mentioned could have been written in Caesarea. The narrative of Acts ends with Paul being in Rome for two years, so we know that is also when Luke finished the book. The book of Acts demonstrates the fulfillment of Christ’s promises concerning the apostolic power given through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Mk 16:17 *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 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.

Sir William M. Ramsay was taught at university that the book of Acts was an inaccurate second century production; but as he studied and travelled in Asia Minor, he changed his mind: *“Further study of Acts 13-21 showed that the book could bear the most minute scrutiny of an authority for the facts of the Aegean world, and that it was written with such judgment, skill, art, and perception of the truth as to be a model of historical statement.”* **After more than thirty years of close study of the milieu of first century Christianity, he penned these words,** *“The more I have studied the narrative of the Acts, and the more I have learned year after year about Graeco-Roman society and thoughts and fashions, and organization in those provinces, the more I admire and the better I understand. I set out to look for truth on the borderland where Greece and Asia meet, and found it here. You may press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historian’s, and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment, provided always that the critic knows the subject and does not go beyond the limits of science and of justice.”*

Incarcerated at Rome Paul continues his ministry, and **writes Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians.** Paul has been in custody for over four years, including the two years in Rome; and during these times in prison has written valuable letters, which we would likely not have otherwise. Thank you LORD for faithful men!

While Paul was being hauled to Rome in the year AD 62, James, the bishop of Jerusalem whom Paul had recently met with, was thrown from the Temple and beaten to death. He had a powerful testimony, and was called “James the Just” for faithfully following the “Just One”.

Paul Released, Again Arrested, and Martyred (AD 63-67)

It is likely that Paul was released around AD 63. It seems Paul wrote **Hebrews** and intended to deliver it with Timothy after his release.

Heb 13:22 *And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words. 23 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; **with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.** 24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. **They of Italy salute you.***

Whether Paul also visited Spain, as he had previously planned, is not known; but if tradition is correct in saying he did, it was a short visit. It appears he is back in Greece and Asia Minor around AD 65-66 and most likely writes **I Timothy** and **Titus** during his work at this time. Paul sends Tychicus to relieve Titus in Crete; and then asks Titus to meet him in Nicopolis (in Epirus), where he planned to winter. Paul is probably in his sixties; and even with all the suffering of his life, he is still working to evangelize western Greece.



It is possible that Paul planned in the spring to evangelize in the adjoining province of Dalmatia (Illyricum); but was arrested and prevented. When Paul is in prison the second time, it seems Titus is sent to continue the plan, and preaches in Dalmatia (2Ti 4:10). Paul says when writing to the Romans from Corinth about AD 58 that his preaching had reached Illyricum; but possibly did not include Dalmatia yet.

Ro 15:19 *Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

Adam Clarke: *When the Apostle says that he preached the Gospel from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum, he intends his land journeys chiefly; and, by looking at the map annexed to the Acts of the Apostles, the reader will see that from Jerusalem the Apostle went round the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and that he passed through Syria, Phoenicia, Arabia, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, Galatia, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Phrygia, Troas, Asia, Caria, Lycia,*

lonia, Lydia, Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, and Achaia; besides the isles of Cyprus and Crete. And no doubt he visited many other places which are not mentioned in the New Testament.

When in prison the second time Paul writes 2nd Timothy, and clearly expects to be executed soon. It is believed that Paul was beheaded in AD 67-68 by order of Nero. Because he was a Roman citizen, he was beheaded and not crucified, as was Peter not too long after this time.

First and Second Peter (AD 62-68?)

Peter's epistles are written to the churches of Asia Minor, which Paul had founded and labored in.

1Pe 1:1 *Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,*

It is possible that Peter wrote to them after Paul's death, in taking up the torch that was dropped, or during Paul's imprisonments to help encourage them. Peter had obviously read Paul's epistles, and writes from a congregation in Babylon where there was a large Jewish community to which he must have been ministering (1Pe 5:13). Remember the plan told to us in Galatians?

Ga 2:7 *But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.*

For the previous 14 years we have heard nothing of Peter, and his own words testify that he is with the church in Babylon (see map). We know from the Scripture how Peter would be slain, as Jesus told him this before His ascension; but we know not for sure where it took place.

Joh 21:15 *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. 16 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. 17 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. (Peter Recommissioned) 18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, **thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.** 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.



Some questionable traditions place Peter's martyrdom in Rome; but other scholars declare that Peter most likely never saw Rome. It can be shown from the Scriptures that Peter was not in Rome prior to Paul's martyrdom. He is not there when Paul writes Romans; not there when Paul is there in prison; and not there when Paul is about to be offered up or Paul would not have said, "only Luke is with me" (2Ti 4:10-17).

Since the Gospel of John (above) was probably written after Peter's death, it can be received as John's testimony and explanation that Peter knew he would be crucified and was. The tradition that states Peter (in Rome) asked to be crucified upside down is likely from **The Acts of Peter**, which is spurious.

Jude's Epistle

Jude, by his own words, was the brother of James; and I believe he is speaking of James, the bishop of Jerusalem, slain in AD 62, who is often spoken of simply as "James" by Luke and Paul (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; 1Co 15:7; Gal 2:12). Jude's epistle is very similar to 2Pe 2, and was probably written after Peter's epistle, but directed to a different region where Greek was also spoken. Jude's main concern was that Christians **EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS**. Even in his day truth corrupters were everywhere trying to change God's program to fit their own ideas. The book you are reading is meant to impress upon you the need to only build on that Faith which was once delivered to the saints in the First Century. It was obviously considered as ***already delivered*** when Jude wrote, and he is stressing the same concern I am now stressing; however, matters are far worse now than then. Why would Jude write so forcefully on that subject if it really did not matter? Why would Jude say what he did if men's salvation and God's honor were not at stake? Are we to contend for the First Century Apostolic Christian Faith? What if we don't? Should we just avoid being divisive?

Martyrdom of the Apostles and their Companions

The Scriptures, as we have mentioned, plainly tell us about the death of Stephen and James the brother of John (sons of Zebedee). The information we have about the deaths of the other Apostles primarily comes from early church traditions. Tradition may be unreliable when it comes to details, yet it is usually based on a fact that occurred, especially when there is no counter tradition. Eusebius (A.D. 325) in his Ecclesiastical History says, *"The Apostles and disciples of the Savior scattered over the whole world, preached the Gospel everywhere."* It seems all the Apostles, except John, died as martyrs before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 or at least around that time. Traditional church histories have stated the following about their martyrdom.

Andrew: Brother of Simon Peter, was crucified on an X shaped cross in Greece, where he preached to the crowds until he died.

Matthew: Surnamed Levi and a tax collector who became an Apostle is said to have been impaled to the ground with spears and beheaded in Ethiopia.

Bartholomew: also known as Nathaniel is reported to have been flayed to death by a whip in Armenia.

Thomas: India claims Thomas as their Apostle, and it seems he died there from spear wounds.

Philip: It seems Hierapolis in Persia is where Philip died a martyr by being dragged to death; however another tradition states he was crucified upside down.

Simon the Zealot: There are conflicting traditions about Simon, but they all conclude that he died a martyr.

James: The brother of Jude and son of Alpheus, he was bishop of Jerusalem and cousin of Jesus. After being bishop in Jerusalem for many years he was thrown from the pinnacle of the Temple and beaten to death by the Jews. Josephus, a contemporary, even states that in AD 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed, it was God's punishment for killing "James the Just".

Luke: The companion of Paul and writer of Acts and the Gospel of Luke is said to have suffered martyrdom by being hanged in Greece.

Mark: Was reportedly killed by being dragged through the Streets of Alexandria, Egypt. Mark worked with Peter and Paul. Babylon and Alexandria had a large Jewish community. These were probably Peter's focus.

Jude: Writer of the book of Jude, brother of James, and cousin of Jesus, also called Thaddeus and Lebbaeus, was either shot with arrows or clubbed to death.

Matthias: One tradition says that Matthias was stoned in Colchis, Armenia.

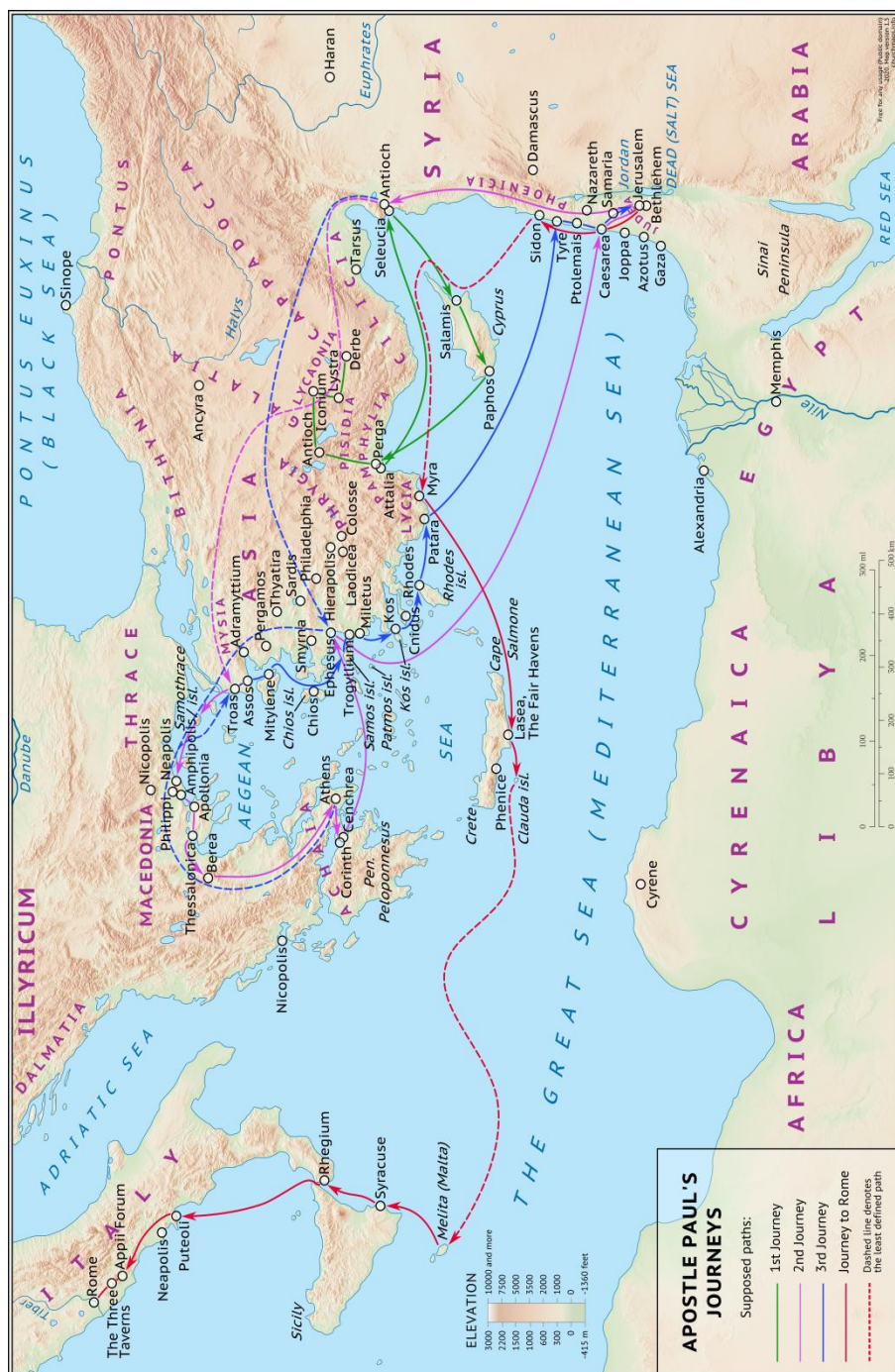
Timothy: Tradition states that Timothy, as the 80 year old bishop of Ephesus, was beaten, dragged, and stoned by a pagan mob for preaching the gospel during a procession in honor of the goddess Diana (AD 97).

God knew that future generations would be better able to believe the testimony of men who died for what they preached. If they did not fully

believe what they preached, they surely would not endure prolonged suffering, hardship, torture, and death to propagate it. There can be no doubt in any intelligent mind that Paul fully believed what he preached.

Study Questions on Chapter 23

- 1. How do we know the manner of Peter's execution?**
- 2. Did the twelve Apostles fulfill the Great Commission?**
- 3. What did the Great Commission include? (Matt 28:19-20)**
- 4. Why would Peter write to the churches Paul had founded?**
- 5. What is the greatest evidence that Luke wrote his history from Rome?**
- 6. How do we know that Luke was with Paul at times?**
- 7. If Peter was writing from Babylon, why would Mark be found in Asia? (2Ti 4:11; 1Pe 5:13; Col 4:10; Phm 1:23)**
- 8. What was Jude's primary concern when writing?**
- 9. Did Paul shy away from church work because he "had been hurt"?**



Chapter 24

The Destruction of Jerusalem

AD 66-AD70

In AD 66, God's vengeance upon a rebellious nation began to develop. Jesus had warned his followers of this coming doom upon the nation and the Temple in a time when it seemed impossible. King Herod (the 'Great') began remodeling the Temple about 20 BC and it was magnificent.

Lk 21:5 *And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, 6 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...20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 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. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 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. 24 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.*

The Jewish revolt of AD 66 led to the eventual destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple in AD 70. This sad story is what Daniel had also prophesied in the 70 weeks of Daniel 9:26 *And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come (Titus & Roman Army) shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined...and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

About 37 years after Christ had warned his followers of the coming judgment on Jerusalem it began to unfold. The Jews conquered the Roman garrison in Jerusalem, the Fortress of Antonia; and took over the city in September AD 66; but Cestius Gallus, Roman governor of Syria, came with his troops and besieged the city for 9 days. "For no reason in the world" as Josephus says, Cestius decided to withdraw to the coast; but his column was ambushed on the way and lost 6000 men as well as much war equipment. This victory in Judea had two effects. First, it gave all who

believed Christ the opportunity to flee the city; and it is reported by Eusebius that they fled to Pella, across the Jordan River. Second, it led the rebellious Jews to think they had a chance, and so sealed their doom.

Vespasian was then given the task of subduing Judea; but because of Nero's suicide and the civil war that ensued, he returned from Judea and left his son Titus to finish the work. Vespasian ends up being the Emperor, and Titus proceeds with the subjugation of Galilee and Judea.

AD 70

On Passover, AD 70, Titus, who has conquered the surrounding area, lays siege to Jerusalem. Adam Clarke in his commentary on Matthew 24:21 makes this statement: *"No history can furnish us with a parallel to the calamities and miseries of the Jews: rapine, murder, famine, and pestilence within: fire and sword, and all the horrors of war, without. Our Lord wept at the foresight of these calamities; and it is almost impossible for any humane person to read the relation of them in Josephus without weeping also. St. Luke, Lu 21:22, calls these the days of vengeance, that all things which were written might be fulfilled. 1. These were the days in which all the calamities predicted by Moses, Joel, Daniel, and other prophets, as well as those predicted by our Savior, met in one common centre, and were fulfilled in the most terrible manner on that generation. 2. These were the days of vengeance in another sense, as if God's judgments had certain periods and revolutions; for it is remarkable that the temple was burned by the Romans in the same month, and on the same day of the month, on which it had been burned by the Babylonians."*

Clarke: *Eusebius and Epiphanius say, that at this juncture, after Cestius Gallus had raised the siege, and Vespasian was approaching with his army, all who believed in Christ left Jerusalem and fled to Pella, and other places beyond the river Jordan; and so they all marvellously escaped the general shipwreck of their country: not one of them perished.*

Josephus says the number of those who perished in the siege of Jerusalem was *eleven hundred thousand*, (1,100,000) not counting the many thousands who were slain previous to this in the surrounding country. It is believed that the Romans could not have conquered the city had it not been for the extensive infighting among the factious Jews which destroyed their food supplies and many fighting men.

The annual Jewish day of prayer and fasting, *Tisha B'Av* (9th or 10th of AV), refers to this terribly sad time in their fifth month when they lost the first Temple (586 BC) **and** the second Temple (70 AD). This date seems to correspond with many other sad days in Israel's history starting supposedly when the 10 spies gave a bad report of Canaan on this day.

During His last week, while Jesus was teaching and reproving the hypocrisy of the religious leaders, He proclaimed:

Mt 23:37 *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! 38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*

Josephus says: "[Titus] then...ordered they should lay ambushes for those that went out into the valleys to gather food. Some of these were indeed fighting men...but the greater part of them were poor people, who were deterred from deserting by the concern they were under for their own relations; for they could not hope to escape away, together with their wives and children...the severity of the famine made them bold in thus going out...so they were first whipped, and then tormented with all sorts of tortures, before they died, and were then crucified before the wall of the city. This miserable procedure made Titus greatly to pity them, while they caught every day five hundred Jews; nay, some days they caught more... So the soldiers, out of the wrath and hatred they bore the Jews, nailed those they caught, one after one way, and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest, when their multitude was so great, that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies.

When Jesus was about to make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the Sunday before His arrest on Thursday night, He stopped and wept over the city with these sad words:

Lk 19:41 *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, 42 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. 43 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, 44 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.*

Adam Clarke: *This was literally fulfilled when this city was besieged by Titus. Josephus gives a very particular account of the building of this wall, which he says was effected in three days, though it was not less than thirty-nine furlongs in circumference; and that, when this wall and trench were completed, the Jews were so enclosed on every side that no person could escape out of the city, and no provision could be brought in, so that they were reduced to the most terrible distress by the famine which ensued. The whole account is well worth the reader's attention. See Josephus, War, book v. chap. xxii. sec. 1, 2, 3*

Also concerning the stones, Clarke continues: *Josephus says, War, book vii. c. 1: "Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the whole city and temple, te polin apasan kai ton newn kataskeptein, except the three towers, Phaselus, Hippicus, and Mariamne, and a part of the western wall, and these were spared; but, for all the rest of the wall, it was laid so completely even with the ground, by those who dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited." Maimonides, a Jewish rabbin, in Tract. Taanith, c. 4, says, "That the very foundations of the temple were digged up, according to the Roman custom." His words are these: "On that ninth day of the month Av, fatal for vengeance, the wicked Turnus Rufus, of the children of Edom, ploughed up the temple, and the places round about it, that the saying might be fulfilled, Zion shall be ploughed as a field." This Turnus, or rather Terentius Rufus, was left general of the army by Titus, with commission, as the Jews suppose, to destroy the city and the temple, as Josephus observes.*

The war in AD 70 ended the Jew's ability to practice Judaism properly according to Moses' Law. The Temple was gone, the Levitical Priesthood ceased; and the Jews were dispersed. Gentile believers were never allowed to keep the feasts; and so they should not try today (Ex 12:43-48; Nu 1:51; 3:10). Can anyone keep the Jewish Feasts today according to the Scriptures? No, they cannot. God designed it that way on purpose so they would know that Jesus was Messiah! Malachi clearly states that Messiah would come to His Temple in Jerusalem and purify the Levitical Priesthood and the worship of God; but after AD 70 this could not be fulfilled. These facts and Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy prove to any honest Jew that Jesus was their Messiah!

All anyone can rightly do today is remember the Feasts, study how they once were kept, and learn the types and shadows; but even Jews cannot observe them without offering strange fire before the Lord. Without the

proper place, proper priest, proper sacrifice, and proper worshipper, the feasts will be nothing more than innovations like Jeroboam and the Samaritan's devised. Seeking God contrary to the "Due order" has never been acceptable. They must consecrate sons of Aaron with the proper sacrifices; must consecrate a biblical altar in the commanded place; must offer the appropriate sacrifices according to the instructions God has given; and the people observing the feast must be in line with the covenants God ordained before it could even be Scriptural.

Heb 8:13 *In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

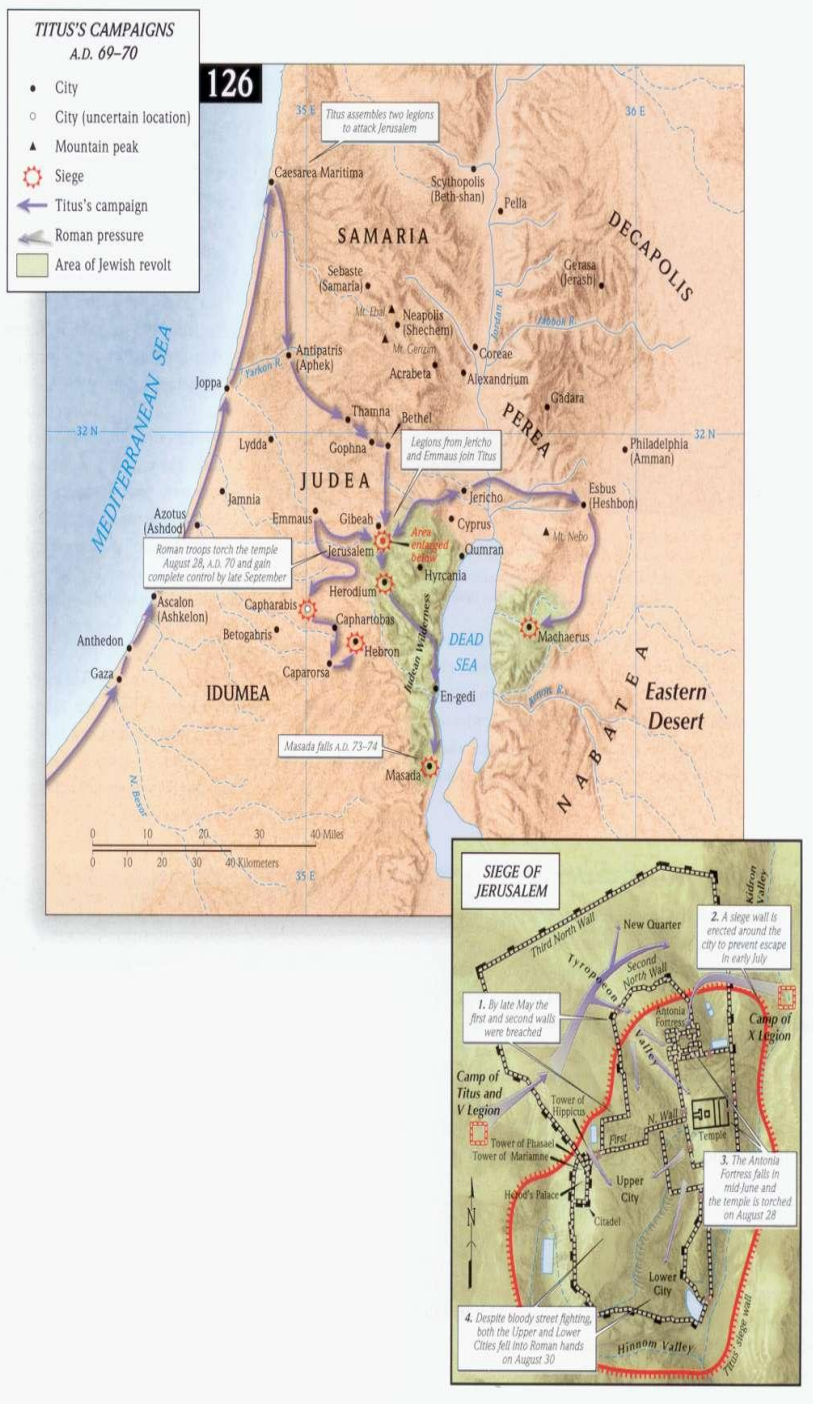
I believe Paul wrote the epistle of Hebrews around AD 63 when released from prison the first time (Heb 13:23); and in AD 70 the ability of people to observe the Old Covenant was abolished by God's providence. This does not mean God's Laws, ways, and holiness were abolished; but that the Old COVENANT arrangement was abolished when God removed His people from that national obligation by destroying the nation and Temple. The Old Covenant was with the nation of Israel, but the New Covenant is with God's Remnant – Christ's churches. Until the nation was destroyed, the Jewish disciples still had obligation to the national covenant.

The New Covenant is God's Laws, ways, and holiness written on men's hearts by the Holy Spirit when they become Christ's disciples. The Old Testament Scriptures taught this LOVE of God by example and precept for our edification and spiritual growth. God is LOVE; and we will always be bound to act and live by this love as taught and expressed in ALL the WORD OF GOD. The New Covenant was not a change in God's ethics or ways, but a shift from a national covenant with the nation of Israel to a covenant with Christ's saints in His program of the Christian churches (Mt 16:28). (See App B, pg 184)

Isa 51:6 *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and **my righteousness shall not be abolished.***

Study Questions from Chapter 24

- 1. How did the disciples of Jesus know to flee from Jerusalem when Cestius Gallus withdrew the siege?**
- 2. What day did Titus raise the siege against Jerusalem?**
- 3. What day was the Temple destroyed? How is this significant?**
- 4. How many years after Christ's Crucifixion was the Temple destroyed? Is that significant?**
- 5. Why would God not accept people's attempts to keep Jewish feasts today?**
- 6. Judas, Pilate, and Nero - all three committed suicide. Is there a connection?**
- 7. How long did Cestius Gallus besiege Jerusalem?**
- 8. How is the abolition of a covenant different than the abolishing of God's Law?**
- 9. Can God exist without His Ways? Are His Ways different than His Laws?**
- 10. Since the earthly priesthood is abolished; what priesthood is operating for our salvation? (Read Hebrews!)**
- 11. Was the Old Testament Priesthood patterned after the heavenly? (Heb 8:1-5)**





Chapter 25

The Apostle John's Writings

AD 70-100

When the dust settles over the Roman Empire after the civil war and destruction of Judea, the Apostle John is laboring in Asia Minor in the city of Ephesus. John, the son of Zebedee, and brother of James (slain by Herod) was first a disciple of John the Baptist and quickly followed Jesus when the Baptist testified of him. John seems to have labored primarily in Jerusalem at the first; but church history states that John moved to Ephesus before the destruction of Jerusalem; and possibly after the death of Mary, since John was her caretaker. Some state that Mary was actually with him in Ephesus for a short time before her death.

During John's labors in Ephesus he wrote his Gospel account along with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John. Evidently John was banished to the isle of Patmos around AD 95. This was most likely during the reign of the Emperor Domitian, who was known for his persecution of Christians. John saw the Revelation while exiled on the Isle of Patmos, but then was recalled by Nerva, and returned to Ephesus in AD 96. John lived into his nineties and died around AD 98-100 in the time of the Emperor Trajan.

In the first three chapters of John's book of Revelation we see the condition of seven churches in Asia Minor around the area where John ministered in the later years of his life. There were more than seven churches in Asia Minor, so these seven are seen as symbolic; however, the condition and rebuke to these seven is authentic and was sent to the actual churches, which were expected to heed the warnings. It is important to note that Christ is dealing with local autonomous churches, not individuals or families. Jesus set up the local church order and program, and it is to be expected that those who love Jesus and are true disciples will be busy working HIS program, not some modified version of their own. Even though these churches had issues to deal with, if you lived in their locality, you were expected to be in the congregation doing your part to get things straight. If the leadership refused to follow the Scripture, like Diotrephes, then you found another church or follow a faithful minister, like Demetrius,

and began a new congregation based on the Word of God. Notice that ROME is not even mentioned. Rome was insignificant in the formation of Christendom until it began the antichrist usurpation campaign.

Even with all the apostolic influences in these early times of church history, we find wicked heresies lurking in the churches among cliques hardened against the light. This is strong evidence that these churches in Rev 2&3 had some age on them, and that the book of Revelation was indeed written at the end of the first century as we have stated. The “Jezebel” group, the Nicolaitans, the Balaamites, and those who had waxed cold or lukewarm were prime vessels for Satan to use in his war against God’s redemption program. Jesus had said, *He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.*

At the close of the first century, it is surprising to see the amount of false teaching and satanically inspired deceivers trying to cloud and cover the truth with lies. We find, at this time, Diotrephes trying to lead a church in his own ideas contrary to the Apostles. Divorcing the concepts of Christianity from the Apostles’ teaching and example was happening even before the Apostles were all deceased! John writes to Gaius and tells him to follow Demetrius rather than Diotrephes and therefore start a fresh congregation based on truth.

3 John 1:9 *I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. 10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.*

If this was happening in John’s life, what can be expected after the last Apostle died? “TRUTH MUST LIVE!” should be the cry of the true Christian. For Truth to live it must be demonstrated, and all error must be purged! Truth is a way of life; so it must *be LIVED* in order to *live*. We must work the program that was once delivered to the saints! We must fulfill the same commission in the same way. If we find today that false doctrines have entered our camp and have ignorantly been venerated and embraced; then what do we do? We must be thoroughly honest,

acknowledge the error, and cling to the True Foundation of First Century Apostolic Faith and Practice

1Jn 3:1 *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 4 **Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.** 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

In AD 95 John, the Jewish apostle, tells us that SIN is the TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW. Of course, that has been the definition of sin throughout the Scripture. “Where there is no law, there is no transgression” is clearly stated in Scripture; and it has been assumed all along that transgressing God’s commandments is what defines SIN. Why did John have to bring people back to God’s Law as the foundation of sin?

1Jn 2:3 *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. 6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

1Jn 5:2 *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*

John’s writings were written to combat Gnostic teachings, whereas Paul’s writings decades earlier were primarily combating Judaizers. This also reveals a shift in Satan’s tactics after AD 70. With the passing of St. John, the inspired Word of God was complete, and all writings after this were just men’s opinions. The great apostasy of the age came swiftly due to a subtle and sinister shift in perspective. Originally the core members of the

churches were faithful Jews with Judaism still being faithfully practiced and understood by them; but after AD 70, with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, the churches became more Gentile in perspective. The Jewish foundational teachings of the Old Testament Scriptures were gradually replaced with non-Jewish ideas. Though many Jews rejected Christ as Messiah, they would not have accepted the Gnostic foolishness, which arose after the destruction of the Jewish nation, concerning the nature of the Messiah and His Father, Jehovah. The prominent church leaders were more and more from Gentile stock; and then the inevitable happened...

Jesus' words were divorced from their Hebrew context and His own faithful adherence to the Law of Jehovah. The *Jewishness* of the Apostles and the *historic setting* of the Scriptures also became blurred. When the writings of the Apostles, which include the four Gospels, are ripped from their Jewish context and cohesion with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, they fall prey to the whims of presumptuous, ignorant, and evil men. Jesus clearly taught that God's Law was LOVE, and all his judgments were consistent with this Law of Love (Mt 7:12). Jesus declared plainly that God's Law was still to be kept, and He did not change any of the requirements of God's Law for His followers who were all Jews. Listen to His clear teaching:

Mt 5:17 *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 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. 19 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. 20 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.*

Did Jesus break the least of God's commandments and teach men so? Of course not! He had to be sinless to be the Lamb of God without spot or blemish to die vicariously for mankind. The Pharisees were notorious for only keeping the parts of the law they liked the way they wanted.

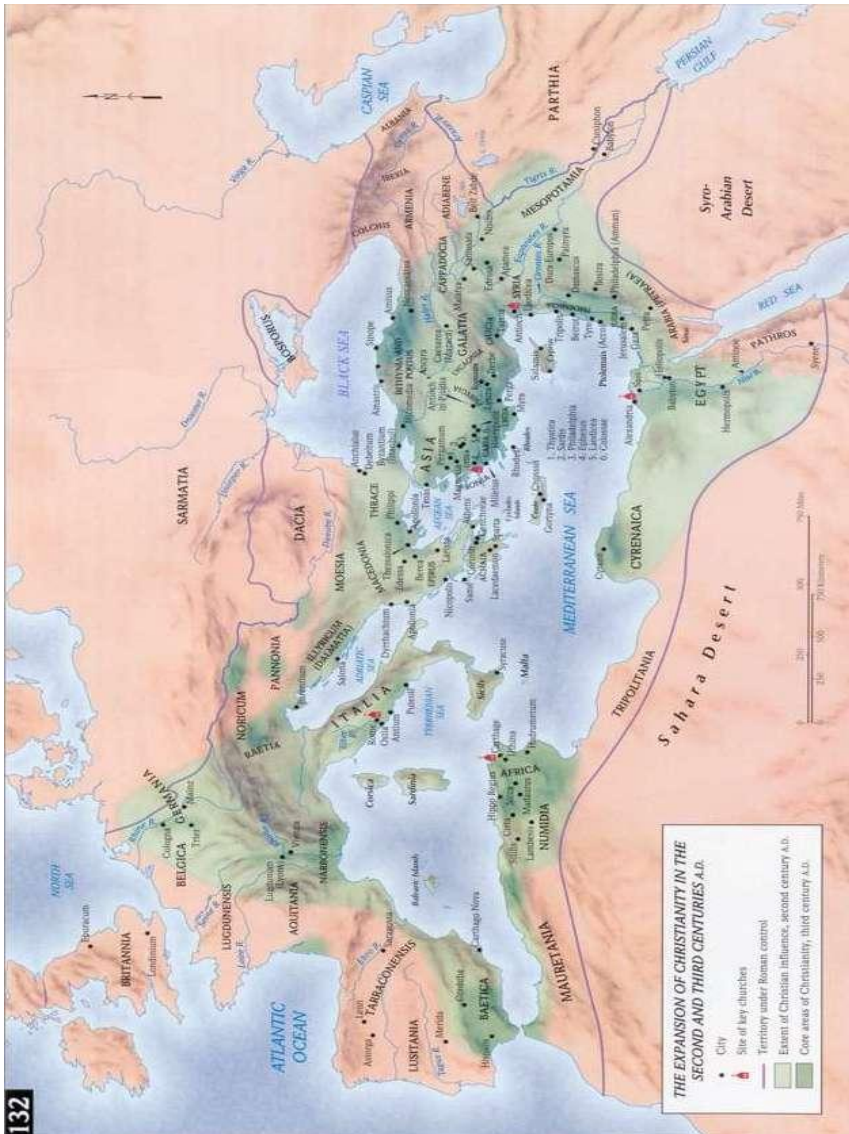
Mk 7:5 *Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? 6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. 8 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. 9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. 10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: 11 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. 12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; 13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.*

Did Jesus ever make the Word of God (Old Testament) of none affect by His own teaching? No, He did not do what He is rebuking the Pharisees for doing. That should be clear to the thinking mind. Grafting in the Gentile apart from circumcision and the ceremonial law does not change these facts! God's moral ethic did not change between the Old Testament and the New Testament! God's Love, which is perfectly consistent with God's Law and the prophet's preaching, was the unchanging message of the Apostles.

Study Questions from Chapter 25

- 1. What shift in perspective led to great apostasy and false doctrine?**
- 2. Who inspired the Old Testament? Who inspired the New Testament?**
- 3. What did Jesus tell Satan during His temptation in the wilderness that proves He never taught or lived contrary to the Old Testament Scriptures?**
- 4. Where did John the Apostle live when Titus was besieging Jerusalem?**
- 5. Who was given into John's care 40 years before the destruction of Jerusalem?**

6. About how old was the church at Ephesus when they “lost their first love”?
7. What did Gentile Christian leaders naturally lack that Jewish Christian leaders possessed from their childhood training? (2Ti 3:15)
8. What may have contributed to one of the “Sons of Thunder” becoming known as the “Apostle of Love”?



Chapter 26

Second Century Christendom & Beyond

Before the Apostles died they were already combating heretical movements trying to slander the church and confuse the message; but after their death the wolves came in full force. Along with pagan persecution, led by the Emperors of Rome, came the heretics from within. The simple and pure faith once delivered to the saints began to be mixed with Gentile tastes and preferences, rather than a Jewish world-view based on the national observance of God's Laws, Feasts, and manners. Attributes of God that Jews would have considered common knowledge, were undeveloped concepts to Gentile minds. This is why you cannot form your ideas of early Christianity from the "Ante-Nicene Fathers" who interpreted Jesus and the Apostles according to Gentile ideas rather than the context of Scriptural Judaism. Some of them clearly had *anti-Semitic* attitudes, which is not appropriate for any Christian claiming the Jewish Messiah.

I hope you understand that the **only** "early church" writings known to be from the first century are the **Scriptures**. The other "early church" writings are from men who were usually removed from Christ and the Apostles by over 100 years, and were not endorsed by any of the Apostles. Ignatius, Polycarp, and Clement of Rome, are the ones who likely knew the Apostles, and not much of their writing is preserved for us today, nor is it inspired. What has been preserved has also known corruption from later innovators seeking to support their heresy. Romanists seem to have corrupted Ignatius and Irenaeus in the 3rd and 4th century.

God preserved a remnant of true and faithful believers through the ages; but they have NEVER been the *mainstream church* since the apostasy of the early centuries and the rise of the antichrist papacy. Rich men and popular names hi-jacked the church and used it for their own ends. Truth became a means to an end, rather than being the end. Christ became a means to an end; and so the wolves put on sheep's clothing in order to make merchandise of the sheep. This has been the course of the age as predicted by the Apostles and Christ himself.

Paul warned the Ephesian elders in AD 59: **Acts 20:28** *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

Paul warned Timothy of the coming apostasy in 1Tim 4 and 2Tim 3-4 before his death in AD 67 or 68. John wrote (AD 80-100) that there were “many antichrists” in his day. So, who do you trust 100 years later? 100 years after Paul’s death would bring us to AD 167. At this date (167 AD): Tertullian was only seven years old; Irenaeus was a young man of 27; Marcion of Sinope had already been excommunicated 23 years previous, and died 7 years ago. Today, we dare not trust any “main stream” views, but must use the measuring tool God gave us to prove what is true and what is not. We must follow truth, even if it means leaving our heritage, comfort zone, and man-made traditions we have affection for.

A prime indicator of pagan corruption and superstition in early times is seen in the embellished baptism practices. This is one way we can know the *Didache* is not as early as some would like to imagine, as it requires fasting before baptism – something the Apostles didn’t practice or teach. Even as early as Tertullian (160-220AD) you have much superstitious ceremonialism and shocking error added to the simple rite of baptism. The Jewish idea of a *symbolic ritual washing* for baptism was changed to the Gentile idea of an **actual bath**. This is obvious departure from First Century Apostolic Christianity (See App C, pg 190).

Tertullian Late 2nd Century

*“When we are going to enter the water, but a little before, in the presence of the congregation and under the hand of the president, we solemnly profess that we disown the devil, and his pomp, and his angels. Hereupon we are thrice immersed, making a somewhat ampler pledge than the Lord has appointed in the Gospel. Then when we are taken up (as new-born children) **(unclothed)**, we taste first of all a mixture of milk and honey, and from that day we refrain from the daily bath for a whole week. We take also, in congregations before daybreak, and from the hand of*

none but the presidents, the sacrament of the Eucharist, which the Lord both commanded to be eaten at meal-times, and enjoined to be taken by all alike. As often as the anniversary comes round, we make offerings for the dead as birthday honours. We count fasting or kneeling in worship on the Lord's day to be unlawful. We rejoice in the same privilege also from Easter to Whitsunday. We feel pained should any wine or bread, even though our own, be cast upon the ground. At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign.” (De Corona Militis Chap 3) **(Bold Parenthesis is mine)**

Hippolytus of Rome (AD 215) 3rd Century

At the hour in which the cock crows, they shall first pray over the water. When they come to the water, the water shall be pure and flowing, that is, the water of a spring or a flowing body of water. Then they shall take off all their clothes. The children shall be baptized first. All of the children who can answer for themselves, let them answer. If there are any children who cannot answer for themselves, let their parents answer for them, or someone else from their family. After this, the men will be baptized. Finally, the women, after they have unbound their hair, and removed their jewelry. No one shall take any foreign object with themselves down into the water. At the time determined for baptism, the bishop shall give thanks over some oil, which he puts in a vessel. It is called the Oil of Thanksgiving. He shall take some more oil and exorcise it. It is called the Oil of Exorcism. A deacon shall hold the Oil of Exorcism and stand on the left. Another deacon shall hold the Oil of Thanksgiving and stand on the right. When the elder takes hold of each of them who are to receive baptism, he shall tell each of them to renounce, saying, "I renounce you Satan, all your service, and all your works." After he has said this, he shall anoint each with the Oil of Exorcism, saying, "Let every evil spirit depart from you." Then, after these things, the bishop passes each of them on nude to the elder who stands at the water. They shall stand in the water naked. A deacon, likewise (naked), will go down with them into the water. When each of them to be baptized has gone down into the water, the one baptizing shall lay hands on each of them, asking, "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?" And the one being baptized shall answer, "I believe." He shall then baptize each of them once, laying his hand upon each of their heads. Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose on the third day living from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, the one coming to judge the living and the dead?" When each has answered, "I believe," he

shall baptize a second time. Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church and the resurrection of the flesh?" Then each being baptized shall answer, "I believe." And thus let him baptize the third time. Afterward, when they have come up out of the water, they shall be anointed by the elder with the Oil of Thanksgiving, saying, "I anoint you with holy oil in the name of Jesus Christ." Then, drying themselves, they shall dress and afterwards gather in the church.

W.A. Mackay, in his book, *Water Baptism: The Doctrine Of The Mode*, reveals the following sad decay in mainline churches under the leadership of these "Ante-Nicene Fathers." What is said below applied to Tertullian's baptisms, described in the previous quote.

"Even in the Apostle's days there was a disposition on the part of many to depart from the simplicity of the Gospel. And this was particularly the case with regard to the sacraments of the Church (See I Cor. ch. 11:19-34, and Ch. 1:14). But in the second and third centuries we find the state of things deplorable indeed. The disposition to ascribe peculiar virtue to external forms had gone on constantly increasing, until by-and-by, nude immersions, accompanied with exorcism (magical powers), anointing, and every species of superstitions, fairly ran riot in unseemingly and scandalous practice. It was thought that there was a saving virtue in the very water of baptism. Just as it was believed that the bread and wine, after consecration, became the real body and blood of Christ, so it was believed that the water of baptism, after the invocation, possessed the real presence of the Spirit. The natural conclusion from this was that the more water the better, and that the water should be applied to the whole body so that the regeneration might be complete. We, therefore, now find trine or three-fold immersions in a nude state, accompanied with exorcism, unction, the giving of salt and milk to the candidate, clothing him in snow-white robes, and crowning him with evergreens"

The Ante-Nicene writers at this period were Gentiles who came from paganism and viewed the Scriptures from their world view rather than from the Jewish viewpoint of Christ and the Apostles. The errors and inconsistencies in the Ante-Nicene writers should cause every conscientious student of Scripture to deem them untrustworthy and only build their doctrine on the Scriptures themselves. Sadly though, today many form their idea of the "Early Church" from these contradictory and confused writers whose erroneous presuppositions led to Roman Catholicism steeped in paganism. This is an undeniable historic fact; and those who quote the patristic writers to defend their positions, rather than

building solely on the Scripture, are strangely quiet about this or are ignorant of it. It is surprising how quickly men will *USE* the patristic writers to defend their own erroneous doctrine, yet completely ignore the gross errors that *they* don't even agree with. Most corruptions today have a common foundation from the second century:

The Plague of Marcionism

Due to the departure from the Hebrew roots of Christianity, we find a man, Marcion of Sinope (85-160 AD), son of a Christian minister, excommunicated in Rome as early as AD 144 and called the "firstborn of Satan" by Polycarp (154 AD), bishop of Smyrna. Why do I bring this man into the picture? He was the natural result of disconnecting Jesus and the apostles from the Scriptures they believed (Genesis-Malachi). He divorced Jesus' ethics from Jehovah's and interpreted the Sermon on the Mount as Jesus correcting Moses, rather than defending God's Law against Jewish abuse. He used the analogy that a good tree does not bring forth evil fruit to charge Jehovah ("God of the Jews" to Marcion) with being an evil tree. Marcion did not like God's Laws, His Justice, His execution of evil-doers, etc. He made Jesus and His Father out to be all forgiving and "loving" (based on Marcion's definitions).

Tertullian states, *"The Separation of Law and Gospel is the primary and principal exploit of Marcion. His disciples cannot deny this, which stands at the head of their document, that document by which they are inducted into and confirmed in this heresy. For such are Marcion's Antitheses, or Contrary Oppositions, which are designed to show the conflict and disagreement of the Gospel and the Law... it is precisely this separation of Law and Gospel which has suggested a god of the Gospel, other than and in opposition to the God of the Law..."*

Any teaching today that claims Jesus taught a higher ethic than Jehovah, was more loving than Jehovah, or makes the Gospel of the New Testament different than the Gospel of the Old Testament or in conflict with God's Law, is a form of Marcionism, and comes from Marcion's foundational premise. Though he was certainly not the first heretic, Marcion was one of the first to interpret Jesus' teachings as antithetical to Jehovah's Law through Moses. Marcion interpreted Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, as CORRECTING Moses' Law (God's Law), rather than acknowledging that

Jesus was DEFENDING His own inspired Law through Moses against Jewish abuses.

It seems there was a line of Gnostic Heretics back to Simon the Samaritan who sought to disconnect Jesus from the “God of the Jews who created the physical world”. They all hated God’s Law through Moses, and yet wanted to gain acclaim through using the person of Jesus the Christ on which to build their system. By disconnecting Jesus from Jehovah and the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament Scriptures) the Gnostics, claiming “higher knowledge” could make their “Jesus” support whatever scheme they imagined. Some went to asceticism **“Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats”** (1Ti 4:3); while the others were **“turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness”** (Jude 3).

Simon Magus, Manander, Cerinthus, Saturninus, Basilides, Cerdo, all helped lay the egg that Marcion hatched into a great movement against the Christian Church. Cerdo was Marcion’s mentor for evil.

Sin is usually involved when someone starts wanting to change the Bible to fit their own ideas. According to Hippolytus of Rome and Epiphanius, Marcion was previously excommunicated from his own father’s congregation for immorality before going to Rome and seeking restoration in that church. When they wouldn’t accept him with his perverted doctrine, he declared in a fit of rage, "I will cause an eternal division in your Church." He was excommunicated for heresy in Rome 144 AD.

History Lesson From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

“Marcionism was an Early Christian dualist belief system that originated in the teachings of Marcion of Sinope at Rome around the year 144.^[1] Marcion believed Jesus was the savior sent by God, and Paul the Apostle was his chief Apostle, but he rejected the Hebrew Bible and the God of Israel. Marcionists believed that the wrathful Hebrew God was a separate and lower entity than the all-forgiving God of the New Testament. This belief was in some ways similar to Gnostic Christian theology; notably, both are dualistic,...The premise of Marcionism is that many of the teachings of Christ are incompatible with the actions of the God of the Old Testament. Focusing on the Pauline traditions of the Gospel, Marcion felt that all other conceptions of the Gospel, and especially any association with the Old Testament religion, was opposed to, and a backsliding from, the truth. He further regarded the arguments of Paul regarding law and gospel, wrath and grace, works and faith, flesh

*and spirit, sin and righteousness, death and life, as the essence of religious truth. He ascribed these aspects and characteristics as two principles, the righteous and wrathful God of the Old Testament, who is at the same time identical with the creator of the world, and a second God of the Gospel, quite unknown before Christ, who is only love and mercy...Marcion is said to have gathered scriptures from Jewish tradition, and **juxtaposed these against the sayings and teachings of Jesus in a work entitled the Antithesis.***^[16]"

"Historic Marcionism, and the church Marcion himself established, appeared to die out around the 5th century, although similarities between Marcionism and Paulicianism, a later heresy in the same geographical area, indicate that Marcionist ideas may have survived and even contributed to heresies derived from Paulicians in Bulgaria (Bogomilism) and France (Catharism). Whether or not that is the case, Marcion's influence and criticism of the Old Testament are discussed to this very day.

"For some, the postulated problems of the Old Testament, and the appeal of Jesus are such that they identify themselves as modern day Marcionites, and follow his solution in keeping the New Testament as sacred scripture, and rejecting the Old Testament canon and practices. A term sometimes used for these groups is "New Testament Christians". Carroll R. Bierbower is a pastor of a church he says is Marcionite in theology and practice.^[31] The Cathar movement, historically and in modern times, reject the Old Testament for the reasons Marcion enunciated. It remains unclear whether the 11th century Cathar movement is a continuation of earlier Gnostic and Marcion streams, or represents an independent re-invention."

(Emboldened emphasis is mine)

Marcion was a wolf in sheep's clothing, and all who follow his thinking today are following satanic deception. His premise is an incredible insult to Jehovah and Jesus; and the Apostles would label anyone *apostate* who chose to follow such thinking. It is very important to note that **where** the Marcionites **went** with their PREMISE is **not** the core of their wicked error; but the **PREMISE itself!** The main problem and slander upon God is the **PREMISE** that the ethics of Jesus are opposite the ethics of the Old Testament or at least incompatible and inconsistent. This is the heresy of Marcion and is seen in many denominations as well as modern Anabaptist groups (along with some of the ancient Anabaptists). Our book **Did Jesus Correct Moses?** Scripturally proves Marcion's premise to be a wicked insult to God and Christ. Marcion's life was a fulfillment of Paul's warning:

Acts 20:30 *Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*

To illustrate how perverted he became in his rage against Jehovah, consider this quotation from *The History of Heresies (Liguori)*: "Among other errors, he said, that when Jesus descended into hell, he did not save Abel, or Enoch, or Noah, or any other of the just of the old law, because they were friends of the God of the Jews; but that he saved Cain, the Sodomites, and the Egyptians, because they were the enemies of this God" (*This information is stated in Epiphanius*)

Most doctrinal heresies today could be cleared up if proper respect was given to Moses, the Old Testament Scriptures, and the historic context of Judaism in the life and words of Jesus and His Apostles. **If we are committed to interpreting Jesus and all New Testament writings in perfect cohesion with all the Old Testament Scriptures, we can apprehend God's true and complete message for mankind.**

2Ti 3:16 *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect (Complete), thoroughly furnished (fully equipped) unto all good works.*

The proper definitions of *Law, Grace, Faith, Works, Jew, Gentile, Sin, Salvation, Justification, Righteousness, Holiness*, etc. are all to be found and understood in the Old Testament Scriptures. The Apostles always upheld the Old Testament as inspired by Jesus, *The Word*; and they always use the above terms as defined and illustrated by those Scriptures. They NEVER intended their writings to CORRECT the Old Testament Scriptures which they believed to be the WORD of GOD. They continually used Old Testament examples to illustrate their teaching, because God's ethics never change, and so ALL the revelation of His Ways are extremely valuable to those who want to know God.

Irenaeus, writing around 180 AD, argues with us against Marcionite ideas: (Against Heresies book IV)

"1. For the tradition of the elders themselves, which they pretended to observe from the law, was contrary to the law given by Moses. Wherefore also Esaias declares: "Thy dealers mix the wine with water,"(6) showing that the elders were in the habit of mingling a watered

tradition with the simple command of God; that is, they set up a spurious law, and one contrary to the[true] law; as also the Lord made plain, when He said to them, **"Why do ye transgress the commandment of God, for the sake of your tradition?"**(7) For not only by actual transgression did they set the law of God at nought, mingling the wine with water; but they also set up their own law in opposition to it, which is termed, even to the present day, the pharisaical. In this [law] they suppress certain things, add others, and interpret others, again, as they think proper, which their teachers use, each one in particular; and desiring to uphold these traditions, **they were unwilling to be subject to the law of God, which prepares them for the coming of Christ.** But they did even blame the Lord for healing on the Sabbath-days, which, as I have already observed, the law did not prohibit. ...but they did not blame themselves for transgressing the command of God through tradition and the aforesaid pharisaical law, and for not keeping the commandment of the law, **which is the love of God.**

2. But that this is the first and greatest commandment, and that the next [has respect to love] towards our neighbour, the Lord has taught, when He says that the entire law and the prophets hang upon these two commandments. Moreover, **He did not Himself bring down [from heaven] any other commandment greater than this one, but renewed this very same one to His disciples, when He enjoined them to love God with all their heart, and others as themselves.** But if He had descended from another Father, He never would have made use of the first and greatest commandment of the law; but He would undoubtedly have endeavoured by all means to bring down a greater one than this from the perfect Father, so as not to make use of that which had been given by the God of the law. And Paul in like manner declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the law:"...

3. As in the law, therefore, and in the Gospel [likewise], the first and greatest commandment is, to love the Lord God with the whole heart, and then there follows a commandment like to it, to love one's neighbor as one's self; the author of the law and the Gospel is shown to be one and the same. For the precepts of an absolutely perfect life, since they are the same in each Testament, have pointed out [to us] the same God..."

He says also...

"...But since the writings of Moses are the words of Christ, He does Himself declare to the Jews, as John has recorded in the Gospel: "If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, neither will ye believe My words."(3) He thus indicates in the clearest manner that the writings of Moses are His words."

From the end of the first century unto our day, the *Faith Once Delivered to the Saints* has been under attack by every stratagem the serpent could devise. Heresy of every shape, size, and color has been propagated by the grand deceiver, persecutor, and accuser of the brethren. As Jude exhorts, we must contend for **The Faith once for all delivered to the saints** (apostles) if we are to overcome and bruise the serpent's head. Jesus is bruising the serpent's head through His own life and through His Church; but if we don't follow the protocol of our master, we will fail in our realm.

Re 12:11 *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb (True Atonement), and by the word of their testimony (Preaching the True Faith); and they loved not their lives unto the death (True Faithfulness).*

The Usurpation Of Romanism

The New Covenant program entrusted to the saints by the Apostles of Christ was Christ walking in the midst of His independent autonomous congregations whose bishops were directly accountable to Jesus Christ. They had to contend for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints or they would have their candlestick removed. In the Jewish temple there was a candlestick with seven lamps called the Menorah, which represented the centralized order of Judaism. You had a designated priestly family, a specific temple location, a national identity, and could not split off from this to purify Judaism. However, the New Covenant was with the believing remnant meeting in separate congregations with no centralized government, temple or priestly family.

The New Covenant congregations had no priests, because Jesus was the heavenly priest in the tabernacle in heaven and the earthly priesthood was destroyed. It wasn't until the end of the second century that "priests" became part of the ministers of the churches. This happened because the Lord's Supper, a remembrance, became a "thanksgiving offering" and then an "expiatory sacrifice" – re-sacrificing Christ for the atonement of sins in the "mass". This development increased the power and necessity of the Romish church in the lives of the people. Christ's heavenly priesthood was being usurped by power hungry churchmen – Yes, the rise of antichrist.

Through political maneuvering, military force, bloodshed, lies about succession, false decretals, legends about Peter's chair, lies upon lies, superstitions galore, and every artifice of Satan the church in Rome, the seat of the empire, usurped authority over every church that succumbed to her harlotry. The rise of the papacy is compared to "Babylon" in the book of Revelation because it took Christendom in the West and eventually the East captive. Declaring infallibility for the popes, goddess status for the Virgin Mary, and supernatural powers for relics, statues, priests, and dead "saints"; they seduced much of Christendom into their antichrist idolatry.

This is a sad fact of History which has filled many books. For further study I recommend among many good books on the subject:

- Our video series concerning “Inquiry 1-7” about who is the bride of Christ.
- Charles Chiniquy’s book “Fifty Years In The Church Of Rome”
- Bishop Strossmayer's speech protesting Papal infallibility
- An Apology Of The Church Of England by John Jewel

So Who Is The Bride?

Ro 9:1 *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: 4 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; 5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. 6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. **For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.***

Ro 11:1 *I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? **I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.***

In these two passages we see God’s way of sifting men, nations, and even those involved in God’s program to see whose faith and heart is genuine before Him. Just because you were related to Abraham didn’t automatically make you “of Israel”, because the “seed” wasn’t counted by physical succession, but by the succession of “Faith” – The Faith of Abraham in whomever it dwelt. **“Even so then at this present time”** and all through the history of God’s People there has been a remnant according to

“God’s Grace toward the Faithful” whether it was obeying the Faith delivered to Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, The Prophets, or through Messiah to the Apostles. Those who refused to bow the knee to the “Baal” of their generation; but wholly put their faith in God’s Word and followed it with genuine love for God have always been God’s elected remnant of salvation by Grace (*not earned by perfect knowledge, sinless performance, or self-atonement*).

God’s Word teaches a Succession of TRUTH and those who clung to God’s truth – in every nation. The New Covenant assemblies have a “Candlestick” as Christ’s Bride by the succession of faithfulness to Him; not by any imagined “seat of Peter”. Every assembly of faithful disciples of Christ on the planet has a candlestick based on faithfulness to truth, not any other connection, relation, succession, or denominational affiliation. ARE YOU studying to be faithful to truth or bowing the knee to the establishment?

Study Questions from Chapter 26

- 1. Understanding that Marcionite teaching is the foundation of all doctrines which set Jesus’ teaching in conflict with the Old Testament; list some doctrines which would fall into this category.**
- 2. How does the premise of Marcionism insult Jehovah and Jesus?**
- 3. What trend do we see early in 2nd century Christendom?**
- 4. Why would Gentiles, converted from pagan idolatry, be prone to embellish simple Christian ceremonies with external ritualism?**
- 5. Why would baptism ceremonies become a prime indicator of the departure from first century Jewish Christianity to Gentile paganized Christendom?**
- 6. Why is outward ritualism easier on the carnal nature than a truly Spiritual Faith and Practice?**
- 7. Are we to believe that the writings of rich and prominent “Christian” figures represent the faithful remnant of Jesus Christ through the ages? What about today? Do the “big**

names” and “popular authors” today represent true Christianity? Have they ever?

8. If we wish to overcome and bruise the serpent’s head, we must be tenacious to contend for WHAT?
9. If we are not building ALL our Faith and Practice on First Century Apostolic Christianity are we really building on THE ROCK?
10. What should we expect wolves in sheep’s clothing to look like?
11. Do Christ’s sheep ever dress up as wolves?
12. What if Paul, James, or John visited your church? What might they say?
13. What practices and beliefs in your church would not fit in the First Century Apostolic Faith and Practice?
14. Is it important to be faithful to the Faith Once Delivered To The Saints?
15. Did the Apostles ever ordain “priests” in the first century churches?
16. Where did Peter likely minister when he wrote his epistles?
17. Did the Apostles establish the Lord’s Supper as a remembrance of Christ’s once for all sacrifice or as an expiatory sacrifice re-sacrificing Jesus over and over at every mass?
18. Paul was primarily called to minister to the Gentile world and Peter was primarily called to minister to whom? (Ga 2:7-9)
19. Who qualifies as the Bride of Christ?

You have just studied the history of First Century Apostolic Faith and Practice, based on the *Scriptures*. If you build your ideas of early Christian Faith and Practice on another foundation, you are not building on The Rock, and you are asking to be deceived and rejected on Judgment Day. If you commit yourself to only follow First Century Apostolic Christian Faith and Practice you must be prepared to swim upstream against the flow of apostate Christendom. We at LFCF strive to believe

and practice what the Apostles taught the first century churches, which is *The Faith Once Delivered To The Saints*.

To continue your studies in First Century Apostolic Faith and Practice go to: www.thefaithoncedelivered.com or write to Living Faith Christian Fellowship for help and literature.

Appendix A

Did Jesus make and drink wine?

We see many "winebibbers" today justifying their use of alcoholic drinks because "Jesus made wine"; but what kind of wine did Jesus make? If they would look, they would find the upright Jews only drank a wine-water mixture; and this is what Jesus, as a Law-abiding Jew would make (Matt 23:1-2). One part wine to three parts water was commonly accepted, but greater dilution was also used. Only Barbarians drank wine undiluted or with a 1-to-1 dilution. J.W. Shepard says: *"Jesus made real wine out of the water. But there was a great difference between the Palestinian wine of that time and the alcoholic mixtures which today go under the name of wine. Their simple vintage was taken with three parts of water and would correspond more or less to our grape juice. It would be worse than blasphemy to suppose, because Jesus made wine, that He justifies the drinking usages of modern society with its bars, strong drinks, and resulting evils"* See J. Dwight Pentecost, **The Words and Works of Jesus Christ** – Pgs 115-117 for a full discussion.

Adam Clarke on 1 Tim 5:23: *among the Greeks and Roman the state of youth or adolescence was extended to thirty years, and **no respectable young men were permitted to drink wine before that time**; allowing that Timothy was about twenty when Paul had him circumcised, which was, according to Calmet, in the year of our Lord 51, and that this epistle was written about A. D. 64 or 65, then Timothy must have been **about thirty-five when he received this epistle**; and as that was on the borders of adolescence, and as the Scripture generally calls that youth that is not old age, Timothy might be treated as a young man by St. Paul, as in the above text, and might still feel himself under the custom of his country relative to drinking wine, (for his father was a Greek, Acts 16:1.) and, through the influence of his Christian profession, still continue to abstain from wine, drinking water only; which must have been very [detrimental] to him, his weak state of health considered, the delicacy of his stomach, and the excess of his ecclesiastical labours.*

Barnes: *Distilled spirits were not then known. The art of distilling was discovered by an Arabian chemist in the **ninth or tenth century**; but distilled*

liquors are not used by Arabians. They banished them at once, as if sensible of their pernicious influence; nor are they used in Eastern nations at all. Europe and America have been the places where this poison has been most extensively used, and there it has beggared and ruined millions, and is yearly sweeping thousands unprepared into a wretched eternity.

Appendix B

Moral, Civil, & Ceremonial Law

There is a definite difference between moral Laws and ceremonial laws. The Bible makes this distinction very plain. The Moral Law is eternal and the Ceremonial Law is temporal and specifically related to the covenant in which it was given. The ceremonies God gave were object lessons about God's plan of salvation. They were merely shadows of eternal principles. They taught that God's relationship with man required more than submission to the moral laws; it also required atonement for man's sins. The Moral Law cannot cease to be obligatory upon moral creatures; but the Ceremonial Law is only obligatory when part of God's covenant arrangement. The Moral Law is God's view of morality for eternity; but the ceremonial laws given to man (including Moses' Law) are types and shadows pointing to the heavenly realities that they illustrate.

Civil Laws are based on moral principles, but deal with social regulations which can change with the times and circumstances. They are the present applications of eternal moral principles to *today's* situation in this culture, climate, etc. Something may not be "morally wrong", but due to the "present circumstances" it is not wise or expedient; therefore a wise ruler will make an ordinance against it. That ordinance may not be relevant or wise in a different country with different circumstances. We will illustrate this later.

Many misunderstand the distinctions between different types of Laws. In Moses' Law we have *Civil Law*, *Ceremonial Law*, and *Moral law*. All the laws are based on moral principles; but not all the laws are moral in NATURE. Ceremonial Laws are Ceremonial in **nature**. Yes, it is always immoral to disobey God in any command, whether moral or ceremonial; but we are speaking of the **nature** of the Law. Ceremonial Laws have to do with things being holy by **appointment** and not by **nature**. Baptism is a ceremonial law in the New Covenant; but getting wet is not holy by **nature**, but only by **God's appointment**. The Sabbath was just another day until it was made holy by appointment. God can change the sanctity of one day to another day by appointing another day to be holy without changing His **moral** judgment in the slightest. Days are not holy by nature, but only by appointment.

God cannot, however, change His mind about adultery, fornication, false witness, murder, covetousness, etc. without changing His MORALS.

Some things are holy because they are made so by “setting them apart” unto a dedicated purpose, like the show bread, priest’s garments, temple furniture, etc. The words “hallowed” and “sanctified” refer to **common** things being **made holy** by cleansing and dedication to the service of God – by appointment. Other things are holy because they are **necessary components** of **God’s Love**. Ceremonial holiness can change; but God’s Love cannot. God can replace the *Temple Service* with the *Church Service*; but He cannot change “thou shalt not commit adultery” into “adultery is now righteous”. The lost Gentile didn’t know by nature about Jewish sanitation and ceremonial cleanliness; but he had a conscience that murder, rape, adultery, cheating, false witness, and stealing were wrong from the remnants of God’s image of love still residing in his heart – Ro 2:14.

The civil laws of God were applications of God’s love to social order, conservation, treatment of animals, etc. **De 25:4** “*Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.*” is a civil ordinance – not ceremonial law; but based on a moral principle. Listen to what Paul says about this.

1Co 9:6 *Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? 7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.*

Here we see that this civil law had a moral principle to teach for mankind, and was not in the same category as *rape, murder, or adultery*, which are strictly moral matters which can never be right. When we speak of moral or ceremonial laws, we are speaking of the NATURE of the law, not whether it is immoral to disobey God. Paul says that circumcision was only holy by appointment and was *nothing* apart from that appointment, but as we said earlier, it represented an eternal moral principle of the circumcision of the heart. It was only holy by appointment.

1Co 7:19 *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.*

This is why it could be changed with the making of a new covenant! It was not a necessary component of God’s Love, but only symbolic of a principle as all

ceremonial laws are. Ceremonial laws can change with the changing of the covenant; but moral laws can never change because they are necessary aspects of God's Love in either our **relationship with God** or our **relationships with man** – *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness* as used in Romans 1:18.

Ro 1:18 *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*

Most ceremonial laws of the Old Testament found their fulfillment in the life, death, resurrection, and priestly ministry of Jesus Christ. I say "most" because the fall feasts are typical of Christ's second coming, and have not been fulfilled. The ceremonial sacrifices God gave were man's way of believing in Christ's atonement before Christ even came. The gospel was preached through the animal sacrifices, and as men reverently observed the ceremonial law, they were believing in God's salvation by grace.

It is important to understand that God's relationship with fallen mankind has always been in the form of covenants. These covenants had two basic parts:

1. Man's willingness to live by God's moral standards; and
2. God given rituals or ceremonies to teach about God's conditional salvation through blood atonement.

God could not allow man to think that present submission to God's moral standards was sufficient to maintain a relationship with God, because man had fallen, and could not redeem himself or atone for his own past sin. Sins could not just be forgotten or "brushed under the rug"; but had to lawfully be dealt with. God started teaching man immediately after the fall that two things were necessary for man to have a covenant relationship and thus reconcile with God:

1. Repentance and submission to God's moral laws, and ...
2. A blood atonement.

God taught this principle through what we call ceremonial law or ritual law. This also predates Moses. The Mosaic Covenant was a covenant arrangement with the nation of Israel for a certain time period until Christ came. God had been relating with man on similar principles from the time Adam and Eve were clothed with skins of a slain animal. Moses' Law incorporated and codified these older covenant concepts.

We find that Cain and Abel knew about ritual obligations, and it was Cain's trespass against this arrangement that caused his offering to be rejected. God had taught them to bring an animal sacrifice for blood atonement. This means they also understood what SIN was and knew when God's Ways had been trespassed. God

tells Cain that if he had **done well**, he would have **been accepted**, but since he did not do well, a sin offering was at the door, and he could avail himself of it to repent and reconcile with God. Obviously Cain knew what to do.

Ge 4:7 *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin [a sin offering] lieth at the door.*

Noah was instructed to take more clean animals on the Ark than unclean animals. This was partly due to animal sacrifices which we find them offering as soon as they were off the Ark. Noah knew the difference between clean and unclean animals, and also about animal sacrifices upon altars.

Ge 8:20 *And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.*

We find Abraham walking up to Mount Moriah where God told him to offer Isaac on the altar as a type of Christ's atonement. As he walked Isaac asked a very revealing question:

Ge 22:7 *And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: **but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?***

Isaac knew all about this principle long before Moses' Law. Abraham had told his servant that they would go yonder to worship and then return. Isaac knew what that meant. We find in Genesis 26 God declaring to Isaac the reason why Abraham was blessed:

Ge 26:5 *Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*

Hear what God commanded Abraham to do along with these sacrifices which picture God's plan for atonement in Christ:

Ge 17:1 *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

As Abraham obeyed the moral precepts God gave him, followed the "work of the law in his heart" from the "image of God" that still remained; and worshipped through blood sacrifices; his relationship with God was maintained. His faith was seen in his faith-full-ness.

Even the covenant of circumcision was a covenant based on Abraham submitting to God's Moral Law, and having the sign and symbol of circumcision as a ceremony or ritual observance picturing a regenerated heart.

Col 2:11 *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:*

Circumcision symbolized the faithful obedience of Abraham. It had to do with the principle of crucifying the flesh and walking in the Spirit. Those with the ceremonial letter of the law fulfilled in their flesh; but without the spiritual meaning fulfilled in their heart were missing the point - and their relationship with God.

Ro 2:23 *Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. 25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26 Therefore if the **uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law**, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, **if it fulfil the law**, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost **transgress the law**? 28 For he is not a Jew, which is one **outwardly**; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one **inwardly**; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

These verses prove that there is a definite separation between **moral** and **ceremonial** laws as Paul argues that one who is obeying the moral laws (righteousness of the law); but is an uncircumcised Gentile (not fulfilling the ceremonial laws) is still acceptable to God and has the true essence of being a Jew **within** though not **without**. The Ceremonial Law was to be eventually done away, but the Moral Law (its counterpart) was never done away. The circumcision in the flesh became unnecessary, but the circumcision of the heart would always be necessary.

Ro 4:9 *Cometh this blessedness (Salvation by Grace) then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the*

circumcision only, but who **also** walk in the **steps of that faith** of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. 13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, **(the ceremonial covenant of types and shadows)** but through the righteousness of faith. **(The real entity – obedience to God’s moral laws from the heart)**

This whole argument proves the separation between the moral and ceremonial laws and shows that salvation by grace, i.e. God imputing our living obeying faith to us as perfect righteousness by cleansing our record of sin, is a blessing bestowed not only on the “circumcision” (the Jews obeying the ceremonial law by faith in God); but also on the “uncircumcision” (Gentile believers who don’t obey the ceremonial law). Paul is explaining why Gentiles could be grafted into God’s church and salvation without becoming Jews first as it was before Cornelius. This blessing comes to those who have the faith of Abraham who obeyed God’s moral laws as much as he knew them. Whether we are Jews under the obligations of the ceremonial laws or Gentile converts who do not obey the ceremonial laws, we ALL must have the faith that obeys the moral laws of God that we know along with the present covenant arrangements (Lord’s Supper, Baptism, public assembly and worship, etc).

Ro 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* 2 *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* 3 *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:* 4 ***That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*** 5 *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.* 6 *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* 7 ***Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*** 8 ***So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.***

If I asked a group of Christians if believers are required to obey God’s Moral Laws, they would probably say, NO; but if I asked them if Christians were required to walk in LOVE towards God and man, they would say YES. This is due to the false teaching that has pervaded Christendom. You cannot know and practice God’s Love properly unless you know and practice God’s Moral Laws, for God’s Law teaches us God’s view of LOVE.

1Jo 5:2 *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*

Appendix C

FIRST CENTURY BAPTISM

In the New Testament it seems that only those old enough to believe in Christ of their own intelligent choice and be instructed in the faith were baptized after they repented of their sins and professed faith in Christ. This is called "believers' baptism". Some have put forth strong arguments for infant baptism replacing circumcision; however, this would have been an easy argument for Paul to use against Gentiles circumcising their children if it was true -- He never used it.

The Jewish Christians practiced Christian Baptism AND Jewish Circumcision (Acts 21); which proves that one did not replace the other. For the first twelve years after Pentecost only circumcised Jews could be baptized. This could possibly include children when the parents embraced Christ; or, as a Jewish youth at twelve or thirteen had their first Passover, children of Christian parents might be baptized at that time when old enough to learn and embrace the faith. Children were considered "clean" or "set apart" to God by having at least one Christian parent, not by being baptized as a baby (1Co 7).

In the Bible, baptism was initiation as a follower of Jesus Christ, as well as a rite of ceremonial cleansing. It pictured the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, washing of regeneration, death to the old life, and resurrection to new life, and the putting on of Christ Jesus. It was initiation as a disciple of Jesus Christ and entrance into the visible church and communion.

In the Bible people were baptized after they were taught the Gospel message and professed faith enough to become a disciple of Jesus -- thus enrolling themselves in "learning to observe all things Jesus commanded" (Matt. 28:18-21). Some were baptized and later proved to be false professors. This makes it clear that the water doesn't save, but is our act of faith to trigger God's promised blessings to those who believe. Baptism is not essential to salvation, but willingness and desire to be baptized is essential to salvation. You may not be able to, but you'd better do your best to obey.

The apostles never counted a convert that wasn't baptized. They never declared anyone a believer who delayed baptism. They didn't coax their converts into baptism, but commanded them to be baptized, just like they had commanded them to repent in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins. Many modern Baptist preachers have an actual program whereby they coax people into the baptistery -- I have the books. This is a perversion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The reason they have to do this is because their false repentance and easy believism has not produced a true convert.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

If you will carefully compare verses, you will see that the baptism of the Holy Ghost happens when we believe, and typically when we are baptized with water. We are baptized **with** water in faith of God's promised forgiveness and baptism **with** the Holy Spirit. Baptism without true faith is meaningless; but faith without obedience in baptism is also dead -- God's plan is for us to show our faith by obedience. Follow closely in these verses:

1. Mt 3:11 John came commanding men to repent and show it by being baptized **with** water. John told the people Jesus was coming after and would baptize **with** the Holy Spirit -- which was promised by God in the Old Testament.

2. Jesus told his disciples that AFTER HE LEFT, he would send the Holy Spirit to dwell IN them, not just **with** them. (Jn 14:16,17; 15:26,27; 16:7,8; Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 2:32,33; 15:7,8)

God promised the indwelling Holy Spirit as a NEW COVENANT in the Old Testament; therefore we find Jesus speaking of it as the "promise of the Father". Jesus received this promise from the Father after he resurrected and ascended -- Jn 16:7; Acts 2:32, 33:

Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

3. In **John 20:22** Jesus instructs his disciples about receiving the Holy Spirit, and what would happen after they received him; but they didn't receive him at this time. Jesus made it clear the Holy Spirit would be sent **after** he departed -- Acts 1:4 "Which ye have heard of me" (Acts 2:33). What happened on Pentecost is what John the Baptist was speaking of; what Jesus had told the disciples about; what the Father had promised; and is equal to the power in Lk 24:49 and Acts 1:8 (Note: Acts 2:33 & 15:7,8)

4. **Acts 2:14-17**: Peter tells the people that what they see is what God promised in the Old Testament (the New Covenant). In Acts 2:38 Peter tells them how to get it!

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

5. **Acts 10:43-48**: In order to show Peter that God would receive these Gentiles, God gives them the Holy Spirit **before** they are baptized. You can see this was a surprise by Peter's statements in 10:47 and 11:15-17. Cornelius received the **same** gift, when he believed, that the apostles did on Pentecost.

6. If you will compare Acts 15:7-9 with Rom 8:9,15,16 and I John 4:13; you will understand that the Holy Spirit is given as the **seal** of God's acceptance. In Eph 1:14, 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; and Romans 8:23, the word EARNEST tells us that the Holy

Spirit is our pledge from God that He has accepted our repentance. Rom 8:9 tells us that those without this indwelling Holy Spirit are not born again. Those who repent and believe show it by baptism -- when God sees sincere faith and repentance, He pours out the Holy Spirit upon the believer to indwell and regenerate him. This is our comfort after our mourning (repentance), our assurance of forgiveness, and the BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. He gives us the present help to overcome and endure in obedience to Christ. See John 4:10; 7:38, 39.

7. Acts 19:1-6 When these people told Paul they had not yet received the Holy Spirit, he immediately asked them, "UNTO WHAT THEN WERE YE BAPTIZED?" This shows that Paul saw baptism with water in close relation to baptism with the Holy Spirit. "If you were not baptized in Jesus' name to receive the Holy Spirit, unto what then were you baptized-- or for what purpose?" He then re-baptized them in Jesus' name so they could receive the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals like to misuse the question Paul asked here, but they don't re-baptize like Paul did. These people were Jews, and that is why they had the sign of tongues.

The case in Acts 8:15 is similar to Cornelius', in that it was not considered "standard procedure" at the time of the writing. I believe God opened the doors of the New Covenant to Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the world by the Apostles hands; thus establishing their authority. This is seen by Pentecost (Acts 2:14); Samaria - six years later (Acts 8:14-17), and Cornelius - twelve years later (Acts 10; 11:15-18).

8. Those who erroneously teach that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit has to be evidenced by the "speaking in tongues" overlook some important points:

- A. I Cor. 14:21 makes it clear that "tongues" were for a sign to Israel -- It fulfilled O.T. Prophecy.
- B. I Cor. 12:29, 30 makes it clear not all believers speak with tongues, so it can't be evidence of salvation.
- C. Bible "tongues" are natural languages -- Acts 2; and I Cor. 14:10.
- D. What happened at Corinth was not of the Holy Spirit, or Paul would not have had to straighten it out, set down regulations, and rebuke those doing it!

Much more could be said, but it will be covered in later publications.

Mode of Water Baptism

The following notes reveal the reasons of my change of mind from a strong immersionist to the practice of pouring. I set out to prove the affusionists wrong; but discovered the evidence was on their side. I am very aware of the history of immersion having been raised a Baptist and studying the subject thoroughly.

What is Baptism?

- It is "ritual washing" as opposed to "actual washing"
- It is "ceremonial cleansing" as opposed to "actual cleansing"

- It is “symbolic purification” as opposed to “actual purification”

Actual purification is by the blood of Christ and the regeneration of the Holy Spirit

Titus 3:5-6 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the **washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost**; Which he **shed on us** abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;”

John 1:19-27 The Jews expected the coming Christ or Elijah to Baptize

*1:19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? 20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? 23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. 24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, **Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?** 26 John answered them, saying, **I baptize with water**: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.*

Compare with Mt 3:11 *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:***

Baptism was not a new concept to the Jews – they saw it as a rite of purification

Messiah would baptize – where did thy get this idea?

Mal 3:1 *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. 2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: **and he shall purify the sons of Levi**, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*

Isa 32:15 *Until the **spirit be poured upon us from on high**, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.*

Isa 44:3 *For I will **pour water upon him that is thirsty**, and floods upon the dry ground: I will **pour my spirit upon thy seed**, and my blessing upon thine offspring:*

Isa 52:13-15 Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. 14 As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15 So shall he **sprinkle many nations**; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

- This is where the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading when he met Phillip.
- When was this fulfilled? How?

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will **pour out my spirit** upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I **pour out my spirit**.

Ez 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I **sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean**: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

- When and how was this fulfilled?

Ez 39:29 Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have **poured out my spirit** upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

The Jews understood that baptism was Ceremonial cleansing and purification.

John 3:25 “purifying”

“Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about **purifying**. 26 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. 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”

Compare Jn. 2:6 “manner of purifying”

“And there were set there six waterpots of stone, **after the manner of the purifying of the Jews,**”

- This is how the Jews washed and bathed (2 Sam 11:2)

2 Kings 3:11 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which **poured water on the hands of Elijah.**

- They didn't immerse their hands or they would have fouled the water.

Compare Luke 11:37-38

11:37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. 38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

- **“did not baptize himself”** in the Greek the word is **“baptizo”**
- **Do they foul their water supply by immersion? or do they pour water over their hands?**

Mk 7:4 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.

- **“unless they baptize”** again it is **“baptizo”**

Mk 7:8 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.

Mk 7:4,8 “washing” “baptismos”

So, the Bible defines “Baptizo” as “washing”, and a rite of purification well known to the Jews, who did this by pouring water over the object – thus it was baptized **WITH** water, not **IN** water.

3. **Jesus’ Baptism** – Not for repentance, but for ordination and anointing as Prophet, Priest, and King

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 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. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Compare: Lk 20:1 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, 2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority? 3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: 4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? 5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? 6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. 7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was. 8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

John's Baptism of Jesus was Jesus' earthly anointing and authority to minister as He did.

- He was 30 yrs. old – the age of a priest at his anointing
- John was the son of a priest, and of the priestly line.
- Daniel 9:4 “anointing of the most high” dates to Christ's baptism

How was this done?

Ex 29:4 *And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water. 5 And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: 6 And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. 7 Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him.*

- **Washed and anointed**

Lev 8:4 *And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 5 And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done. 6 And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. 7 And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith. 8 And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim. 9 And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses. 10 And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them. 11 And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them. 12 And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.*

The washing was done at the door of the tabernacle in the audience of the people – most likely wasn't the whole body, but a ceremonial washing – like baptism. It was probably done similar to the cleansing of the Levites:

Nu 8:5 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. 7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.*

Ex 30:17 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 18 Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. 19 For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: 20 When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made*

by fire unto the LORD: 21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.

They would not immerse the dirty hands or feet into the laver and foul all the water, but have someone dip the water and pour it on their hands and feet (see above 2 Kings 3:11)

Examples of ceremonial washing by sprinkling

Nu 8:5 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. 7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.*

Nu 19:18 *And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave:*

Psalms 51:7 *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

This hyssop was dipped in the water and used to sprinkle the unclean – it was considered as a ceremonial “washing”.

Heb 9:13 *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:*

John baptized with water, but Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost

What Mode did Jesus use? What did the water baptism signify?

- **Acts 1:4-8** Baptized with water -- Baptized with Holy Spirit – the little Greek word “en” must be translated consistent with **both** “water” and “Holy Spirit” baptism for they are a parallel; and we know without doubt what the mode was in Spirit Baptism.
- “Holy Spirit is come upon you”
- Tit 3:5 “washing...and...Holy Ghost...shed on us”
- Acts 2:1-4; 16-18 “sat upon” “pour out upon you”
- Acts 2:33-38 “shed forth” “be baptized...and ye shall receive the...Holy Ghost”
- Acts 8:16 “As yet he was **fallen upon** none of them”
- Acts 10:37,38; 44-47; “God **anointed** Jesus”, “**fell on**”, “**poured out**”
 - “forbid water... being brought in to baptize”
- Acts 11:15,16 “**fell on**” “baptized **with** water...baptize **with** Holy Ghost”

Peter was reminded of John’s words, John’s baptism, and the Pentecostal outpouring when he saw the Holy Spirit poured out upon Cornelius and his friends.

- Acts 19:2-6 “unto what then were ye baptized?” “...if you weren’t baptized to receive the Holy Spirit, unto what then were you baptized?”

The parallel is inescapable!

What did the water baptism of John signify?

- Pouring out of the Holy Spirit

What mode did Jesus use to Baptize with the Holy Spirit?

- Pouring

Jesus was the Christ (anointed one) – when was his anointing?

- At His Baptism Lk 4:18; Acts 10:37,38

We are called Christians (little anointed ones) (I Jn 2:27) - When is our anointing?

- At our Baptism

Why would the mode of “baptized **with** Water” be different than “baptized **with** Holy Spirit” when water baptism was to signify and parallel Spirit baptism?

We are baptized to signify the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon all believers as the earnest of our inheritance.

We are identifying with Christ’s life, teaching, suffering, crucifixion, and burial in faith of being resurrected with HIM.

Some additional thoughts:

- **“Baptizo”** is a word that deals with RESULT, not MODE: Like the word “paint” or “wet” or “wash” -- these words deal with result, not mode.
- In Extra Biblical Greek literature when this word is used, we are told that the element is always moved and put on the object. The object is not dipped into the element

Baptism in the name of a person is identification as a disciple of that person’s teaching and example.

- **1Co 10:2** *And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;*
 - They had come under Moses’ leadership and teaching.
 - What was the mode? Sprinkling and pouring – only the Egyptians were immersed.

Same with **1Pe 3:20-21** Those in the ark were separated from the old life by water pouring over them and washing the world away. Only the wicked were immersed, not Noah.

Baptism as a disciple of Christ is identification with His life, teaching, stand, rejection, crucifixion, death, and burial, in faith that we will then also share in his resurrection and glory!

- See Rom 6:1-11; Col 2:11-13; Gal 3:27 & 5:24; I Cor 1:13; 10:2 & 12:13
 - Water baptism pictures being baptized with the Holy Spirit
 - The mode of Spirit baptism is pouring...
 - ...But the **RESULT** of Spirit baptism is:
 - Crucifixion with Christ to the world and flesh (Gal 2:20 & 6:14)
 - Washing of regeneration
 - Circumcision of the heart – “made without hands” (Col 2)
 - Entering into Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection
 - Being placed into the body of Christ (I Cor 12:13)
 - Putting on Christ (Gal 3:27)

“Buried with Him by baptism into death” has led many to use immersion as a mode of baptism; and this idea is possibly where immersion came into use as a mode. It doesn’t seem to be the original mode used by the apostles, which was **before** they understood Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, as we have demonstrated. All early Christian art shows baptism by pouring. Jesus was not **“buried into death”**, but **crucified**. In our baptism we are “putting on Christ” (Gal 3:27) in **every aspect** of his **life** and **death** (Gal 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; Phil 2:5-8; Heb 13:12, 13)

Jewish burial was not in the ground, but in a tomb. Greek and Roman burial was by cremation. Being immersed in water does not picture Jesus’ burial any more than pouring water on someone. When we bury people, we do it by pouring dirt over them, not immersing them in the dirt; but this is useless arguing, for the Jews did neither. They entombed, which is what “buried” means in the Bible. The preparation for burial or entombing was **pouring** oil – **anointing the body** with oil and spices with cloth to mummify. This is interesting in light of the following verses.

Mt 26:12 *For in that she hath **poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.***

Mk 14:3 *“...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...** 8. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to **anoint my body to the burying.**”*

Joh 12:7 *Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my **burying** hath she kept this.*

Joh 19:39 *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. 40 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.***

Water baptism did not symbolize “death, burial, and resurrection”; but Spirit baptism RESULTED in regeneration, which **was** a death, burial, and resurrection to new life. The MODE of Spirit baptism was pouring, the result was spiritual regeneration. To say we, in our baptism, *put on Christ*, is correct; to say we were *crucified with Christ* is correct; to say we *died with Christ* is correct; to say our *old life is buried, and now we walk in newness of life through his resurrection* is correct; to say we were *circumcised in heart at baptism* is correct; but the **mode** of water baptism doesn’t have to **picture** all these, as it pictures the reception of the agent (The Holy Spirit), which **produces** all these.

The first time in history we find immersion used as the mode of baptism it is **not** to picture the death, burial, and resurrection, but as *a religious Gentile bath*. It was trine immersion forward (unclothed), accompanied by the “sign of the cross”, “anointing with oil”, “blessing the water”, and other superstitious rites.

Constantinople I 381, 2nd Ecumenical Council

*Those who from heresy turn to orthodoxy, and to the portion of those who are being saved, we receive according to the following method and custom: Arians, and Macedonians, and Sabbatians, and Novatians, who call themselves Cathari or Aristori, and Quarto-decimans or Tetradites, and Apollinarians, we receive, upon their giving a written renunciation [of their errors] and anathematize every heresy which is not in accordance with the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of God. Thereupon, they are first sealed or anointed with the holy oil upon the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, and ears; and when we seal them, we say, The Seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost. **But Eunomians, who are baptized with only one immersion**, and Montanists, who are here called Phrygians, and Sabellians, who teach the identity of Father and Son, and do sundry other mischievous things, and [the partisans of] all other heresies— for there are many such here, particularly among those who come from the country of the Galatians:— all these, when they desire to turn to orthodoxy, we receive as heathen. On the first day we make them Christians; on the second, catechumens; on the third, we exorcise them by breathing thrice in their face and ears; and thus we instruct them and oblige them to spend some time in the Church, and to hear the Scriptures; and then we baptize them. (Canon 5)*

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE): Trine (Triune) Immersion

***Eunomius (circa 360)** introduced single immersion “into the death of Christ.” This innovation was condemned. Apostolical Constitutions, 50, says, “If any presbyter or bishop does not perform the one initiation with three immersions, but with giving one immersion only into the death of the Lord, let him be deposed.” Single immersion was allowed by Gregory the Great (circa 691) to the church in Spain in opposition to the Arians who used a trine (not triune) immersion (Epis., i. 43). This was exceptional.*

I would accept those with believers baptism, even if by immersion, because MODE is not the most important issue, but the application of water in Jesus' name to a **truly repentant believer**. Continuing in this repentant, obeying, faith is even more vital to the salvation of the soul. If one understands immersion as a **whelming with water**, rather than a **dipping into water**, then the symbolism is not totally lost.

Appendix D

Did the Apostles Carry Swords?

Luke 22:28 *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. 29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ...35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. 36 Then said he unto them, But now (as ye go out to preach), 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.*

Did the Apostles obey Jesus' instructions? Why do men suppose they did not obey? They will say, "No, because Jesus told Peter that all who use the sword will perish with the sword"

Do you even know what that means?

Ok, let's see.....

LK 22:49 *When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? 50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. 51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.*

Those reading Luke's Gospel would think that the Apostles wore swords and that Jesus told them to....

JN 18:10 *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. 11 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?*

Those reading John's Gospel would believe the Apostles wore swords too

Mk 14:47 *And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. 48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me?*

Those reading Mark's Gospel would believe the Apostles wore swords too.

Did it bother the Apostles to leave it out?? IF JESUS TAUGHT PACIFISM AS MANY TEACH – WOULDN'T THIS BE A BIG DEAL TO CLARIFY?

It's only in Matthew! Isn't that the Gospel with the hated "exception clause" (Mt 19)?? Marcionites try to say that Matthew was to the Jews – so the exception is for "betrothal"; but Matthew is the ONLY Gospel that says "Resist Not Evil"; and the only Gospel that says "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword"; so was that only for Jews too? Of course not.

Mt 26:51 *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. 52 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. 53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?*

"Was it OK to carry it; but not to use it???" What did, "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" **mean to a Jewish mind?**

Rev 13:10 *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. **Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.***

Where and to whom do these statements apply? As stated they are not true of everyone! According to Eph 4:8, Jesus would then have to go into captivity too.

Eph 4:8 *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he **led captivity captive**, and gave gifts unto men.*

It means, "All who take the sword and lead into captivity **contrary to God's plan and purpose** will reap what they sow, according to God's judgment." It was a Jewish way of saying, "God will render to every man according to his works." It was a maxim that was only true in the sense that the following maxims are true.

Pr 26:27 *Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.*

IS THAT TRUE? It can **only** mean that those who dig a pit for an evil purpose will get their due punishment from God

ECCL 10:8 *He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.*

PS 7:14 *Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. 15 He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. 16 His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.*

JESUS WAS SIMPLY TELLING PETER IN A JEWISH MANNER THAT THIS WAS NOT THE APPROPRIATE USE OF THE SWORD. This was not the time or place to use the sword against the authorities coming to arrest Jesus and put Him on trial.

So, would the Apostles carry a sword? Why does everyone suppose that the Apostles disobeyed a command given to them at one of the most sacred times they spent with Jesus? If they carried a sword when they were **with** Jesus, **why would they not later after He directly told them to?**

Let's look again at what Jesus said on that sacred night: "**Lu 22:36 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.**" Did they take their purse? Did they take their scrip? Did they take a sword? Which of the three items did Jesus lay more stress on? Which one was obviously a priority? **Don't run from God's Word and wish Jesus had not said that...** "*O, Jesus why did you say that? It gives my opponent's arguments so much strength, and I know you didn't mean it....*" **On and on they go in their blind support of their own ism. What a PITY!**

For a complete expose' of the Marcionite teaching on pacifism, Marriage/Divorce, Swearing, and also on other false doctrines contrary to First Century Christian Faith and Practice, see the books and videos by Mark Q. Bullen, at:

Living Faith Christian Fellowship

www.thefaithoncedelivered.com

www.TheRightJesus.com

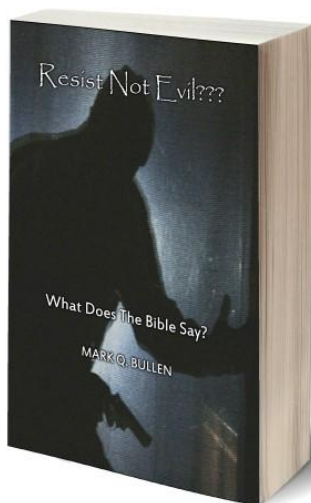
LFCF Church - YouTube

Or write to:

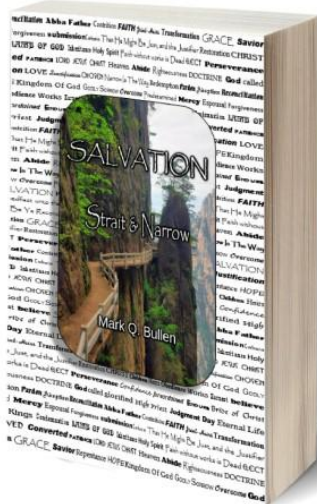
LFCF Church
27216 Ingel Rd.
Brookfield, MO 64628

Also by Mark Q. Bullen

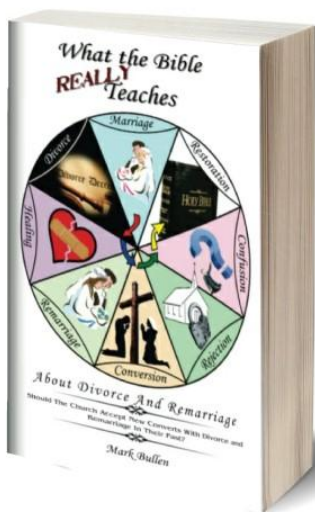
- **Resist Not Evil?** This book deals with the issue of pacifism and non-participation in Government in depth



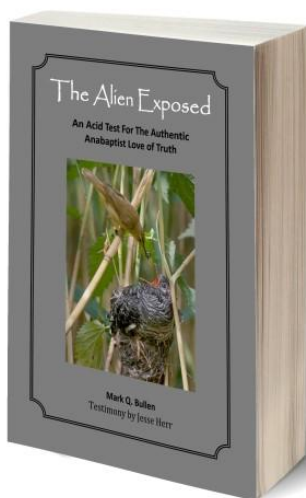
- **Salvation: Strait & Narrow** -- A definitive look at Biblical Salvation.



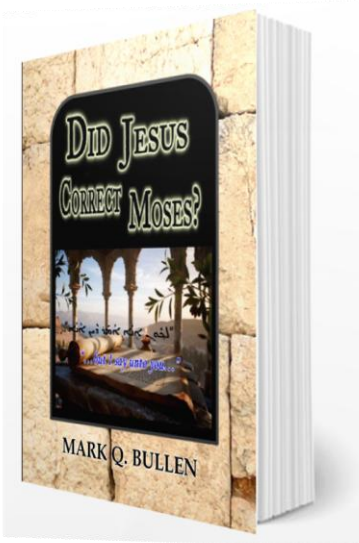
- **What the Bible *Really* Teaches About Divorce And Remarriage** -- This book is an in-depth study of this topic specifically.



- **The Alien Exposed: An Acid Test For The Authentic Anabaptist Love Of Truth**



- **Did Jesus Correct Moses? An in-depth Study of many errors rooted in ancient Marcionism**



Pastor Mark Bullen and his wife Angela have been serving the LORD together for over 37 yrs in *Contending For The Faith Once Delivered To The Saints*.

We invite sincere questions and will strive to answer them directly from the Word of God.



**The Bullen Family in 2025 at
Micah & Abigail's Wedding**

Living Faith Christian Fellowship
27216 Ingel Rd. Brookfield, MO 64628
www.thefaithoncedelivered.info

