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*EPISODES
IN
THE LIFE
OF
CHRIST*

BY PASTOR JACK CASEY

Introduction

This is a study in the life of Jesus Christ. This study was first taught at Freedom Baptist Fellowship on Tuesday mornings. There is no attempt to be overly theological rather there is an attempt to make the study beneficial to the every day life of Believers. The King James Bible is used through out as it is the final authority in our lives. By using the King James we will not leave out nor change what the Father had written concerning His son.

We will look to dig out some nuggets of truth and to enjoy what we are studying. It is this Pastor's desire to see the body of Christ edified and matured to stand in these growing days of Apostasy.

May the God of heaven bring a blessing into your life as you go through this study? For other studies from Freedom Baptist you can contact the church or visit our web site

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May God bless you as you study to show yourself approved unto God.

How to Study Your Bible

1. Begin in Prayer 1 Cor 2: 9-14
2. Read the Bible Neh. 8: 1-3
3. Study the Bible Neh. 8:8
4. Meditate upon it Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 1
5. Pass the Bible on to others Heb. 5: 12

How to Study Each Chapter

1. The Theme
2. The most important verse
3. The most prominent word
4. The teaching about Christ
5. The command to obey
6. The promise to claim
7. The new truth learned Psalm 119:18

Also every verse or passage has at least 3 applications

1. Past: this is the historical application
2. Present: This is a devotional or spiritual application
3. Future: This is a doctrinal or prophetic application

Chapter one

Background

We are going to be looking at a cross section on the life of Christ. We will be touching on some of the more important points of His life and how they relate to each of us.

We will start with some background material. First the land area in which Jesus walked is roughly the size of the state of Connecticut. In his life Jesus walked the major portion of this region, visiting such cities as Bethany, Bethlehem, Bethsaida, Caesarea, Cana, Capernaum, Jericho, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Sidon Sychor, and Tyre.

Israel of that day was made up of three primary provinces, Galilee, Judea, and Samaria. There are four bodies of water spoken of in the gospels. The first is the Great Sea or the Mediterranean the second is the Dead Sea or salt sea this body of water is six times saltier than the ocean. It is so salty that fish die in minutes of entering from the Jordan River that feeds it. The third is the Sea of Galilee and the fourth is the Jordan River.

Let insert a spiritual application. The Sea of Galilee receives fresh water from the north and the flow goes into the Jordan fish thrive in this sea. On the other hand the Dead Sea receives water from the Jordan but there is no outlet so living fish die as they enter the sea of death. When God's word flows into our lives from his word it is then to flow back out of us so that there is life as opposed to becoming stagnant and toxic as the Dead Sea is.

The Political Climate

During the time of Christ Rome ruled the then known world. However there is one who is truly in control of the whole world (1 Chron. 29:10-13; 2Chron.20: 6; Psalm 103:19). We see from these verses that it is truly God who is in control of the world and all that is in it. As for Rome Augustus was the Emperor of the throne when Jesus was born and into the first part of Jesus life. Augustus died in 14 AD when Christ would have been about 18. At that time Tiberius took over as Emperor and reigned until 37AD. The land of Palestine at that time was given over to Tetrarchy or a four-man rule.

The Kingdom under Herod the Great

He was an Edomite and his reign began in 37 BC. He died in 4 BC. Look over in Luke 1:5 and we can see what he was called also in

Matthew 2:3,13,16 adds some insight into his character. After his death Rome put Palestine under Herod's four sons.

First was Archelaus who was the oldest he ruled Judea, Samaria, and Idumea. He was deposed in 6 AD by Augustus and from that time on governors were sent to oversee Judea. Governor Pontius Pilate is the most notable and recognizable name.

Second was Herod Antipas who was ruler over Galilee and Perea. He was Herod's second son and he reigned from 4BC to 39 AD. Jesus called him a fox in Luke 13:32 for he was a sly and crafty ruler. He is the one who had John the Baptist beheaded. This Herod and Pilate became good friends so that they could deal with a common enemy Luke 23:6-12.

Third was Phillip he ruled the area of Iturea and Trachanetis this area was north east of Galilee. Caesarea Philippi was named after him and Caesar. He unlike his brothers was a just and well-loved ruler. He was married to Salome daughter of Herodias Mark 6:22. He is not to be confused with Philio Herod I in Mark 6:17

Fourth was Lysanias he ruled the area of Abilene this was a small district north of Galilee between Mt. Hermon and Damascus.

It was amid all this political confusion and apostasy that God stepped in according to John's words in 1 John 4:14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

The Religious Climate

The religious climate of Palestine was in great disarray and full of power hungry Godless men who thought they were serving God when in fact they were serving themselves much the way some do today. There were three main groups of religious people of that day and some smaller groups.

First were the Pharisees- these were the strict religionist the separatists of the day. They were proud of the fact that they prayed, fasted, gave tithes, and alms to the poor as seen in Luke 18:12 and Matthew 6:1-5. By doing these works they felt they pleased God notice Luke 18:9 and that they were better then all the others, so much so that they loved to be seen of men (Matthew 6:5).

They were orthodox in belief, and they were basically right. They were patriotic Jews who looked to be freed from Roman rule. They were popular and they looked for messiah one who was a political deliverer. They rejected Jesus message of spiritual deliverance and liberation.

Second were the Scribes (lawyers)- most of these were Pharisees and they were experts in the law! Their function was to study, interpret, and teach the law and how it applies to everyday life situations. They added

their tradition and commands to the Bible as seen in Mark 7:3, 5, 7-9, 13. Jesus called them hypocrites. There were two well-known Pharisees one was Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night and the other was Saul who would become Paul. Take a moment and think how many groups are around today that are like the Pharisees. They are orthodox religious, self righteous, hypocritical, and have a need to be born again and at the same time will try and destroy true believers.

Third was the Sadducees- they were not as numerous but much more powerful. They controlled the temple, priesthood and the Sanhedrin the 70 man ruling council.

They were not as popular as the Pharisees; they were less patriotic and leaned more towards Rome. They were liberals, modernists as they liked government more than God. They denied angels and the resurrection. Neither did they believe in hell or eternal punishment.

Josephus said this of them-“The Sadducees say only what is written is to be esteemed as legal what has come down from tradition of the fathers need not be observed.

There were several other groups that were active then also

1. The Herodians- these were those who supported the Herods as kings they were murderous and crafty.
2. The Zealots- these were Jews who were ultra patriotic. They wanted our from under Rome so bad they instigated violence. Simon Zelotes was one of this group before Christ took him as a disciple. The thief Barrabbas was a Zealot also.

The Religious Institutions

1. The Temple – this one was built by Zerubbabel and rebuilt by Herod the Great. This was the only acceptable place of worship and the Roman General Titus destroyed it in 70 AD.
2. The Synagogue- the word means a place where people gather for a purpose. In the Bible it is that place where the people gathered to read God’s word and have prayer offered to Him. Jesus was faithful to the synagogue Luke 4:16-30 and Paul started in the synagogue upon entering a new town Acts 17:2-4; 18:4-6.

Chapter 2

The Forerunner

In ancient days when a king went to visit another place there was a herald a forerunner who went in advance to let people know the King was coming and to prepare for his visit.

When the King of Israel came to the world God the Father sent a herald to let everyone know He was coming.

We find Jesus forerunner in John 1:6 “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John”. His name means “the lord is gracious” In Luke 1:13 we see how he received this name, an angel tells his father to name him John this is contrary to the way names were chosen then. Families passed names down from generation to generation and John was not a family name for Zacharias. This however is how God works that is He works outside the ordinary. In Isaiah 40:3-5 we have the prophecy that declares the forerunner coming first. We can compare this with passages such as Matthew 3:1-3; Mark 1:3 and Malachi 3:1.

The forerunner would have a special name as recorded in Luke 1:76 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; Jesus adds to this description in John 5:35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. In Luke 1:16 it says many of Israel would turn to the Lord because of his ministry. The message he gave Israel is summed up in Luke 1:77 to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

John was so bold in his ministry that his ministry was known in every part of Israel even Herod had something to say about John as recorded in Mark 6:20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. Herod said John was holy and just what a great testimony to have said by sinful people. John was also a man of prayer and a teacher of prayer Luke 11:1 one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. The disciples of Jesus wanted to be taught prayer as John had taught his disciples. We see in Luke 1:15 that he would be great in God’s sight (many today are great in their own eyes). Look what Jesus says about John’s greatness in Matthew 18:3-4 and Luke 9:46-48. You can also read Matt. 3:11; John 1:19-27 and 3:25-30

John constantly pointed toward Jesus (John 1:29, 36) and away from himself. Anyone who faithfully points people to Christ by their life and lips is a true witness (John 1:7). At a wedding the bride and groom is the center of attention not the maid of honor and best man (John 3:28-30)

How many miracles did John perform I ask this as John is the last prophet of the Old Testament and so many today are looking for someone to do a miracle in their life we need to understand that prophets did not always work miracles, John did not do any yet his words were much more important as seen in John 10:41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. As you can see it was said that his words were truth. In the Old Testament the prophets were not miracle workers they instead proclaimed warning and judgment to come. There were actually only three time periods of great miracles. They were in the time of Moses, Elijah, and Jesus.

This brings us to why John was thrown in prison and for that we must look at Luke 3:19-20 But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

Added yet this above all that he shut up John in prison.

So John went to prison for telling the ruler that he was living in sin, you see John feared God more than man we need some preachers who fear God more than their congregations. He died at the axe mans hand because he stood for the truth and was unafraid to declare it. His influence lasted many years after his death, as we find some 20 years later Paul encounters some of his disciples as recorded in Acts 19:1-7

What was John's message well lets look at Matthew 3:1-2 to find out, in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

Mat 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Also you can read Matt. 4:17,23; 10:5-7 to see more of his message. Who were the people that received John's message they were the poor and lowly as seen in Matt. 21:31-32 *Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, the first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.*

Mat 21:32 *For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.*

Publicans and harlots welcomed this message of repentance and the religious people of the day rejected it trusting rather in their own good works.

John commanded the people to repent (change of mind or direction), his baptism was one as described in Acts 13:24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

Also in Mark 1:4 this was an outward ritual that declared an inner reality of a changed life. Matthew 3:8 let's us know John's instructions to the multitude, which came for baptism. They were to bring forth from their lives fruit "worthy of" repentance this has the idea of being in balance as weights on a scale. How did the people prove they had repented? Luke 3:10-11 gives the answer And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. How did the soldiers give evidence of a changed life look in Luke 3:14 for the answer And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

Repentance is an inward transaction that takes place between God and man. It is something that takes place in the heart of an individual and cannot be seen by others. You simply cannot look at a crowd of people and know the ones who have really repented you must observe their lives for a while and see what fruit is manifested.

Fruit however in contrast to repentance can be clearly seen by those around you. This is the natural outflow and result of a person being in a right relationship to the Lord. A healthy apple tree will bring forth good fruit and a healthy believer will do the same.

John gave a warning in Matthew 3:9-12 about bad fruit. Jesus taught the same in Matt 7:15-23. Was the Church commanded to repent? The answer lies here in these verses Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 20:21 should we be bringing fruit meet for repentance lets see here what Paul says in Acts 26:20 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. If arrested could you be convicted for being a Christian? What evidence could your friends submit?

CHAPTER THREE

The Baptism of Christ

We come now to the beginning of Jesus public ministry He is 30 years old and He is fulfilling the law and prophets. We find in Matthew 3:15 the reason he came to the Jordon River to be baptized of John “And Jesus answering said unto him, *Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.* Then he suffered him.”

Now John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance according to Acts 13:24, we can compare this with Matthew 3:2, 8, 11. In Matthew 3:6 a Jew baptized by John confessed their sin. Now Jesus couldn’t do this, as he had no sin to confess. Let’s go over several verses that clearly state this starting with Luke 23:4,14,41 now go to 2Corinthians 5:21 and to Hebrews 4:15 & 7:26 one last one is 1 Peter 1:19 & 2:22. We as believers will not reach this goal on this earthly pilgrimage according to 1 John 1:8, however like Paul we should be striving for the mastery.

Since Jesus did not need to repent because of sin why then did he come to John for baptism? John tried to get Jesus to baptize him as seen in Matthew 3:14 “But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?” What hinders a person from being baptized? We can see the reason in Acts 8:35-39 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

Jesus answers John’s objection to His being baptized in Matthew 3:15 by telling John to allow it so that He might fulfill all righteous acts. Why was it right for the sinless Saviour to submit to baptism intended for sinful people? The following verses will show us Matthew 1:21; Luke 5:30-32, 19:10; John 3:17; 1 Tim. 1:15. So it was proper and right for Jesus to be baptized so that He could identify with those He came to save. He was willing to humble himself to stand in the place of sinners. Look at Isaiah 53:12 “Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath

poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” Now let’s compare this with Hebrews 2:17 “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” Jesus the one without sin was able to understand His fellowman in their struggle against sin, because he was tempted in all points of life like we were yet He was without sin. Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin; Romans 8:3-4 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: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

From the beginning of His ministry throughout to the end Jesus continually identified with those he came to redeem. Let’s look at four passages that show how the Pharisee’s reacted to Jesus ministry. The first is Luke 5:27-32 then Luke 7:36-50 & 15:1-2 and finally 19:1-10.

What did they think of John’s baptism? Did they take his baptism? No Lets compare the Pharisee’s view of their life look at Luke 7:30 “But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.” Now look at the publicans and their response Luke 7:29”And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.” Lastly Jesus in Matthew 3:15 as we have already read it.

When John pointed out Christ he called Him the Lamb of God in 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.” Three and a half years later Christ would experience another baptism as we read here in these two places Matt. 20:22-23; Luke 12:50 where he completely identified with sinners. Let’s compare

Jesus at Jordan

1. Christ should not be baptized
2. Was not a sinner
3. Did not deserve death
4. Stood in the sinners place
5. Symbolically identified with sinners

Jesus at the cross

1. Should not have been crucified
2. Was not a sinner?
3. Did not deserve this death
4. Died in the sinners place
5. Actually identified with sinners

Jesus baptism shows us His desire to identify with those He came to save; however there are other reasons for His baptism.

1. His baptism marks the beginning of His public ministry. He was about 30 years old and he left his home town, his family, his occupation and his privacy to submit to this Mark 1:9
2. Jesus baptism marked God's approval of the 30 silent years, little is recorded of those first 30 years as most of the gospels accounts are concentrated on the last 3.5 years and especially the last week. Yet in Matthew 3:17 we have the Fathers summation of those years "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He handled every facet of those years in which daily life was not much different than ours with such grace that His Father could say well pleased!
3. Jesus baptism marked Him as God's messiah. The Spirit descending was a sign to John and his followers that this was messiah John 1:33-34 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.
4. Jesus baptism marked His anointing by the Spirit for service. Jesus depended His entire ministry upon the Spirit of God (Acts 10:37-38). The Old Testament predicted this in Isaiah 42:1, 61:1-2 & 11:1-2
5. Jesus baptism marked the co-operation of the trinity in the mission and work of Christ.

J. Oswald Sanders had this to say "The incarnate Son stands in the waters of Jordan, identifying Himself with sinful humanity. The Father opens heaven to voice His approval of His Son when he had submitted for this task. The spirit descends from Heaven to empower the Son to fulfill the purpose of the Father.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Temptation of Christ

Satan's Strategy

Matthew 4:1-11

The temptation account is found here in our text and in Luke 4:1-13 & Mark 1:12-13. There are three specific temptations mentioned in Matthew and Luke. There is one thing to see first that it was the Holy Spirit that took Jesus to the wilderness and there Jesus fasted for forty days and nights before the tempting started. The devil never attacks in our strength rather he attacks in our weakness circling until he finds that spot of vulnerability and then he strikes. So he did with Jesus in His physical weakness and hunger that's when the devil came.

I. The First Temptation

Jesus was tempted by the devil to take the stones on the ground and to make them into loaves of bread. Matthew 4:2-3 "And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." This is significant in that Jesus had been in a total fast for forty days, in His wakened state He appeared to be a good target and had it been any of us we would have failed the test. The desire for food is not sinful in and of itself. The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness for a time of testing. We would be wrong to think that the Father would allow Jesus to die of hunger when he came to be the lamb read Matthew 4:11 angels came and ministered unto him.

Did Satan know that Christ had the ability to merely speak to the rocks and they would become bread? Matthew 4:3 & Duet 8: 1-3 tells what we are to live by. Is there something more important than food, that eating and drinking to survive? Yes.

What is more important doing God's will or satisfying our physical needs Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

II. The Second Temptation

The second thing Satan tried was to have Jesus throw himself off of the temple Matthew 4:5-7 "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands

they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” The part of the temple where Satan took Jesus was the balcony of Herod’s palace that overlooked the valley of Kidron and was some 450 ft. deep. Josephus the first century historian gives the following description “if anyone looked down from the top of the battlements, he would be giddy (dizzy), while his sight could not reach to such an immense depth”. Satan tried to use the word to convince Jesus to tempt God to see if He would fulfill His word from Psalm 90: 11-12. It should not be surprising that Satan quotes scripture, his children do as seen in John 8:44 & 1 John 3:10 they twist the scripture to their own destruction (2Peter 3:16). Look at Psalm 91 here is where Satan pulled his quote. The question is does this say God will protect those who trust Him? No; what is the difference between trust and tempting?

Would it have been faith or presumption if Christ had done what the Devil suggested? Many people claim to trust the Lord, when they are in reality being presumptuous?

III. The Third Temptation

Satan always seeks by any means to gain worship. Was it God’s plan for Jesus to rule all the Kingdoms? Yes as seen in the following passages Rev. 11:15; Dan 7:13-14; Psalm 2:8. Was it God’s time for Jesus to rule? No as John tells us in his gospel chapter 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Though Christ rejected the offer; He will receive the kingdoms when the time is right as seen in Deut. 6:13-15 “Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you; (For the LORD thy God *is* a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.” Can you think of examples where men and women have compromised with evil to gain power or position? Yes there are many today that are compromising the truth of God’s word to draw crowds and money; it is sad and hard to accept that once strong men of God gave in to Satan’s scheme after a long time in the faith.

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST CHRIST’S VICTORY

When the Devil came to Adam he was totally successful Gen 3:1-6. When he came to the second Adam he failed miserably 1 Cor. 15:45 And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. He was soundly beaten in Matt 4:1-11.

The first Adam was tempted in a garden paradise (Gen. 2:7-15) the last Adam was tempted in a wilderness Mark 1:12-13 And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. The first Adam could freely eat from every tree (Gen. 2:16) the last “Adam was famished with hunger Matt 4:2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. The defeat of the first Adam brought woe and judgment on all men (Rom. 5:12-21) the victory of the last Adam brought hope and encouragement Heb. 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.

How did Christ defeat Satan? Did he use his super natural power? No. Did he rely upon His divine omnipotence? No. If He had done this it would have been discouraging to us, as we would think that I am no match for Satan.

This is not what the Bible teaches, Jesus faced Satan as a man this gives great hope to each of us. You see we can win the victory because Jesus did and we can do it in the same manner by using and relying on the Word of God.

We dare not underestimate the power and ability of the Devil he is a great foe, 1Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: We see here that Satan is a lion seeking who he might destroy just as he was seeking to destroy Jesus in the wilderness.

How can we do it, we do it according to James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. We are commanded to resist the devil and submit to God’s authority. The word “resist” means to stand against. God does not want us to be afraid of Satan (Matt. 10:28 & 1 Pet. 2:17). God never says run he rather He says, “stand” against the devil and he will run from us James 4:7.

Resisting involves two things; first one has to “stand under God” (submission) and second they need to “stand upon God’s word”. The result: Satan has to flee. There is a warning first do not move out from

under god! Second do not move out from upon God's word, if you do Satan will get you!

James says in the second part of verse seven "submit yourselves therefore to God", submit means to rank under, to take a proper place under God, realizing that the one over us is our Lord our commander in chief, and I must obey him. 1 Peter 5:6 tells us "submit yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God" We must as believers stand in that place of humility under God. We must just stand there. 1 Peter 5:9 says we are to resist the devil in the faith. The faith is that body of truth God's preserved word the KJV 1611. Read Ephesians 6:11, 13, 14, "withstand" means to resist. There is one word used four times in these verses.

HOW DID JESUS STAND AGAINST THE DEVIL

The submissive son of Man under God with the Spirits guidance and control, Jesus was led by the Spirit (Matt. 4:1) he also was full of the Holy Spirit Luke 4:1.

Matthew 4:11 says that the Devil leaveth Him. The obedient Son of Man standing upon God's commands and living by (upon) every word of God.

How did Eve fail to stand against the Devil? Gen. 3:1-6 (1 Tim. 2:14 & 2 Cor. 11:3). Eve failed to stand because she did not stand solely on the pure word of God! She moved away from that good and safe position (she was no match for Satan). Peter fell the same way as seen in Matthew 16:21-23. Peter finally learned his lesson! In his last recorded words Peter tells us all how to stand 2Peter 3:16-18 *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen. Grow in Grace: humble yourselves under God and realize that He is everything and you are nothing. Grow in Knowledge: grow in knowledge of Christ and His word and stand upon it! The Devil will run away from you.*

CHAPTER FIVE

CHOOSING TWELVE MEN TO BE DISCIPLES

The Preparation Luke 6:12

Jesus is surrounded by a multitude of follower's and from this He must chose out a small group of twelve. To do this God's will is to be determined. It must be the right men! Why you ask?

These are the men Christ will devote the bulk of His time and energy. They will be known in the beginning as, The Twelve (Mark 6:7; 10:32) Later Christ will rename them as, Apostles (Luke 6:13; Matt 10:1-2). It is these twelve that will be sent on the first important mission that of evangelizing Israel (Matt 10:1-15). It is these twelve who will first partake of the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-30). It is these twelve who will be among the first to see the resurrected Christ (John 20:19-29; 1 Cor. 15:7) It is these twelve who will receive and communicate the commands from the risen Lord (Acts 1:2; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48), It is these men who will be the foundation of the church (Eph 2:20) It is these men who will write the majority of the new Testament. Finally it is these men whose names will forever be written on the twelve foundations.

So it is clear that the right choice must be made. So the son of man went out to a mountain to pray and commune with the Father, Luke 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." Jesus spent the whole night praying (Matt 7:7) when day came God's will was clear, so He called all the men together and chose (6:13) and God gave them John 17:6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. We must make important decisions and as we do are we ascertaining God's will? Before we choose do we look for God's choice?

The Choice

After much prayer the Lord makes His choice of the twelve. There are four lists given of these men in the Gospels.

Matt. 10:2-4

1. Simon Peter

2. Andrew

Mark 3:16-19

Simon Peter

James

Luke 6:14-16

Simon Peter

Andrew

Acts 1:13

Simon Peter

John

3. James	John	James	James
4. John	Andrew	John	Andrew
5. Phillip	Phillip	Phillip	Phillip
6. Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
7. Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
8. Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
9. James Alphaeus	James Alphaeus	James Alphaeus	James A
10. Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Simon Zelotes	Simon Zelot
11. Simon Canan	Simon	Judas James	Judas Jam
12. Judas Iscariot	Judas	Judas	

All the lists have three groups of four. The same person heads each group. In each group there are some minor variations.

Who were these men? In Matthew 4:18-22 Peter Andrew John and James are fishermen. Matthew is a hated tax collector, Simon Zelotes is a Jewish freedom fighter and several others were fishermen and Judas was a false believer later to known as the son of perdition. Acts 4:13 adds to there description “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” In the world’s eyes they were no bodies! So why did Christ chose such unlikely unimpressive, undeserving men? The Bible in 1 Cor. 1:26-31 teaches us about the kind of people that God chooses for Himself? If the Lord had chosen only the rich and powerful where would that leave us? If God taken common, ordinary people, and makes them great Godly men and women does that not give us great hope?

God took a teenage slave and made him ruler over Egypt. He took a shepherd boy and made him Israel’s greatest King! He took a teenage Jew and made him chief advisor in Babylon and Persia! It doesn’t matter who or what we are, it is God that makes the difference!

The Training

The twelve chosen men were called by two different names as seen in Matthew 10:1 and 2 (Luke 6:13)

A disciple is “one who learns” or a pupil. It is true the disciples were “unlearned and ignorant men” that is without formal training, however they were the best trained because they had been with Christ as seen in Acts 4:13.

The word “Apostle” means “one who is sent on a special mission”. The men were sent out on a special mission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Mark 3:14 provide us the reason He chose these twelve.

1. To be His Disciples Mark 3:14a: The first thing Christ wanted was close companionship he wanted these men to set and learn, to watch and learn. He wants no less from us 1Cor. 1:9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
2. To Be His Apostles 3:14b: Before they could serve as apostles they had to be disciples. They needed to spend time with the teacher before they could go out and teach others. We have a good example of this in Luke 10:40 where Martha wanted to serve, while Mary wanted to sit (39) which one was right well Jesus answers that in verse 42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

When the apostles were sent out their message was delivered in power because they had been with the Teacher. The Lord is very interested in the proper training of His servants. Here are several examples.

1. Moses was trained in Egypt for 40 years, and then God trained him for forty more before he was sent to set the people free.
2. David was trained with the lion and a bear before taking on Goliath. He learned to shepherd sheep before leading Israel.
3. Paul sat under Gamiliel the greatest teacher of his time, then spent three years with Jesus Gal. 1:11-17.
4. Joseph was a slave and prisoner for 13 years before becoming second ruler in Egypt at 30 Genesis 41:46
5. Jesus did not start His ministry until He was 30

The Traitor John 6:70

In this special group of twelve there was one who was lost; Judas Iscariot. Why was Judas chosen to be one of the twelve, was it a mistake? No the Lord knew about Judas He says so in John 6: 64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. The Lord had a purpose in picking Judas. There are three lessons from his tragic life.

1. It is possible to go through the outward motion and still be lost. To others Judas was just like them Matthew 10:4-7 yet he still went into a Christ less eternity Matthew 7:21-23
2. It is possible to fool everyone but God. Judas never got his heart right with God but fooled everyone else. The others never suspected; they even let him carry the money. In John 13:29 when

Jesus said one would betray him they did not say it must be Judas rather they said is it "I" in Matthew 26:25.

3. It is possible to be very close to the Lord, yet end up forever lost. Few have been as close to the Lord as Judas. Few have had the privilege Judas had. He was face to face with Jesus for three and a half years. He heard salvation preached repeatedly from Jesus Himself. He witnessed all the miracles, he had every possible advantage and yet Jesus had this to say about him in Matthew 26:24-25 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

We need to take personnel assessment to make sure we are not deceiving ourselves. Do we have a Bible, a good church, a Godly pastor, dedicated teachers, and what are we doing with them.

CHAPTER SIX

Christ's Claims

Who did He Claim to be

Who is Jesus? Who do men say He is?

Matthew 16:13-14

Men have had and still do have all kinds of ideas about who Jesus really is. In Jesus day men had their ideas (13-14). His enemies said He was a madman possessed of a demon as seen in John 10:20. They accused Him of working by Satan's power (Matt. 12:22-26). They called Him derogatory names (John 8:48) this was a hateful insulting term. They also called Him a blasphemer (Matt 9:3; 26:65) a man who claimed to be equal to god as seen in John 10:33 and 19:7.

People today have as many ideas about who Jesus was and is! Some say he was a teacher, others probably a prophet. Some see Him as the character in Jesus Christ Super star; others that he was a good man possibly the best who ever lived.

Nothing is more important than knowing who Jesus really is. If I believe he is truly almighty God then I will bow before Him I will serve and obey Him. If I believe he is a liar, then I will never trust him. If He is just a good teacher I may read after Him but I will also read what other teachers say. If He was just a man then He is dead and has no power to change my life. If he is my superstar another will come along for me to idolize.

WHO IS JESUS MARK 14: 61- 62?

Jesus in appearance was no different than any other Jewish man. He had no outstanding physical attributes. He certainly did not have a halo or glow around His head. He did not necessarily have flowing long hair as he is portrayed in movies. In age He was 30 years old as seen in Luke 3:23 and John 8:57.

The Jews thought of Jesus as being from the family of Joseph (John 6:41-42) yet He made the most amazing claims.

1. He claimed to be the messiah, God's anointed King! The Jews who knew their Old Testament understood who messiah was.

1. The king whose name is the mighty God
2. The King whose name is the Lord (Jehovah)
3. The King who is the eternal, everlasting God
4. The King who will be born of a virgin
5. The King who will reign forever and ever

When a man claimed to be the messiah, he was saying “I am the promised King the eternal and mighty Jehovah-God! That is a large claim!

In the New Testament the Messiah is called the “Christ” when Jesus said in John 4:25-26 “I am he” He was claiming to be the eternal God. Let’s go to John 10:24-33 in verse 24 the Jews wanted Christ to tell them that He was the expected Christ, so they would have no doubts of His truthfulness. Jesus gave them an answer in verses 26-33.

2. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God!

Did Jesus ever say “I am the son of God” look at John 10:36 and 9:35-38? What did Peter say in Matthew 16:22-23 and 16:16-17? What did Jesus enemies say at the foot of the cross, for the answer look at Matthew 27: 43 when the high priest asked if Jesus was the Christ in Mark 14:61-62? In the first century the phrase “son of God” was understood to mean “equality with God” having the same nature and attributes as God.

3. Jesus Claimed to Be Equal with God

Look in John 10:30, here Jesus makes an outstanding claim here and the Jews had their answer (v31) why did the Jews want to kill Jesus, what was His crime it is in verse 33.

4. Jesus Claimed to be able to Forgive Sin

Look at Mark 2:5 and lets see what Jesus said to the paralyzed man. Only the one offended can forgive sin Psalm 51:4 says “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.” God is the offended party and only He can forgive sin Jesus understood this as seen in Mark 2:7. It would be blasphemy for a mortal man to claim to be able to forgive sin Jesus proved he could in Mark 2:9-12 and since he could he must be God!

5. Jesus claimed to be Jehovah

In the Old Testament the divine name “LORD” is JEHOVAH or YAHWEH sometimes it is stated as GOD. To the Jew this was the most sacred name of God they would not even dare pronounce it and even today in the synagogue when they read they skip over it.

We see this in Psalm 23:1 “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” According to Isaiah 41:4 and 44:6 who is the first and last it is the Christ Jesus; now for comparison turn in your Bibles to Rev. 1:13, 17-18 who is stated here as the first and last? Jesus the Christ that’s who!

6. Jesus Claimed to be the final judge of all men!

Does anyone apart from god have the right to judge men look at James 4:12 “There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?” Did Jesus claim this right look at John 5:22, 27 along with Matthew 25:31-46 these two passages give us the answer.

7. Jesus claimed to be the great “I AM” the Eternal God

Go to John 8:57 here we have a question the Jews asked Jesus. How did Jesus answer well verse 58 has His answer Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. If a man came to you and claimed to be 2,000 years old what would you think? What did the Jews think look at verse 59? In Matthew 16:15 the Lord Jesus asked His disciples a most important question. Every person’s eternal destiny depends on how you answer this question.

There are three honest answers and one true answer; Jesus was a liar, a lunatic or Lord.

He claimed to be God
Two alternatives

Claim was False
Two Alternatives

He knew claims He did not know
Were false claims were false

Deliberate
Misrepresentation

He was a liar

He was a
Hypocrite
(He taught others
not to lie)

He was evil
(He told others to
trust him while he
could not back up
his claim)

He was a fool
(He died for making
false claims)

he was sincerely
deluded

He was a Lunatic

Claims were true

He is Lord

Two alternatives

Accept Reject

John 3:18,36

It is foolish and dishonest to accept another alternative one need only examine some people’s conclusion.

Thomas said he was God John 20:28

Peter said He was Messiah in Matt. 16:16

Paul said He was God Titus 2:13
John said He was God 1 John 5:20
Stephen said he was God Acts 7: 59

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Miracles of Jesus Christ

If you were living during the ministry of Jesus what miracles would you have heard and seen, look at Matthew 11:4-5 “Jesus answered and said unto them, *Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*” Sometimes people think that the Bible is filled with accounts of miracles on every page from Genesis to Revelation. Actually miracles in the Bible are rare; they are the exception rather than the rule.

The majority of Godly men in the Bible never performed miracles (*God is free to perform miracles at any time as seen with Daniel and the lions*) but Daniel never performed any miracles. Below is a list of men which ones performed miracles and which did not.

Enoch	Noah	Ezekiel	Abraham
Samuel	David	John the Baptist	Isaac
Solomon	Jesus	Jacob	Elijah
Peter	Joseph	Elisha	Paul
Moses	Daniel	Augustine	Joshua
Isaiah	Luther	Jeremiah	Whitfield

The Bible indicates that there have been only three major time periods of miracles in history (when God gave certain men power to perform miracles)

1. During the time of Moses and Joshua 1441-1370 b.c (Exodus and Joshua)
2. During the time of Elijah an Elisha 870-785 b.c. (1 & 2 Kings)
3. During the time of Christ and Apostles 28-70 a.d

Apart from these, miracles are the exception rather than the normal.

Why did Jesus perform such miracles? He did miracles to prove to the Jew that He was from God.

WHICH MIRACLE IS EASIER?

In Mark 2: 1-12 (Matt. 9:1-8; Luke 8:17-26) we have the healing of the paralyzed man. Jesus states clearly why he healed this man in verse 5 “When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, *Son, thy sins be forgiven thee*”. Jesus made the claim he could forgive sin, the Jews did not believe He could do this Mark 2:6 But there was

certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Mark 2:7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only? Since they could not look into his heart and see if his sins were really forgiven Jesus asked them a question in verse nine Mark 2:9 *Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?*

Which is easier to forgive his sins or heal his body? Let's look at a comparison.

The Miracle of Healing

1. Required God's working power
2. Miracles took place in the physical
3. God working on the man's body
4. A miracle clearly seen (12)
5. A miracle that could not be denied

The Miracle of Forgiveness

1. Required God's working power
2. Miracle took place in the spiritual
3. God working of the man's heart
4. Miracle that could not be seen
5. Miracle that could be seen by unbelieving men 5-7

Did Christ really have the power and authority to forgive sins? How could he prove this? How could He demonstrate His authority in the spiritual realm?

In Mark 2:10 the Lord Jesus tells us the primary reason why he healed this man. The Lord proved he had authority in the spiritual by performing a fantastic miracle to prove He had the power and authority to forgive sins.

Where Are the Carpenter's Credentials?

The carpenter (Mark 6:3) claimed to be The Christ the man who had no formal education (John 7:15) taught the people that He was sent from God with a heavenly message (John 7:16, 28) What then could prove the message was true and that he was Messiah, turn to Isaiah 35:5-6 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert and 61:1 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. In these two passages we see what the prophet said Messiah would do.

So we can see in John 7:31 that it says that the Jews would believe Messiah had come because of miracles. Now when Jesus did miracles

what was their reaction as found in Matthew 12:23 “And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?”.

When John the Baptist doubted what did Jesus say about His credentials? The answer lies in Matthew 11:2-5, His Father even backed up Jesus claim in Acts 2:22.

Greater Works Than These

Look at John 14:12 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. What exactly did Jesus mean by this statement? Let me give you this quote from John C. Whitcomb, in his book “does God Want Christians to Perform Miracles Today” from page 11.

“The works that Jesus performed during His public ministry were fantastically great. Diseases were banished demons were cast out, dead men, wine, bread, and fishes were created, and mighty storms were instantly calmed. But it must be recognized that each of these miracles was intentionally superficial and temporary in quality! In other words, no one was permanently helped by any of them, nor were men’s deepest needs met by such works of power! Creating food for one occasion did not automatically supply the need for later occasions. And with regard to bodily ailments, every diseased, crippled, leprous person Jesus ever healed finally died anyway every one of them! And poor Lazarus! It is true that Jesus raised him from the dead, instantly and completely, with no convalescence needed. But later on he died again! Would you like to die twice?”

Jesus said greater works than these shall ye do because I go unto the Father. What can be greater than Christ miracles? To start with right after Jesus ascended Peter preached one message and 3,000 souls were regenerated and healed permanently meeting mans most basic need of all his souls salvation.

So Which are Greater

The miracle of healing, feeding the
Multitudes, casting out demons
Raising the dead

The miracle of salvation, the
forgiveness of sins, the new
birth, freedom from sin, etc

1. required God's work & power
2. Took place in the physical
3. God's working on man's body
4. Helped man temporarily
5. Final Result: physical death

1. Required God's work & power
2. Took place in the spiritual realm
3. God's working on man's heart
4. Helped man permanently
5. Final result: Eternal life

Compare John 6:13-15 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. and 26-27 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. What did the Jews really want? To be fed physically. For the last two millennia the greatest miracle ever repeated has been the salvation of souls Acts 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Rejection of Christ

Isaiah 53:3 mark 8:31; 12:10 Psalm 118:22

The Rejection of the Saviour

With the great pollution of man's heart with sin, they were faced with a hopeless situation of eternal death (James 1:15; Romans 1:32, 6:23) God looked on man's pitiful condition and sent the perfect cure as seen in John 3:13-17. Down in verse 19 of the same chapter we have man's reaction to the proposed cure, they chose to continue in their sinful lives (Matt. 7:13)

The Rejection of the Creator

In John 1 we see some amazing facts about the Lord Jesus look at the following verses. John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Joh 1:9-10 *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

Joh 1:14 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.

These are amazing facts, yet the most amazing fact is found in verses 10&11

Joh 1:10-11 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

They recognized Him and rejected Him anyway.

They did not know the creator; they did not recognize their creator!

Mark 6:3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. The person who built with wood created the wood out of nothing. Read Col 1:16 and compare this with Heb. 3:3-4. A few humble people accepted Him and His gift.

Most of the nation of Israel did not and it is no different today a small portion of the world will accept Him, however the majority will not (Matt.

7:14). Now the Father gives a promise to all who will receive Him in John 1:12 “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:”

If Christ had made His appearance today instead of then how would the world treat Him? For those who accept the “despised and rejected one” what does that person need to expect from the world look at John 15:18-21 & 1 John 3:13 “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you” here then is the answer the world will hate Christians for the very name of Christ.

The Rejection of the King

When a leader of another country comes to America they are afforded royal treatment. The best of everything would be at their disposal. However when the legitimate king of the entire universe came here how was he treated? At His death he was treated as a criminal. At His birth those who came to him came from the east (Matt. 2:2-6) when His countrymen would not even make an attempt, even though they had the scripture to verify His birth (Micah 5:2). They had the proper answer however the answer did not have them. After 30 years these same men’s attitudes had become progressively worse! Look at Matt 20:18-19 and John 19:15 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.

Suppose for a moment that those same wise men returned after those same thirty years and asked for the King of the Jews they had worshipped; what they would see is a king crowned with thorns and hanging on a cross (Matt. 27:29,31 & 1 Peter 2:24). No star would be needed because they have placed a sign is over His head for all to see Matt 27:37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Today those looking for the King must find Him there! They must fall humbly at the foot of the cross. William Newell’s song “At Calvary” says it well “*Years I spent I vanity and pride, caring not my Lord was crucified; knowing not it was for me he died on Calvary!*”

The Rejection of the Prophet

In America presidential candidates carry their hometowns in the elections and most often their home state. So one would think the Jewish

King would be welcomed and accepted in His hometown but He was not (Luke 4:16-30). There are several reasons for this.

1. Who fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy in 61:1-2 (Luke 4:17-19,21)
2. Was Jesus Joseph's son not according to verse 22
3. What did the people intend for Jesus to do in verse 23 (Matt. 4:13, 23-24)
4. Did Jesus do what they wanted? No read Matt 13: 54-57
5. Why did he not? Matt. 13:58
6. Did Jesus expect to be accepted? No Verse 24
7. As Elijah and Elisha both ministered outside of Israel. It would be no less for Jesus Matt. 13:58
8. Did Jesus words please the Jews? Not according to verse 28
9. What did the men of Nazareth try to do in verse 29
10. What miracle happened to Christ? He walked through the crowd unnoticed Verse 30

These people of Nazareth wanted the miracles and signs but they did not want to receive the words of the prophet.

To reject the word of God is to reject the Son of God. The way we treat the word is how we are really treating Jesus (John 8:37, 46-47). Read John 12:47-48 the person who rejects Christ is what? Now compare this with Matt. 10:14. Here the rejection of the messengers is shown by their refusing to hear the word.

We need to check out our attitude towards God's word

1. Do you become bored at church
2. Do you constantly check your watch or set the alarm for 12
3. Do you read your Bible on your own
4. Do you enjoy sharing God's word with others
5. Do you memorize God's word
6. Do you consider the Bible as God's preserved love letter to you?
Heb. 2:1, 3:12,14

The Rejection of the Messiah

The rejection of Jesus as Messiah by the religious leaders is most apparent in Matthew chapters 11-12. The following are 14 things found in these two chapters.

1. We see the Jews rejection of Messiah
2. What advantage did Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum have over the other cities.

3. If Christ had come earlier in history and performed His earthly ministry in Tyre and Sodom what would have happened they would have repented and been delivered.
4. On judgment day which city would you rather belong to Sodom or Capernaum; according to Jesus Sodom would be the better choice.
5. Christ is accused of breaking the Sabbath
6. In verse 8 of chapter 12 this verse lets us know whether Christ made or broke the Sabbath. What was important about Jesus claim? Every Jew knew who instituted the Sabbath.
7. In verse 12 of Chapter 12 we have a question that is as obvious just as obvious as “is it sinful to do evil?” verse 14 gives their reaction.
8. In 12:22-23 we have Jesus casting out demons showing his power
9. What was the great sin of the Jewish leaders 12:24, Mark 3:29-30
10. 12:25-30 shows us why their charge was unreasonable
11. When we speak what do the words we speak really reveal about ourselves 12:34-35
12. What did the Pharisees want to see? 12:30. What did they do with what they had already seen 12:22
13. What is the sign Jesus promised to give them John 2: 18-21
14. What did these people have that the Ninivites did not 12:41

The Rejection of the Bread of Life

At the miracle of the feeding of 5,000 (Matt. 14:21) how many were actually there. The text mentions 5,000 men plus women and children so most teachers estimate upwards of 15,000 total. These same people wanted to make him King what made them think He was perfect for the job (John 6:15). What they really wanted is found in John 6:24, 26 they wanted to be delivered from the yoke of Rome.

Read John 6: 27-71 what happens when Jesus began to feed the soul? Look at verses 41, 52, 60, 65. Here the Lord started with thousands and ended up with a few as 6:67 tells us and then even fewer in 6:70-71. Verse 68 tells us what attracted the 12 to begin with.

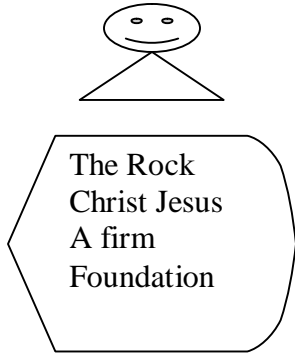
The Rejection of God’s Stone

Matthew 21:42, in Acts 4:11 Peter told the Jews that the Lord Jesus was the stone which they rejected. What a marvelous thing God has

done! He took that rejected stone and raised Him up to be the head of the corner. What will each of us do with the Stone?

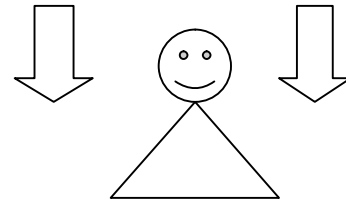
Here's the Choice

FAITH
Stand on the Rock



1 Cor. 3:11; Acts 4:12

The Rock Christ Jesus
Judgment
Matthew 21: 44
John 3:36



Stand under the Rock

Either you are on the rock (faith) or the rock's on you (judgment)! You can fall on this rock or it will fall on you.

The Rejection of the good Shepherd

In John 10:1-18 Jesus claimed to be the Good Shepherd how did the Jews respond? Three things happened

1. A division 10:9
2. The Majority (many) 10:20
3. The Minority (others) 10:21

What was Jesus promise for His sheep 10:11, 15, 17, and 18? The Shepherd would become the rejected lamb that was slaughtered Is. 53:7; 1 Peter 1:19; John 1:29

Go to John 12:32 where the Lord speaks of His death. He said he would draw all men to Him. This doesn't mean all will be saved just that all men will face the cross and make a decision.

When he died there were two other crosses one on the right and one on the left. Jesus draws all men to that center cross where they must choose to accept or reject the crucified one. There are only two classes of people.

I WILL DRAW ALL MEN
The cross of redemption

Cross of
Reception



Died sins forgiven
Acts 10:43
Faith

Died for sin
“All men”

Cross of Rejection



Died in sins
John 8:24
Rejection

Chapter Nine

The Transfiguration of Christ

The disturbing Revelation Matthew 16

The disciples were told for the first time that Jesus must die! Notice Peter's response in verse 23 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee" he said this right after his great confession in verse 16. Peter knew what his statement meant; he was declaring Jesus as both God and Messiah. However he forgot or had not read such passages as Is. 53; Dan. 9:26; Psalm 22; Gen 3:15; Zech 12:10.

Peter was not alone in his misguided understanding many Jews could not accept a suffering Saviour. In John 12:32-33 Jesus told the people he would be lifted up to die. They held the never-ending idea of a King that reigns forever and ever John 12:34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man . They then faced what seemed to be an impossible problem "How can a dead messiah reign forever and ever".

How did God solve the problem lets read Acts 2:24 "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" we see here it was by Christ's resurrection: one messiah two separate advents.

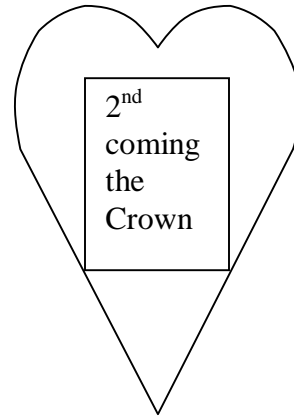
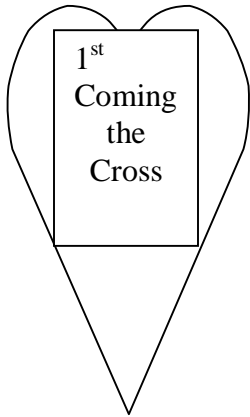
The Mysterious Prediction

In Matthew 16: 27 "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels" Jesus announced what great event? His second advent. If Christ must die (16:21) then he must come again (16:27) as also mentioned in Mark 14:49. Here in Mathew 16:27 is the first real time Jesus spoke of His second coming. When the Jews read the scriptures they could really only see one coming. Today we live between the two comings of Christ. Matthew 16:10 tells us what Christ is doing between his two comings.

Let's read several passages comparing Christ's first and second coming. Micah 5:2; Is. 9:6-7; Is. 61:1-2; Zech. 9:9-10; Is. 40:3-5. If you were a first century Jew would have a clear understanding. In Matthew 16: 26 the question is asked what is worth more to you the world or your soul, look also at Matthew 16:27. There is a man coming and may already be here who will gain the world and lose his soul as shown in 2 Thess 2:3-4,

9-10. He will have all that Jesus refused, however when Christ returns in power and glory what is going to happen, the answer lies in 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:11-20.

The Lord's first coming was necessary to set things right in man's heart, His second coming is necessary to set things right in man's world.



Result Rom 14:17

Results: Jer. 38:15; Is. 9:6-7, 65:18-19

With this background, let's examine the Lord's mysterious prediction in Matt. 16:28 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. Who was listening to Jesus in verse 24 of this same chapter and what would some see before death as seen in verse 28.

It has been almost 2,000 years and Christ has not returned and all those who heard have died. Did He fail in His prediction? I believe the answer is in Matt. 17:1-3 here is the account of the transfiguration the revealing of Jesus in His glory to Peter, James and John. Peter wrote about this in 2 Peter 1: 16-18 here the apostle reminds us that he was eyewitness (16) and ear witness (18) of a remarkable event. So those who would not see death were these three men, they were given the privilege of a preview of the kingdom.

The Glorious Transfiguration

Jesus took these three aside on three occasions Luke 8:49-56; Matt. 26:36-38; and here. As the mountain is not identified we need to find out why Jesus went there the answer is in Luke 9:28 and went up into a mountain to pray so we find here that Jesus went to pray with His inner circle.

What really happened on the mount? Luke 9:29 says Jesus face changed, became different (Matt. 17:2). Transfigure is what we see a caterpillar do to become a butterfly.

How was Christ transformed? His face (Matt 17:2) glowed; His raiment was white as snow. His raiment was white and glistening Luke 9:29; Mark 9:3. All of this took place at night, when Peter, James and John awoke in Luke 9:32 they saw a sight they could never forget, John 1:14 is probably a reference to this event.

The great glory of God's Son was veiled during His earthly life. Here is the exception when this glory was allowed to be revealed. John 11:4, 40-44, 18:4-6 and 1 Cor. 2:8. At His second coming this glory will be vividly displayed as we see in the following passages Matt. 16:27, 24:30, 25:31; Luke 9:26; Dan. 7:13-14. The disciples were allowed a momentary preview.

In our Christian lives we need to know for sure if Jesus is veiled in our lives or not. Do we allow Him to shine forth? How does the world hinder this (our speech, mannerisms, habits, experience, fads, styles, amusements and sinful philosophies)? Since we are not able to be a part of these three men's experience how can we see the glory of the Lord today look here at 2Cor. 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord; also Luke 24:26-27?

The Intriguing Conversation

Two men appear from out of nowhere one was Moses who represented the law of God and the other Elijah who represented the prophets. What did these men do? The answer is in Matt. 17:3, here we see they spoke of Jesus impending death at Calvary (Lk 9:31). The word decease is talking about a "going out or a departure" and it's clear they are speaking of Jesus death (Matt. 16:21). The importance of Christ's death was well understood in paradise if not here (Matt. 16:22). These two men knew they were in paradise on credit, their sins had been padded over (Ro. 3:25) remission is passing over. They were anticipating the day when their sins would be paid in full (Heb. 10:4, 11-12) Now both the law and prophets both spoke of Messiah's death.

In this scene we see a picture of the types of people that will be in the 1,000-year reign of Christ. Jesus the glorified king, Moses and Elijah glorified believers, Peter, James and John believers who enter the kingdom in their mortal bodies.

The Foolish Suggestion

When the three disciples awoke (Lk 9:32) they saw Jesus in His glory with Moses and Elijah. As Moses and Elijah were preparing to return to paradise (Lk 9:33) Peter speaking for the three blurted out his misguided statement in Matt 17:4 to build three tabernacles. A tabernacle is a tent or dwelling place. Jesus was not about to stay on the mountain, His mission demanded he march to the cross (Lk. 9:51) awaiting Him at Calvary.

Did Peter know what he was talking about (Mk 9:6; Lk 9:33) Peter often spoke first and thought later, much as many today do. Later in life Peter realized that it would not be good to stay in a tabernacle for too long 2Peter 1:13-15; John 21:18-19. Paul adds valuable words on this subject in Phil. 1:21-23 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.

The Heavenly Commendation

While Peter was still speaking, a cloud (Shekinah Glory) came over the group, with God speaking out of the cloud (Matt 17:5). This is the same message that was given at His baptism, with this addition of “hear ye Him”

How well did Peter hear the Lord in Matt. 16: 21-22? In this day how does God speak? Heb. 1:1-2 gives us the answer. In 2 Pet. 1:17-18 Peter here states that he heard God speak from heaven. What do we have today that is sufficient for our living and our dying the answer is here in 2 Pet. 1:19-21? May we hear and heed all that the king says to us in His written word!

CHAPTER TEN

The Royal Entry of Christ

We come to our Lord's final week before he goes to the cross. This week is marked by some sharp contrasts. The multitudes cried hosanna on His entry a week later they cried crucify Him! The city rejoiced on His coming in, yet Christ wept over the city (Luke 19:41). The people looked for a crown yet could not see their need of the cross. They wanted a king that would free them from Rome, yet rejected a Saviour. They cried for political freedom yet they cared little about their bondage to sin (John 8:33). They looked for a king (Luke 19:37) who could put food in their stomachs, but refused his personnel rule over their lives.

The Detailed Preparation

We go to Matthew 21:1-3 here Jesus knew exactly what he wanted giving detailed instructions to His men. There is an obvious plan being fulfilled by God as everything is on schedule. Verses 4&5 tell us why Jesus wanted the donkey and food. This is a fulfillment of prophecy given to Zechariah in 9:9. What was going to happen when Jesus rode into the eastern gate was unique and very special as the king officially came to Jerusalem. Jesus clearly knew this, look at Luke 19:42, 44. In Matthew 21:5 we see that Matthew only does verse nine of Zechariah 9 and not verse 10 as that is about His millennial reign, and God will at the right time bring that to pass. The second time that he comes will be different (Mat. 24:30).

The Public Presentation

Matthew 21 as it is read we cannot but help to see the very public nature of this event. Jesus arrival was boldly, noisily and defiantly (John. 11:57). This lets us know there was a price on His head. Look at Matt. 21:10 Jesus actually wanted to draw attention to Himself because His time had come!

Up until this time Jesus had avoided publicity and moved away from crowds especially as in John 6:15 as they tried to make Him king. When Peter and the other disciples understood Jesus was the Christ, did he tell them to make this public, to those they met; look at Matt. 16:20 for the answer "Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ".

But now no hush, look at Luke 19:37-40 especially 38. Look at the great title the people gave Him. The Pharisees had their protests in verse 39. They called for Jesus to rebuke the people, yet Jesus said nothing knowing that if these people crying out “king” were to be quite then the stones would cry out Luke 19:40.

Why did Jesus want the entry public and widely proclaimed the answer is found in Peter’s preaching after the resurrection (Acts 2:22-24, 36; 3:13-15; 4:10). You see with such a public entry at such a feast as Passover no Jew could say they didn’t know who Jesus was!

When the Lord rode in there was not just a few people along the side of the road there was a large crowd as stated in Matthew 21:8. Why was there so many out there? Let’s see three reasons, first is in Luke 10:1 Jesus sent out 35 teams of two into the cities. He would go to later, the message they proclaimed is in 10:9. As a result many were anticipating the kingdom of God. Second is in John 12:9-18 Jesus had performed a great miracle; many people saw this and spread the news all over. Third the celebration of Passover was about to take place (John 12:1) so large crowds had come to Jerusalem to observe the great feast. Josephus, states that during one Passover in the days of Nero 256,500 lambs were sacrificed which if accurate would mean that there were over 2,700,000 people in and around Jerusalem. They used one lamb for every 10 people.

So when the King entered Jerusalem the city was packed and it still would be a few days later when the true lamb was sacrificed (1Cor. 5:7).

The Stunning Acclamation

As Jesus rode in on the donkey the multitude put their robes in His path. In 2 Kings 9:13 we see a similar instance Then they hastened, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king. The people also cut down palm fronds (John 12:13); Alfred Edersheim says it was customary for people in the east to welcome a king, a conqueror, or a deliverer in such a way.

Not only did they acknowledge Him as king by their actions; but also by their words. Look at His title in Matthew 21:9, the Jews knew that Messiah King would be from David Matthew 22:41-42; Jer. 23:5, 33:15; Luke 19:38; John 12:13.

What were the words shouted by the crowd in all four gospels (21:9) these words are from Psalm 118:25-26 this was a very well known passage as Psalm’s 113-118 are called the Hallel were recited during

Passover. Psalm was also considered the greatest of all messianic Psalms. This Psalm was also very much a part of our Lord's thinking during the days just prior to the cross (Matt. 21:42). Jesus quoted from this Psalm once again in Matt. 23: 37-39. When Jesus rode in they acclaimed Him with their lips. There is coming a future day when they will say these words from the heart as prophesied here in Matt. 23:39 Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord..

The Prophetic Consummation

Zechariah was not the only prophet who spoke about the coming of Israel's messiah-King. Daniel also wrote of it in 9:25, Daniel marks this as the end of a period of 69(7 + 62) weeks. Each week of 7 days being equal to 7 years containing 360 days compare these passages Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 13:5; and Dan. 9:27. After this period of 69 weeks (483yrs) another important event takes place in 9:26; that is the cutting off of Messiah. Following this event Rome would destroy the Temple (Luke 19:41-44).

The royal entry of Christ was an event that God had marked on His calendar, when Christ rode in he was not one minute early nor late.

The Millennial Expectation

Thou the King was rejected and crucified (cut off) following His royal entry; he still gave the people of Israel a taste of the Kingdom.

1. The messianic King was personally present in His own temple Matt. 21: 12,13 compare this with Malachi 3:1
 2. The greedy ones were cast out Matt. 21:12-13 compare with Ezekiel 34:1-10
 3. The word of the Lord was going forth in instruction from Jerusalem Luke 19:47 compare with Isaiah 2:2-3
 4. The healing hand of the King was upon all those who were suffering physical affliction Matt. 21:14 compare with Isaiah 35:4-6
- Such a foretaste should make the believer long for the day when Christ shall truly be on the throne of Jerusalem.

The Sorrowful Lamentation

When the King came near He beheld the city (Luke 19:41) the crowds rejoiced, but the Saviour wept because He knew the fickle multitude

would within a short time be turned into a savage mob with a demand for His death.

Our Lord's lament over the city is recorded in Matthew 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. Since they refused God's blessing what must God do (Matt. 23:38 & 24: 1-2) this was fulfilled in 70 ad by the Roman General Titus as he left no stone unturned in destroying the Temple.

The Lord stretched forth His very best, but they refused and were rebellious.

In 2 Chronicles 31:15 what did the Lord God do for His people? Why did he do it and what did the people do (36:16). In Psalm 81:10 God gives a promise it tells us the only thing Israel had to do. How did Israel respond to God's gracious promise look at Psalm 81:11? What would he have done for them if they obeyed (81:14-16). Their rebellion brought a different reaction (81:12). In Jeremiah 6:16 God makes a promise to Israel and look at their response in verse 17; leaving God no option as seen in verse 19 (Is. 30:15).

So many today fail to receive God's best and in return are robbed of so much and bring God's wrath.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The agony of Christ

The Dreadful Hour

In John 12:27 we find a moment where Jesus cried out to be saved; this is on the eve of His death on Calvary. He has withdrawn to Gethsemane to pray (Mark 14:32). He is praying that if there were any other way then let the cup pass from Him (Mark 14:35). Here we see Jesus in His perfect humanity, drawing back from that dreadful hour that approached. This hour that he had known about from the beginning, the hour he had anticipated was now very near Matt. 26:45. What was this hour? To determine this let's read the following passages John 7:30, 8:20, 12:32-24, 12:27, 13:1, 17:1.

In his humanity He desired to be freed from this time, he knew it was for this purpose that he came to us. Jesus came to "save sinners", not to condemn but to provide salvation, to give his life a ransom for many.

Jesus only wanted free from this hour only if possible (Mark 14:35) however the Father knew to save Jesus would mean it would be impossible to save sinful man. So Jesus was not saved from that hour so that we could be saved from sin. He tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9) so we would never taste spiritual death (John 8:51-52; 11:25-26). At the cross he was mocked (Mk. 15:30). But it was for this very purpose that he came into the world! In Luke 23:35 the rulers mocked Him; but our Lord knew that if he should save Himself it would be impossible for others to be saved. Jesus loved us so much he was willing to pass through that terrible hour!

In John 12:27-28, Jesus presented two prayer requests the smaller of the two is in verse 27. His major prayer request is given in verse 28, which one was answered by the Father; the one in verse 28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there

a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. .

The Terrifying Cup

Jesus asked for the hour to pass (Mk. 14:35) but He also made a similar request in verse 36, compare this to Matthew 26:39. It is evident that there was something, which the Lord had never encountered before, there was a “cup” being filled up for Him of which he had not yet drunk.

What was this “cup” and what was it filled with? A cup can hold good or bad, a blessing or a curse. This cup obviously contained something terrible, look at Psalm 11:6; Ps. 75:8. This cup was for one in particular as seen in Isaiah 51:17, 22 compare with Rev. 14:10, 16:19. John in John 18:11 tells us who gave the cup to Jesus, why was it done? The answer is found in 2Cor. 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him & Gal. 3:3.

How does God deal with sin? How does God deal with the believing sinner?

Believer in Christ

How does God deal with the person who refuses to come to Christ for salvation (Ro. 2:8-9; Eph. 5:5-6; col. 3:5-6) our Saviour drank a cup of wrath without mercy, that we might drink a cup of mercy with out wrath!

In the garden, Jesus was anticipating the cross, look at John 18:4. He knew what was ahead; He saw the tidal wave of God’s wrath because of our sin coming on Him. After Jesus had prayed three times, he knew it was the Father’s will for Him to drink the cup John 18:11 the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? The thing Jesus wanted more than anything was to glorify the Father. Our

Saviour was submissive and obedient to the Father's will even unto death (Phil. 2:8)

The Sorrowful Saviour

It is difficult for any of us to understand what the Lord went through in the garden as he anticipated his impending death for sinners. Here is profound mystery, and there is much we cannot comprehend. There is

Sudden Amazement

As we read Mark 14:33 here in this verse Jesus was stunned with astonishment and utterly surprised; as the Saviour saw the mixture in the cup that was being mixed for Him. A quote from D. Edmund Herbert says it well "Jesus had long foreseen his coming death but now that the shadow of the actual cross fell upon Him, He felt the shuddering horror of the terrible ordeal. It came with stunning effect."

Extreme Sorrow

In Matthew 26:87 Jesus became sorrowful, the word means "to become grieved, sad, sorrowful; to be in pain." We see in 1 Thessalonians 4:13 that the Thessalonians were sorrowful over their separation from their deceased loved ones. Jesus would soon be separated from His loved one (Father). For the first and only time He would soon be parted from the wonderful relationship with His Father as we see in Matt. 27:46. We know what it is to be out of fellowship with the Father because of sin; however Jesus had never been even slightly out of fellowship in all of eternity past!

Deep Trouble

Turn to Matthew 26:37 we see that He became very troubled and distressed as the hour of His death drew near, there was another occasion on which he had similar emotions (John 12:27). These verses remind us that the cross was far more

difficult to face than creating the universe. He created with ease but with great difficulty he redeemed sinful men. This helps us know that no matter the problem we face, Jesus faced worse and overcame it (Heb. 8:17-18; 4:15-16).

Awful Agony

In Luke 22:44 we are told Jesus prayed in agony this is a word used of athletes who struggle in the midst of conflict to win. J Oswald Sanders “as the power of darkness closed in on Him and the imminence of the cross pressed upon Him, he found Himself in a conflict the like of which he had never before experienced.”

The mental and emotional agony of this experience was so great that the Lord was afflicted physically look at Luke 22:44. According to medical doctor’s it is possible under great strain that certain capillaries will dilate to such extent that they will burst. When this happens the blood and sweat will mix and ooze out. This was just a small evidence of the inner agony of the son as the shadow of the cross drew nigh (Heb. 5:7).

If the anticipation of the cross was so traumatizing, how much more was the cross? Yet Jesus faced it (Mark 14:41-42) because of His supreme desire for the Father to be glorified and His amazing love for those he came to save!

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Arrest of Christ

The Kiss of Love from a Heart of Hate

Following his agony Jesus knew the hour had come (Matt. 26:45). When Judas appeared in the garden, with all those who came with him (Mark 14:43; John 18:3). The Lord was not surprised (Matt. 26:25, 46). Judas did not come alone, look at Matt. 26:47. John gives the best description of those in Judas party (John. 18:3). The word “band” is a military term, which refers to the Roman “cohort” which at full strength consisted of some 600 soldiers. With so many people in Jerusalem for Passover, there was an extra large contingent of soldiers to keep the peace. Whether there were 600 soldiers or not one cannot be sure, certainly there were many more than necessary.

The Jewish leaders had their officers as well (John. 18:3) also look at Luke 22:52. So it was the combined forces of religion and pagans that took one unarmed man! The children of darkness carried torches so they could seize the Lord of light (Jn. 8:12). They carried swords, clubs and spears so that they might capture the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6).

Judas had made all these arrangements beforehand with Jesus enemies and given them a clear sign to identify Him as recorded in Mk.14:44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he. The word “to kiss” means to love, to show affection towards a friend. Judas did what he did under the guise of friendship. The word “kissed” in Mark 14:45 and Matt. 26:49 indicate that Judas kissed fervently. Look in Luke 22:48 for what Jesus said to Judas. It would probably have been better for Judas to spit on Jesus as at least that would have come from an honest heart, and not from hypocrisy. We would do well to search our hearts to see if our affection is real, do we kiss Him on Sunday and then betray Him during the week.

The Captive who was in complete control

Here in John 18:4-6 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground let us see what happened when Jesus identified Himself, all the soldiers fell down backward. It must have been a sight to see hundreds of the finest Roman Legionaries

along with a large number of temple police on the ground with one unarmed man and His eleven disciples still standing. All this because of two little words “I am”.

As all these men were regaining their feet there must have been a sense of “I’m going to let you arrest me, but I wanted you to know who is in control!” Jesus was totally in command; he willingly and voluntarily gave His life that is why they could take Him.

The Prayer Jesus never prayed

In John 18:10-11 we find Peter rushing to the Lord’s rescue with his usual zeal, however he also has poor aim, he sliced off the right ear of a man named Malchus! What was Jesus response, look in Luke 22:51. With both the falling down of everyone and the healing of Malchus all these men were left with out excuse as to who Jesus was. The Lord reminded Peter that He did not need his help. If He had wanted help one short prayer would have done it, look at Matt. 26:53 there before Jesus was some 600 men and at a word Jesus Father would send 12 legions of 6,000 angels each to protect Him. One angel could kill them all; think of what 72,000 could do. Yet Jesus did not pray this prayer, in doing so He would have saved Himself and we would have been helpless. Jesus said in John 3:14 that He must be lifted up on the cross so He would surrender Himself to that form of death.

Peter and the other disciple’s dispersed like scared rabbits according to Mk. 14:50 “And they all forsook him, and fled” even as Jesus said they would (Matt. 26:31-35. There stood Jesus betrayed by one and deserted by all. Alone He faces His enemy, alone He suffers, and alone He is going to lay down His life.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Trials of Christ

Following His arrest, the sinless Son of God was tried as a common criminal and sentenced to death. A total of six trials were held; all of which were in violation of the Law; from His arrest until His condemnation by Pilate. As these trials progress you will see who is really innocent and those who are truly guilty.

First Trial Before Annas

John 18:13 here immediately after the arrest Jesus is brought before Annas for examination. Annas was perhaps the most powerful man in Jerusalem. He was High Priest from 7-15 AD, after being removed, he still retained the title (Luke 3:2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests here we see that two of them were holding the same office which was against the law of Moses also read Jn 18:19, 22). Even in Acts 4:6 he is still called the high priest. His power was such that five of his sons, a grandson (Matthias) and a son in law (Caiaphas) all served as high priest.

Annas used his sons as his instruments, at this time he is in advanced age and also very wealthy having used the priest hood to gain his wealth (Matt. 21:12-13). As he was not the official high priest the people thought of him as such. So it was no surprise that they took Jesus to him first.

Annas asks two questions in John 18:19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine, his questions insinuated that Jesus was gathering around Himself a group of followers with the intention of political insurrection against Rome. Annas wanted Jesus to say something about His teachings that would give the appearance of plotting to overthrow Roman rule.

Notice our Lord's masterful response in 18:20-21 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.. In verse 22 Jesus suffers abuse at the hand of an officer.

Abuse #1

This officer takes his open hand and slaps Jesus in the face this was not allowed until guilt was established. This was the first of many

blows Jesus would suffer. Jesus asks this officer a question in verse 23 If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me.

The Question of Legality

This trial was held at night contrary to Jewish law. There was no indictment presented; no witnesses were heard; and no counsel for the defense was provided, the law required all this. In other words, everything was wrong, unfair, and unjust. They broke every law to accomplish their goal. Had these trials been held in a true court, they would have been condemned and Jesus set free.

Second trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin

After the trial before Annas, Jesus is taken before the Sanhedrin in John 18:24. Annas and Caiaphas were identical in that they both hated Jesus; Mark 14:55 adds for us who was there “And the chief priests and all the council”. The Sanhedrin found some false witnesses (Matt. 26:59). They turned out to be an embarrassment to Caiaphas in Mark 14:56. They did come up with two in Matt. 26:61 that make an accusation based on a statement of Jesus. Now Mark in Mark 14:59 will give us the weight of their testimony.

The Strange Silence

Look in Mark 14:60 Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee here Caiaphas stands and demands an answer; verse 61 gives the Lord’s answer “But he held his peace, and answered nothing”. When we are accused rightly or wrongly we will try and defend ourselves. In Jesus case he was innocent and He had the right to defend Himself, yet He remained silent. It is often more difficult to be silent than to speak. Yet He remained silent before His accusers.

The Solemn Oath

The High Priest speaks again in Matt. 26:63 I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God, Caiaphas places Jesus “under oath” a most solemn oath, demanding Jesus answer the question. Knowing He must answer Jesus gives one in verse 64 Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man

sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven one needs to read Mk. 14:62 also.

The Great Crime

When Jesus makes His claim Caiaphas gives the verdict in verse 65. The council adds their sentence in verse 66, what was His crime? He claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God!

Awful Abuse #2

After the sentence the Sanhedrin showed them for what they really were haters of God (Matt. 26:67) here they spit on Him this is the greatest insult and still is in the mid-east. They also beat Him with their clenched fist like a boxer, others slapped Him; while doing this they mocked Him and played games with Him as recorded in Luke 22:64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee; also Mark 14:65. Even though He could have called them by name He chose to endure their punishment in silence. We are not told all they did (Luke 22:65) however it is quite evident who the real blasphemers were.

Trial three before the Sanhedrin at Dawn

The Sanhedrin gathered for one more meeting as recorded in Mark 15:1; Matthew 27:1 and Luke 22:66. We must remember Jesus has been without sleep for over 24 hours, and He has been suffering abuse for hours. Knowing that the first two trials were illegal the Sanhedrin convenes at daylight to condemn Jesus again (Luke 22:66-71) they had agreed Jesus was to die all they needed was Rome's permission and help to carry it out.

Trial four Before Pilate the first time

We begin in Matthew 27:2 the Jews have bound Jesus and led Him to Pilate. In John 18:28 we find that the Jews would not defile themselves by entering Pilate's palace, what hypocrisy. They were defiled to the limit! They needed to fall on their faces and beg for mercy from the one they have bound, but such is the tragedy of religion as men try to cover a defiled heart instead of facing a Holy God!

In John 18:29 Pilate asks for the accusation. The Jews try to evade giving a direct answer as seen in 18:30! Why because they knew Pilate would have no interest in such a charge. In Luke 23:2 We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King here we find them making up a threefold charge. The first was vague at best, the second was an out right lie, and only the third would have peaked Pilate's interest as it involved someone claiming to be a "king" and therefore a threat to Rome.

Pilate's Plan number One

At first Pilate wanted the Jews to deal with Jesus according to the Jewish law (John 18:31). Since the Jews had no means in the law to execute Jesus and they demanded His death and could not even do that under Roman rule they were not able. The Romans crucified criminals (Luke 23:33). Jesus had already said what manner His death would be.

Pilate then realized he would have to deal with this capital case so he has Jesus brought before him for a questioning about the third charge Luke 23:3 "Art thou the King of the Jews" Jesus answers the question Thou sayest it. John provides the most detail of this trial (John 18:33-37). Jesus was a king, with a kingdom and subjects but not of this world and would be no threat to Rome, Pilate's verdict then was not guilty.

Pilate's Second Plan

The Jews would not settle for this, Jesus must be crucified. Luke 23:5-6 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. This tells us that the Jews gave Pilate an out, he thinks, he will send Him to another judge!

The Fifth Trial Before Herod

Herod the puppet king of Israel was in Jerusalem for Passover (Luke 23:7). He was glad to see Jesus as we see in 23:8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Jesus however would not do any miracles for him nor would He say anything profound to Herod. Why? Very simply because Jesus would not fulfill

Herod's sinful curiosity. Herod gained only one thing from Jesus as seen in Luke 23:12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

Abuse Number Three

Herod joined his guards in having sport with Jesus 23:11 set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe after their lusts for violence is sated they then send Him back to Pilate.

Trial number Six before Pilate the Second time

Pilate was not happy to see Jesus again after thinking Herod would deal with it. After five trials the verdict is still not guilty (Luke 23:14-15). Pilate still wanted to release Him as seen in Mark 15:10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy and Matthew 27:18 these verses let us know that Pilate knew who the really guilty ones were. Pilate was hoping that the people would release Jesus and not the murderer Barrabbas (Mark 15:6-10). Pilate even offered a compromise by beating Jesus before releasing Him as seen in Luke 23:16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him even though he had said Jesus was innocent. Pilate was willing to beat an innocent man to appease the people!

Pilate's fourth Plan

Pilate has Jesus severely whipped hoping the Jews would have pity and consider that just punishment and then release Him John 19:1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

Abuse number Four

Jesus was scourged; there was nothing worse except the cross. The scourge was a wooden handle with 9 leather straps having bone and metal embedded in them. The victim was bent over a low pillar and stripped of clothes. The stripes laid across the back often caused fainting and death due to the loss of blood. (Isaiah 53:5 and Psalm 129:3)

Abuse number Five

The soldiers were not satisfied with scourging they added more.

1. They robed Him in a scarlet and purple robe Mark 15:17 And they clothed him with purple

2. They crowned Him with a cap covered in thorns 1.5 to 2 inches long 15:17 and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,
3. They gave Him a scepter Matthew 27:29 and a reed in his right hand:
4. They adored Him in mockery Matthew 27:29 and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him,
5. They spit upon Him 27:30 And they spit upon him
6. They slapped Him in the face (John 19:3) in a game of hot hand. This is a game where the victim is blindfolded and then the soldiers put on a metal glove and hit the victim and ask them to guess who it was (Is. 52:14 & 53:2). Now let me ask you a serious question do the modern pictures of Jesus on the cross show us the real Saviour? The answer of course is no, they show a sanitized version that is pleasant to the eye and mind. The real Jesus suffered enormous cruelty before He ever was placed on the cross.
7. They took turns with the scepter hitting Jesus on the crown of thorns driving the thorns deeper. and smote him on the head.
Do not feel sorry for Christ; rather feel sorry for the soldiers who will again have to kneel before Jesus!

Pilate has Jesus brought out before the temple (John 19:5) the Jews look on Him and have no pity (19:6). Only the cross will do (19:7) to satisfy their hate for this innocent one. Pilate tries several times to free Jesus (19:8-16). All Pilate could do was wash his hands (Matthew 27:24) in a bowl of water to symbolize the fact that he was finished with the matter leaving Jesus death the responsibility of the Jews (27:25). Forty years later (70AD) a million Jews would die in those same streets.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Crucifixion of Christ

Barrabbas the Murderer

The name Barrabbas (Matt. 27:17) is Aramaic for “son of the Father”. Barrabbas was notorious, infamous, widely known and talked about criminal (Matt. 27:16). The people of Jerusalem were well aware of this criminal.

Look at verse 20 to see who was inciting the crowd to want Barrabbas released “But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus”. In Mark 15:7 we gain some additional information on Barrabbas. So he was a rebel and a murderer, part of a mob. Most likely he was the leader of a sect trying to throw off the yoke of Rome Luke 23: 19 Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.

Notice the people desiring a Messiah who would remove Rome when it becomes evident that Jesus will not do that they cry for His death and ask for one who will fight. John 18:40 tells us that Barrabbas was one who plunders openly with violence. He was not a burglar but a bandit. Here are some thoughts that might have went through his mind

1. He knew he was guilty and deserved death
2. He knew Jesus was innocent. Pilate knew, His wife knew, the thief knew, even Judas knew (Matt. 27:3-4).
3. Barrabbas knew that Jesus was his substitute
4. He knew he did not deserve this
5. He knew the substitute died so that he would not die. Every one must realize those same five facts.

The Men who were Crucified with Christ

Mark 15:27; John 19:18; Isaiah 53:12

There were two men crucified one on each side of Jesus they were the same type of thief as Barrabbas and may have been a part of his band. Luke describes these two condemned men (Luke 23:32 malefactors, 39 one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him). These men understood there punishment was just Luke 23:41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds:

Christ reviled by the robbers

Let's read Matthew 27:38-44; and Mark 15:27-32 to see who reviled Jesus. You see they were also guilty of blasphemy they added sin upon sin.

The criminal whose eyes were opened and whose mouth was shut

Go to Luke 23:39 see and amazing change, a drastic difference! Instead of two revilers Jesus now only has one still being abusive the other is silent. Finally he breaks the silence and speaks, not against Christ but against his companion Luke 23:40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

What caused such a change? Was he impressed by the prayer of Jesus in Luke 23:34 Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.? Did he see something in the way Jesus endured the suffering of the cross? Did he read the superscription on the cross recorded in Luke 23:38 THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS?

We are Guilty

Luke 23: 40-41 says that this criminal was saying the following, we are condemned to a Roman cross and we are getting exactly what we deserve. This robber recognized that he was guilty before Rome and before God and he knew that he deserved nothing less than death.

He's Innocent!

Though there were many "dogs and wicked men" as Psalm 22:16 predicts surrounding the cross, there was one man whom God raised up to bear a clear witness to the absolute sinlessness of the Saviour. The penitent thief used few words to express his belief Luke 23:41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. Jesus had done no wrong, committed no crime. Let's read 1 Peter 3:18 for Peter's words on the guiltless Saviour "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust". In 2 Cor. 5:21 Paul adds some important words For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Fantastic Faith

Here is a man hanging between heaven and earth knowing he is near death. Is there any hope for this man who has just about reached the

end of a sin-filled life? If salvation depended on something that man must do then there is no hope for this guilty robber.

This man could do none of the normal things man says one must do to merit salvation. There is one thing he could do as seen in Acts 16:30-31 Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house and that 's exactly what he did. After rebuking the other thief he turned to Jesus in Luke 23:42 and makes this statement Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. This statement is remarkable considering what was written over Jesus (Luke 23:38). How can a dead king come into his kingdom? With the eyes of faith he looked beyond the cross and saw the crown! He was dying yet he wanted to have a part in the future kingdom!

Faith Reward

Look here at Eph. 3:20 and read what Paul says to us Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. So it was in the case of the dying thief. Though we wait on the kingdom to be established the thief was afforded a different promise. Paradise is that place of comfort and blessing where the dead went, it was also called Abraham's bosom. Today paradise is in heaven as seen in 2 Cor. 12:2 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, and 4 How that he was caught up into paradise.

A Suffering Saint

When a person receives Christ as Saviour all of there problems do not suddenly disappear. The repentant thief still had to face his punishment, yet now with Christ presence and promise to carry him through. After several hours of agony Jesus makes His final cry as recorded in John 19:30 and Luke 23:46 Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. Soon after the soldiers came to break the legs of those crucified as recorded here in John19:32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him this breaking of the legs was done to hasten death. What he suffered in those last few minutes was not worthy to be compared to what he would receive (Ro. 8:10; 2 Cor. 4:17.)

The Uniqueness of the Center Cross

Death by gas, electric chair, guillotine, or firing squad is fast, crucifixion is however a terrible slow form of death. Victims did not die at times for 2 or 3 days. This is what brought surprise to Pilate about Jesus in Mark 15:44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. This is why the others had their legs broken to speed up their death (John 19:31-32). Here is the crucifixion from a medical viewpoint. The gospel accounts do not give a detailed description of the Lord's death (Luke 23:33 & John 19:18) however Psalm 22 gives a more elaborate description even though it was penned 1,000 years before it was ever put into practice.

God had a reason for not over emphasizing the sufferings of Christ. His sufferings were not what made the death of Christ so terrible. We will never be able to say Christ's death was nothing compared to what I had to go through. No one can really understand what the suffering Saviour had to face.

Many men were crucified and they stayed on the cross longer. Others were tortured with more cruel means just read Foxe's book of Martyrs. Why then was the death of Christ so unique? What was the most terrible part for Christ His Father turning His back on Him so as to not see the sins of all of mankind heaped upon Him (Matt. 27:46) according to Psalm 22:1-3 and 2 Cor. 5:21 why did God forsake His beloved Son look at 1 Peter 3:18. God's judgment came down upon Christ so that it would never need to come down upon us read Romans 8:1, and 3 and Hebrews 13: 5. We need to bow our head and thank Christ that He endured the cross for us 1 Peter 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

The mysterious Darkness

Turn to Matthew 27:45 to see what caused such darkness Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. Certainly it could not have been a solar eclipse. Why? Because Passover is always held during the full moon a solar eclipse only takes place at the new moon.

Full Moon---Passover Time

New Moon---solar Eclipse

Even if the Sun, Moon and Earth were in the right place a solar eclipse could never last three hours! So this darkness was super natural. Darkness in the Bible is often a symbol of the judgment of God, such as the plague of darkness in Exodus 10:21-22 that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. There is the darkness before the day of the Lord as seen in Joel 2:30-31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. Then the darkness when Christ the judge returns as seen in Matthew 24:29-30 the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven.

The Rending of the Veil

Look now to Matthew 27:51 to see that no human hand could have done this And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Because of Christ's death God was able to remove the barrier that stood between sinful men and a holy God. Before this time only one man the High Priest could come into God's presence and then only once a year as seen in Hebrews 9:7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year. The way today has been opened by a mighty act of God Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace and 10:19-20, 22.

A Mighty Earthquake

Look again at Matthew 27:51 and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; not only was there an earthquake on Calvary but hundreds of years earlier (EX. 19:18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly; Heb. 12:26) there was an earthquake on Sinai. God spoke and the earth shook. On Sinai God spoke the 10 commandments as a result men were condemned. At Calvary Jesus said it is finished in John 19:30 It is finished as a result God was able to justify guilty lawbreakers!

The Appearance of Dead Saints

Look now at Matthew 27: 52-53; here was a wonderful and vivid sign that Jesus had conquered death. Forever, Christ had robbed the grave

of its terror and victory over mankind (1 Cor. 15:55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory, 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ; compare with Heb. 2:14-15).

The Significance of the Crucifixion

Christ died, that's history! Christ died for you and me that's salvation. The four gospels are history books given by God they tell of Christ's life and of His death. They contain very few details of the latter. The Epistle's are doctrinal books. They teach us the meaning and significance of the death of Christ.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Resurrection of Christ

If we were to desire to see the Love of God, where would we look? We would have to look to the cross (John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; Ro. 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; 2 Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: Gal. 2:20 and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me).

If however we were to desire to see the Power of God we would need to look elsewhere. We would go to Ro.1:4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; Eph. 1:19-20; Ph. 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection

How to Destroy Christianity

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is stated over 104 times in the New Testament. Without the resurrection there is no gospel and no hope for men. We must not only believe in the resurrection (Ro. 10:9 and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.), we should also know why we believe! Our faith is to be founded upon FACTS and the greatest of these is that God the Father raised up Jesus (Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree). If God's enemies can destroy this fact they effectively destroy our faith! If that were done it would destroy Christianity! They have tried repeatedly even as recent as this year 2007 by supposedly finding his burial

box. This is just another ploy as Jesus was not put into a funeral box and his family was not buried in Jerusalem.

The Claim of Christ

If Christ's claim of being killed, buried and raised again 3 days later were made today the world would say the person was crazy. Back in Chapter 6 we saw some of Christ's family claim that they thought He was. In the following verses you will see another claim of Jesus that of rising from the dead Matthew 16:21 and be killed, and be raised again the third day, 17:9 Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead, and 23 and the third day he shall be raised again; 20:19 and the third day he shall rise again; Luke 9:22 and be slain, and be raised the third day; John 2:18-22 But he spake of the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them. Now Jesus did not just tell His disciples but others also, maybe even His enemies as seen in Matthew 27:62-64 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

Something Happened!

Consider Peter in that he denied Christ three times (Luke 22:54-62) but just 2 months later he proclaimed Christ before thousands (Acts 2) something happened to change this mans view!

James half brother of Jesus did not believe he was the Christ (Jn. 7:5 For neither did his brethren believe in him) then he is seen as the leader of the Jerusalem church. James even describes himself (James 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ). This change is explained in 1

Cor. 15:7 After that, he was seen of James, something happened.

Thomas refused to believe in the resurrection unless he could actually see and touch the risen Christ (John 20:24-25). Yet history tells us that Thomas became a missionary to Persia and even into parts of India. What happened to change the doubter into a fully persuaded believer (John 20:26-29) something happened!

Saul the greatest enemy of the new church, he was devoted to destroying Christians (Acts 8:1-3, 9:1-2). On his trip to Damascus his life was changed he became Paul the greatest Apostle of Jesus something happened!

The eleven disciples they ran scared at Jesus arrest (Matthew 26:56 Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled). Weeks later those same men became powerful preachers who were willing to lay down their lives for what they believed. They literally shook the Roman Empire something happened!

The Christian church could not have been founded nor would it have grown had nothing happened on that third day!

The Appearances of Christ

Six books written by 5 different authors, that tells us about the resurrection appearances of Christ. Three of them saw the risen Christ, Matthew, John and Paul; so they wrote from first hand experience. Below is a list of Jesus appearances in order

1. Christ was first seen by Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9 Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene; John 20:1-18
2. By the women returning from the tomb in Matthew 28:9 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

3. Christ was seen by Peter 1 Cor. 15:5; Luke 24:34 The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.
4. He was seen by Cleopas and another disciple on the road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35; Mark 16:12 unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country
5. Seen by the 10 disciples Mark 16:14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat; Luke 24:36-43
6. Seen by the 11 disciples one week later John 20: 26-29 came Jesus and stood in the midst,
7. Seen by the 7 disciples who went fishing John 21:1-22
8. Seen by more than 500 at Galilee 1 Cor. 15:6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once
9. Seen by James 1 Cor. 15:7 After that, he was seen of James
10. Seen by His disciples on the day He ascended Acts 1:3-12 Then he was seen by Stephen Acts 7:55-56 and Paul Acts 9 and by John in Revelation 1:9-18

As you can see Jesus was seen by a cross section of people and numbers at different times over a forty-day time frame. Most of these were put to death for what they preached.

False Theories

1. The disciples stole the body of Jesus in Matthew 28: 11-15 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you
2. Joseph of Arimethea took the body
3. Everyone went to the wrong tomb

4. Those who said they saw Him all had hallucinations
5. Jesus did not really die on the cross and once in the tomb He revived and slipped away. This is the most absurd of all as only a fool would believe that one could survive such torture as Jesus and then have a Roman spear ran through the heart.

All of these are absurd. We serve a risen Saviour.