



# *Life of Christ*



THIS IS HOW WE KNOW WHAT LOVE IS:  
**JESUS CHRIST  
LAID DOWN  
HIS LIFE  
FOR US.**

1 JOHN 3:16

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**A look at Christ, who he was and what he did.**

## Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. People of the New Testament World
- III. Daily Life in Biblical Times
- IV. The Early Days of Jesus
- V. The Sermon on the Mound
- VI. Parables
- VII. Miracles and Signs
- VIII. The Journey to Jerusalem
- IX. Cleansing the Temple
- X. Olivet Discourse
- XI. The Lord's Supper, the Trial and the Resurrection
- XII. Titles of Jesus
- XIII. The Characteristics of the Disciples
- XIV. Concluding Facts About Jesus
- XV. Conclusion: The Deity of Christ
- XVI. Charts
  - a. 44 Messianic Prophecies of Jesus
  - b. Jesus in all the Books of the Bible
- XVII. Profile
- XVIII. References



## I. Introduction

Of course, this study represents a Christian Worldview and within the community of those who label themselves Christian, there is diversity. The church and this study represent a spectrum of those who would be considered conservative and/or evangelical in their perspective, believing that the Bible contains accurate historical information and theological truths that we are meant to believe and obey, but often accompanying a discussion on world views, the prevailing argument that one person's world view is right while the other person's world view is wrong. We don't want to think in these terms. For myself, in accepting Jesus Christ as my Saviour, I wanted to believe that it was all true and that I could trust in what I believe. So, my world view is also conservative evangelical with a slight lean toward Calvinist doctrine. There is a slight degree of fundamentalism and the acknowledgement that the Holy Spirit is making inroads in the world in all denominations through the movement generally known as the Charismatic Movement which has been going on for many decades. I simply acknowledge this.

Reading about Jesus and indeed studying the Bible as a whole, the Bible itself is an incredible literary book containing people throughout the history and cultures of the last two to three thousand years. Of course, the Bible and Jesus Christ are central to Christianity in relating to us why we believe and what we believe. The gospel message is primarily about two things: forgiveness that leads into a relationship with God and the distribution of the Holy Spirit. The Bible and Jesus are still having an effect on cultures around the world. The New Testament makes claims which thoughtful, growing, educated people should know, understand, and evaluate and examine to see if they are true, and these claims centre around the identity, the person and the work, the teachings and the deeds of Jesus Christ. The New Testament is not just a book of history, not just a great work of literature, but it is a work of theology. It is a work of making claims about God and humanity and their relationship. It appeals to those who read it to

acknowledge and serve Jesus as the human expression of the Living God. It is also a book of ethics, teaching people how to live a God-pleasing life, one of love of God and fellow humans in ways that are alleged to be of benefit for humanity individually and as a whole. So in order to apply these teachings to our lives, we need the best possible understanding of the New Testament. We start off in our study by looking at the people groups that existed during the time of Christ.

## II. People of the New Testament World

Here we have the different influences that existed over Palestine at the time of Jesus. These influences usually only had an indirect connection to Jesus; however they created the atmosphere that spread over most of the region. There was the Roman Empire whose rules and armies dictated the lives of individuals throughout its provinces. The Emperors who were mostly psychotic in the way they portrayed themselves to those around. Transactions of money, commerce and goods were done in terms of favours with expected paybacks. The high class supported the Emperors and were considered knights of the empire and those who had citizenship were the only truly protected, yet even that protection was limited. There were the poor of the Empire who had to join clubs to get any favours or help. There were the million or so slaves that poured into Rome from conquered territories including Jews. Foreign domination prior to the Romans set a stage of Greek thinking and new ideas that challenged the foundations of the Jewish and the Roman world. The Stoics of Greece contributed heavily to the mind-set of Greek thinking and eventually this also influenced the church. Then later Rome found pleasure in demonstrating their might in the mass murder of Christians throughout the Empire.

Locally, the Sadducees of the Jews accepted the Roman status quo and became the go between with the Romans and the Jews. The Pharisees were the legalists of society and hated what Jesus was saying. He was totally over looked for who he was and the reason he came. Only those who were not so self-centred and realized their hope would be in heaven, understood. John the Baptist had gained the trust of the common people and thus was feared by Herod. The Herodian Dynasty

ruled in evil for a hundred and fifty years. They killed and murdered those around them, along with the Jews and even members of their own family to keep themselves in power. They killed John and Jesus to appease the Jews. Paul was even kept in prison in order to appease the Jews. Groups like the Essenes withdrew from society because they were sick of the evilness that presented itself in every direction. There were other groups at play such as the Zealots, Scribes, and the Tax Collectors that kept people from understanding the grace of God. Jesus was challenged on every front because he was the person to bring spiritual light into the world of darkness that seemed to reign. Then there were the Hebrew Christians who had a hard time to break away from the influences of the Pharisees. They tried to bring the Greek Christians back under the Law of Moses. It was a Roman Centurion that revealed to Peter that God had accepted the Gentiles into the church. And Paul was a key person chosen by God to break through the Greek world mind set and bring the Gospel to the Greek and Roman world of darkness where pleasure, magic and gods reigned. The following summary will provide details of these people and how they presented themselves within that society.

The Jews' desire to live as a group in the face of an oppressive brutality, created a mechanism of survival with themselves. Groups of Jews formed as renewal movements which were intended to be a restorative measure for their faith and belief. This domination came from all corners of the world, starting with Assyria, then Babylon and Persia. Later it was the Seleucids and Ptolemy and then the Romans. Even during the time of the Hasmoneans which was right before the Roman era, the Hasmonean reactions to the Jews were sometimes extremely brutal.

When the Assyrians took away the ten tribes, it changed the significance of the Hebrew nation. The affect was a cancelling out of who they were. Those tribes no longer contributed to the future of Israel. The Babylonians then deported Judah which caused a raft of changes in their way of thinking and practices. Nebuchadnezzar first deported the best and brightest of the Jews. The actual number is guessed to have been around 10,000 but whether this count included

just men and women and their families isn't known. The second deportation only left the poorest of the lot. We have to remember that during the invasion thousands were killed, starved and slaughtered. Before the final deportation, Zedekiah was left in charge to see that tribute continued to flow into the Babylonian treasury. This went on for three years but alas, the people were calling for revolt. Against Jeremiah's recommendation, they rebelled hoping that Egypt would come to their aid. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem for eighteen months. This resulted in the total destruction of the Temple and the city. Zedekiah watched his children die and then had his own eyes taken out. He died in captivity. So at that point the Jews could no longer identify themselves as a nation. There was unimaginable suffering. But this made the Jews return to God and perhaps this was the whole point of what happened. Out of this suffering, they knew that their faith in the Law of Moses could not be taken away. They established prayer cells for the reading and study of the Torah. These meeting places became known as synagogues which substituted for the loss of their temple. But the coping tool that helped them the most was the study of theology and hermeneutics. Israel acknowledged that they were responsible for their situation; for Jeremiah said that Nebuchadnezzar was the servant of the Lord.

The Persian leader, Cyrus came with his army, diverted the river and entered Babylon under its wall. The Cyrus Cylinder, found in 1879, states that he restored the culture and returned the exiled peoples to their homeland. This decree is seen as the beginning of a new era for the Jews. The rebuilding of the temple was paid for by the empire and Zerubbabel was commissioned to manage the project. Then later, Darius called the God of the Jews, 'the God of Heaven.' Many Jews chose to stay in Babylon and other cities of the empire they had been taken to. Yet many chose to leave. Ezra and Nehemiah said there were 42,360 Jews plus servants that returned to Judah. The Passover took place in March 515 B.C. which re-instituted the status of the second temple. Ezra arrived to teach the people the law. There were ethical reforms to deal with those Jews who had been left behind during the exile. Jeremiah said, 'I thought, 'these are only the poor; they are foolish, for they do not know the way of the Lord,' the requirements of

their God! The Jews struggled but they existed and in fact existence was existence and their survival was looked at as success.

Around 345 B.C. Alexander from Macedonia became known to the world. He was born in 365 B.C. and was taught by Aristotle. Alexander believed that Greek culture was the highest model of life in the world. He also believed that he was a direct descendant of the gods of ancient Greek mythology. As he struck out conquering the world, his aim was to create a common Greek culture throughout the empire. But more than that, it was time for the Persians to experience what the Greeks went through years before, from the Persians. He first defeated Troy and then the Cilician Gates in the Taurus mountains. Susa fell in 331 B.C. Tyre took seven months. There was no problem in Judah and also Egypt as they accepted Alexander as a liberator. He founded the city of Alexandria in Egypt which furthered the cause of Hellenism. He also established Hellenized colonies throughout the lands he conquered. Anything Greek was supported, especially sports as many arenas were built for such activities. He created a tax-farming system to generate funds for his treasury. Israel was set up as a semi-autonomous state exempt from tribute on every Sabbath year. The Sadducees represented the Jewish aristocracy. Koine Greek language became the lingua franca of the empire. Many in Jerusalem readily adopted the Greek way of life. They became very cosmopolitan in terms of trade and Greek ideas. The Torah was translated into Greek by the Jews in Alexandria. This became known as the Septuagint and it was the standard Jewish Bible of the Diaspora.

However, everything started to erode after the Seleucids took control in Syria. The Ptolemies were in charge of Egypt and gained control of Palestine by 301 B.C. They carried a million Jews away to Egypt, forcing 30,000 into the military. Yet, after this, the Jews were free to do what they wanted and to live in peace with a certain amount of autonomy. But in 198 B.C. Antiochus III led the Seleucids with the help of the Jews at Jerusalem to take control of Palestine. He exempted the Jews from taxes for three years, repopulated Jerusalem from Jews of the dispersion and endorsed Simon to be the first High priest. Thus, Jerusalem welcomed him into their city happily. These were the people

who felt that Hellenism was the way for the future. However, there was resentment by those who didn't want the pagan influences of Greece. In 190 B.C., the Romans defeated Antiochus at Magnesia, but the Seleucids were left alone to carry on with their dynasty. And when Antiochus IV came to power, Hellenism was embraced even more. The Jews referred to him as Epimanes or Moron' because he loved himself so much. Factions grew and the four major families: the Oniads, Tobiads, Simonites and Hasmoneans were all affected by this. Jason embraced Hellenization with the idea of having all the Jews to become citizens of Antioch. A sports arena was built near the temple and all the Jews that attended the games became uncircumcised in their actions and thinking. Menelaus offered bribes also to Antiochus IV but didn't have the money so he started selling the temple treasures to get cash for this. Jason launched a military campaign against his own people killing thousands while Antiochus IV was in the process of attacking Egypt. This forced Antiochus's immediate return to stop the civil war. In doing so, Antiochus plundered the temple with the help of Menelaus and built a citadel for the military occupation of Jerusalem. He took land from the Jews to pay his Greek mercenaries. He then created laws to stop Jews from observing the Laws of Moses. He put a statue of Zeus Olympus in the temple and coerced the Jews to worship Bacchus. Families were forbidden to circumcise their children and those who refused were tortured. When an altar was built and a pig was sacrificed on it, this was the straw that broke the camel's back.

In 168 B.C. supporters of Menelaus came to force the Maccabean family to sacrifice to pagan gods. Matthias killed them all. With his sons: Judas, Jonathan, Eleazar, Simon and John, they headed to the wilderness with others who hated the status quo. The War of the Maccabees allowed the Jews to jump from the frying pan into the fire. It was truly a righteous war to begin with but it caused groups such as the Pharisees, Sadducees and Zealots to solidify. The hopes of a new theocratic government didn't eventuate; Judas took control of the revolt. One such slogan that encouraged the Jews was, 'but we fight for our lives and our laws.' Through guerrilla warfare, they repelled the better armed Seleucid. Judas captured Jerusalem and re-dedicated the temple. Jonathan and Simon Maccabee starved the Seleucid garrison into



submission. But it all quickly turned to mush. John Hyrcanus became the new leader of Israel and he illegally declared himself as high priest. His armies still held gentile mercenaries and forced the peace. Between 135 and 76 B.C. the Hasmoneans reclaimed all of the Jewish land once held by King David. Alexander was the military leader who accomplished all of this. Yet, one day while ministering at the altar, other Jews threw citrons at him and laughed. He massacred six thousand of the Jews present. Civil war immediately broke out resulting in the deaths of 50,000 Jews. He then had 800 of the Jewish rebels crucified. This destabilized the country and the results of this brought on the Romans.

Mostly, the Roman period covered the world of the New Testament and the growth of the church. But not for the Jew who remained a Jew. They once again felt the lash of an oppressive gentile empire. The Romans used any means by which to further their power and wealth. The use of the Roman legions was the first method to solve

problems. Other methods were political. The fighting between the two Hasmonean brothers provided an impetus to intervene in Syria and Palestine. While the Sadducees had supported Aristobulus and the Pharisees had supported Hyrcanus, a 3<sup>rd</sup> factor took advantage of the situation. Antipater, father of Herod the great who later became a tyrant, used his influence in Rome to set up the new

government in Palestine. Thus the Herodian dynasty came into being. They exploited and oppressed the Jews like other regimes. Pontius Pilate, governor of Judah added to the harshness of the situation. He committed such brazen atrocities that Rome recalled him to answer for his crimes. The same issues were being discussed: paying taxes to Caesar, submitting to the dictates of an ungodly emperor. Jew was



against Jew and was helping the godless Gentiles more and more. These and others points became extensions of nationalism. The Pharisees were being pushed to separate themselves from what they considered unclean. The Essenes separated themselves totally by moving off and becoming a monastic order. The Sadducees were pro government. Into this intracultural segregation came Jesus preaching God's love for one another and His Kingdom.

First we have the Pharisees who appears ninety seven times in the New Testament. For the most part, Jesus' understanding of God was at odds with many of the Pharisees. Yet, there were signs of respect from the Pharisees toward Jesus. Early beginnings showed that the

Pharisees were known as the Hasidin or pious ones or the Haberim which meant fellowship. Even as far back as the exile and the return, the struggle was to preserve their religious heritage. The desire to create strategies for the survival



of the Jews perhaps led to the formation of the group. For Ezra and Nehemiah, a strict observance of the Law became the definitive sign of a Jew. Ezra began teaching the decrees and Law of Moses as commanded by Artaxerxes. Both of them were faced with dealing with who exactly were Jews. There were many who had intermarried with non-Jewish women. Thus, they were required to separate themselves from their families. Nehemiah commanded the law to be read every morning. However, the Sadducees were more politically focused and only accepted the Torah as Canon. But, like Jesus, the Pharisees accepted the books from Genesis to Malachi as Canon. Also like Jesus, they believed in the physical resurrection along with angels and demons. But unlike the Pharisees, Jesus dined with the poor and the sinners. He came to preach the Kingdom of God and God's love. This was blasphemy to the Pharisees. But Jesus was not in competition with the Pharisees for He knew that the Father went far beyond Moses. The Pharisees were self-justifying and lovers of money who actually stopped others from entering into heaven. In 70 A.D. with the

destruction of the Temple and the nation of Israel, the Pharisees came to an end.

Then we have the Sadducees which appears fourteen times in the Greek New Testament. They were mentioned by Josephus, the New Testament and the Rabbis literature. Their aim was to cope with Hellenism in order to ensure the survival of their race and to outlast their oppressors. They were viewed as apostates by the rabbis and were antagonists of Jesus. Some think that they may have been associated with the Essenes but this is highly unlikely because of the lack of strict observance of purity regulations. The Qumran group believed in the afterlife like the Pharisee but the Sadducees didn't. The Sadducees during Jesus' time consisted of the Aristocratic of Israel which were far fewer than the Pharisees. They were also members of the Sanhedrin which was the high court of Israel. Annas and Caiaphas were linked to the Sadducees and Rome managed Israel through them and the local King. The Sadducees could relate to the Jews on a local level and the King over saw rebellions and what not. The Sadducees chose a route of acceptance and accommodation in dealing with the Romans, but in doing so they were reduced to the simple maintenance of the status quo. They pursued moderation in all things. The local kings were responsible for appointing and removing the high priest who would serve a term of five years. Leaders were appointed from the Sadducees usually.

They denied the resurrection of the dead and considered it a virtue to argue with teachers of the law as they did with Jesus. But in regards to arguing with Jesus on the resurrection, Jesus quoted Exodus 3:6 saying that the patriarchs enjoy a living relationship with God now! This issue surfaced again during the trial of Paul in front of the Sanhedrin. Paul said he stood for the resurrection of the dead which created a moment of chaos with the Pharisees and Sadducees. Even though they didn't agree on much, they were united against Jesus. But alas, like the Pharisees, the Sadducees disappeared after 70 A.D. not to be heard of again.

The third group mentioned here are the Scribes. The skills of reading and writing gave them a tremendous advantage in the leadership of nations. Not only literary but diplomatic, government officials, even as high as the secretary of state in some cases. They existed long before Israel, throughout Mesopotamia as early as the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium. They were in Israel long before the Pharisees and Sadducees.



Many became royal correspondents and emissaries of the state. There were the intellectual elite of the ancient world. There were liturgical and fiscal scribes also. They functioned as accountants, attendants and experts in the law. Some were placed on the level of Prophets. Enoch, Moses and Elijah were acknowledged as scribes. Judges 5:14 talks about a military scribe and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 8:16 list a 'record' amongst David's officials. David's uncle Jonathan was a scribe. As mentioned Scribes copied, interpreted and taught the Law of Moses. Many a 'seal' has been found for the purpose of authenticating documents. Baruch had his own seal, the scribe working for Jeremiah and another seal belonging to Shaphan as mentioned in Jeremiah 36:10. Ezra was a scribe and priest that dated back to the lineage of Aaron. Antiochus III wrote to the Ptolemy of Egypt in regards to whether temple scribes should be taxed or not. The priest Eleazar and scribe refused to eat swine's flesh from a pagan altar. The Qumran community was a sect of scribal reactionaries that produced and copied over 800 different scrolls.

Scribes are mentioned sixty six times in the New Testament, mostly from the Gospels. By the 1<sup>st</sup> century, they were a recognized social group. They were in league with the ruling authorities and linked to the Pharisees to some extent. They were also recognized authoritative teachers of the law. In Mark 12:28, Jesus had talked with one of the scribes and said that he was close to the Kingdom of God. Jesus brought to light the hypocrisy and spirit of the scribes as being self-serving, arrogant and hypocritical. Despite what the Scribes and Pharisees said against him, Jesus was portrayed as one who taught with authority.

Sadly, the Scribes kept up their relentless attack on Jesus, even to the Cross.

In Isaiah 9:7, he foretells that the promised messiah will be driven by the zeal of the Lord. This speaks of the intense love of Yahweh for his people (Exodus 20:4-5). As Israel struggles to survive intensified, so did militancy and piety. So the fourth group are the Zealots who took this militancy and piety to heart but they never became organized enough to present a structured presence. Josephus says that zealot ideology and tactics were not representative of the people of Israel. He actually blames the downfall of Jerusalem and the holocaust of 70 A.D. on them. Both the Zealots and the Pharisees were willing to die for God. Both believed in the afterlife for the faithful, especially those who were martyred in the defence of Yahweh. The Maccabean revolt may have given rise to the Zealots. The story of Matthias and the killing of the emissaries of Epiphanes made him call out to those who were zealous for the law to follow him.

One of Jesus' disciples was called Simon the Zealot. Also at the trial of Jesus, Barabbas could have been a Zealot. Jesus made it plain that the Kingdom of God was separate from the Kingdoms of the world. And his command to love one another was antithetical to Zealot thought. And his teachings of turning the other cheek would have been strange to the Zealot. Simmons points out that Jesus wasn't just a person who was able to manipulate words to satisfy those he spoke to. Being the Son of God, his given answers and ideas simply pointed to the nature and character of God. Jesus transcended these issues to focus his listeners on the heart of God. Another person who was zealous for God was Paul. He identified himself as a Pharisee and spoke of his zealous persecution of the church until God spoke to him. Paul may have thought that killing of the Christians credited him with righteousness. After conversion, Paul makes it clear that the Kingdom of God consists of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. At first, Christians were thought to be just another Zealot movement. They had to develop their own distinct identity as their focus was on the love of God and the Gospel message. But the Jews' discontent continued to increase, leading up to 66 A.D. and the Zealots used this for their own

means. In 67 A.D., the Zealots actually retook Jerusalem from the Romans. They killed thousands of Jews who wouldn't side with them and thousands more who sided with the Romans. Menachem, son of Judas the Galilean, murdered the Jewish elite for collaborating with Rome. This zealot flame happened again during the Bar Kuchba revolt of 132-136 A.D. The Tax Collectors clearly formed a separate identifiable group in Israel if not everywhere in the Roman World.

They could be traced back many hundreds of years. The word appears twenty nine times in the New Testament and Simmons said that people purchased a franchise which was presented to the highest bidders.

Zacchaeus seemed to have been such a person who would have had other people working under him. There were no standards of accountability, thus there was an unmentioned power attached to the job. For the Jews, it was a simple matter



of morals. In the New Testament they were categorized along with thieves, robbers and extortionists. The Pharisees classed them as sinners. And, indeed, some would take as much as the market could bear since there were no laws associated with the collection of taxes. During the time of Antiochus, he asked Ptolemy to relieve the Jews of taxes in order to recover from the war. He wanted to exempt those who worked at the temple altogether. Then Roman taxation came about in 63 B.C. There was a temple tax and a tithe on first fruits and redemption money. Julius Caesar taxed farm produce at 12.5 per cent. The Roman governors initiated a house tax for those who owned houses. There was a custom tax on goods transported from one region to another. We know that Caesar called a census every so often and collected tax from all over the empire.

Jesus was condemned for associating with Tax Collectors and sinners. But many were attracted to Jesus because of His treatment and

acceptance of them. He dined with Zacchaeus who was fair and generous to all. Jesus said that he was a child of Abraham. It was the sinners who found favour with God not the religious. The Pharisees tried to catch Jesus in a trick question regarding a coin minted by Rome, but Jesus redirected the question to a deeper meaning. Coins were owned by Caesar in the first place but give to God what belongs to God.

Another two less conspicuous groups are the sinners as such. Both fit the description of sinners and were beyond redemption to the Pharisees and others of that time. The Gospels used the word, 'Sinners' alongside the publicans and tax collectors. But yet, the publicans and tax collectors were identified as being separate. Paul differentiates them in Galatians 2:15 as being non-Jews but does he really mean this? Protestant tradition includes the Jews who have failed to follow the Pharisaic interpretation of purity. Thus sinners would include everyone except the Pharisees. They were labelled as being ignorant of the law and unclean. They were cut off from the Kingdom of God. This applied with the Sons of Light at Qumran. If you weren't part of them then you were not of the Kingdom of God. Paul followed Jesus in teaching that God justifies the ungodly. Through the actions of Jesus, holiness as demonstrated by the Pharisees and the Qumran community was cast into question. Holiness was now looked at as inclusive mercy. Jesus broke through the traditionally established categories of what was clean and unclean and these actions birthed a spiritual movement. So the teachings of Jesus were certainly at odds with the Pharisees and Sadducees. But these teachings were very attractive to common people and non-Jews.

For the Samaritans, it's not exactly clear who the Samaritans were at the time of Jesus. Most people think of them as a people from Samaria who originally came from a mixer of imported people after the ten tribes were taken away. They intermarried with the poorer Jews who were left behind. Their origins could be from the time of King Omri of Israel. He built a new capital calling it Shameron which Samaria is derived from. They are related to the Jews either ethnically and/or religiously. After Sargon deported the Jews, five different nations were brought into the area from Babylon, Cuthah, Awa, Hamath and

Sepharreaim. Yahweh became to be worshiped due to the fear of the people in Judah. Josiah had suppressed the high places and taxes were collected from the north for repairs to the Temple. After Judah was carried away, those left in Judah and the north were cut off from the influence of the Law of Moses. But those in exile became even stricter in following the Law of Moses. Both Ezra and Nehemiah were saddened that the land had become so polluted. Those who had strayed away could re-join the main stream of Jews only if they left their Gentiles wives and children and devoted themselves to Orthodox Judaism. Those who wouldn't were branded non-Jews and even their property was taken away from them. From that moment on they became the enemies of the Jews. This tension is seen in the Book of Nehemiah. This heightened when a son of the high priest married the daughter of the governor of Samaria. Manasseh was banned from the Temple by Nehemiah. Manasseh then went to Samaria and created a new place to worship near Mt Gerizim. He only accepted the Torah as the Word of God. They believed that God was one, humanity was created in the image of the angels, and Moses was the only prophet. Mt Gerizim was taught to be the only true place to worship and they believed that a restorer will come to correct all things in the end times. This Temple was destroyed two hundred years later by John Hyccanus in 128 B.C.

In John 4:19-20 Jesus made it clear that salvation came through the Jews and a geographical location was irrelevant to God. Equality and inclusion is one of the themes in the Gospels. Later, Philip returns to the area to preach Jesus' message and many accepted it. After WWII, Israel classified the Samaritans as Jews of which about a thousand were left of them. They observe the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Tabernacles, and Yom Kipper. All males are circumcised at



the age of eight. Somewhat closer to Jesus were John and his disciples who looked at themselves as an end-time community of the true Israel. Actually hardly anything is said of John's disciples. Josephus said that John preached a baptism for the purpose of the washing away of sins. But John was the most theologically important person before Jesus in the New Testament. Gabriel announced that John's birth was an extraordinary redemptive moment in God's plan of salvation for the world. He was a prophet on the order of Elijah. Luke introduces John simply by stating that he appeared publicly to Israel after living in the desert. He was the prophesized, 'voice of one calling in the desert.' John also fulfilled the end prophecy of Isa 40:3 which was stated in all three synoptics. Jesus and John both testified of each other. He was the son of a priest but never served in the Temple. He was declared the greatest prophet of all the prophets, yet he only claimed to be a witness to the Lamb of God. He preached an apocalyptic judgement whereas Jesus opened the Kingdom of Heaven to everyone. Josephus thinks that he could have associated with the Essenes.



John ministered alone at the Jordan or in the desert like Moses and Elijah. His dress was of camel hair with a strip of leather for a belt. This type of dress was fashioned after the ancient practice of wearing sackcloth during times of repentance and humility before God. Thus his message was to humble oneself before God, seek His face and repent. Luke said that he was filled with the Holy Spirit from birth. John was also a Nazarene like Samson and Samuel who were forbidden from drinking wine and cutting their hair. A statement by Luke said, 'the Word of God came to John'; this reminds us of the prophets of the Old Testament. John was an ascetic in the desert, unlike Jesus who enjoyed socializing at a table in the city. John performed no miracles but Jesus was all about miracles. John preached the impending wrath of God but

Jesus preached mercy and grace. John was the end of the Old Testament where Jesus was the beginning of the New Testament. John declared Jesus to be the Lamb of God, as he was only the forerunner. He baptized with water while Jesus baptized with the Holy Spirit. Both John and Jesus met a violent death. Herod Antipas killed John because he said that marrying the wife of his half-brother Philip was a sin. This was Herodias. Major points associated with John the Baptist:

- \* John – a prophet on the order of Elijah.
- \* A Call Back to Covenantal Faithfulness.
- \* John is a divine messenger prophet.
- \* Eschatological Prophet who announces the arrival of the Messiah and with the coming Eschaton.
- \* He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
- \* The Voice of one Crying in the Wilderness.
- \* He is far removed from the Christ.
- \* He is calling Israel to become faithful again.
- \* John comes in the Spirit of Elijah, being faithful to God and standing up for righteousness.
- \* The new era represents the reestablishment of just rule of God on behalf of the righteous
- \* John's Baptism is unique to the Jews
- \* John's Baptism is a cleansing in Judaism to bring people back to a proper status with God.
- \* It is a special eschatological Baptism preparing for the coming of God

- \* It is also associated with repentance, both cooperative as well as individual.
- \* He Baptised Jesus with water
- \* John's baptism is the sign that identifies the coming of the new era, the new age and the Messiah
- \* There is an announcement to Mary along with Elizabeth's pregnancy as being a sign.
- \* There was a breaking of tradition of naming in Luke 1:57 where he was named John.
- \* John is announcing a new period, that of the Eschaton which came with Jesus.
- \* John did not perform any miracles.
- \* Deuteronomy 30:1-6 – we have a promise to regather the nation and to circumcise their hearts.
- \* Ezekiel 11:17-21 – the regathering will involve a new Spirit and a new Heart
- \* Jeramiah 31:31-34, a promise of a New Covenant, the idea of the Law being placed within people and the context of forgiveness.
- \* Ezekiel 36:24-28 is a picture of being sprinkled clean and purified with a new heart and spirit
- \* Malachi 4:5, Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.
- \* Elijah is a prophet and it was a time of the most concentrated period of miracles outside of Moses in the history of Israel.

- \* John did not perform any miracles.
- \* The importance of the relating the two has to do with the faithfulness of John and Elijah.
- \* John came in the Spirit of Elijah, being faithful to God and standing up for righteousness
- \* In Judaism Elijah became associated with the idea that he would proceed Messiah who was associated with the Eschaton.
- \* John baptized with water, but Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit and Fire.
- \* The Spirit represents the purifying work of cleansing and fire which is the purging judgement.
- \* Luke said that this baptism is the sign that identifies the coming of the new age and the Messiah.
- \* The Coming of the Spirit is an important part of the Gospel and the Kingdom of God.
- \* The new era represent the reestablishment of just rule of God on behave of the righteous.
- \* Eschatology includes Jesus' first coming and represents the beginning of the end times.
- \* Jesus was the bearer of the new era.
- \* John asked, 'are you the one to come or not?' Long story short, yes he is.
- \* So we have the promises like in Isaiah 29 and John is compared to the figure in Malachi 3:1 and the image of Exodus 23:20.
- \* Jesus put John in a class of his own – there is no one greater that has arisen.

- \* In Luke 1:17 says that he came in the Spirit of Elijah and the Pharisees rejected him, the tax collectors and sinners embraced him.
- \* Elijah was sent to Sidon, this was gentile territory. In addition, of all the lepers in Israel, none of them were cleansed except Naaman, a Syrian. So the crowd gets upset with him for including the Gentiles in his ministry. During the time of Elijah, Israel was not doing well in their faithfulness to God. It was during a time that Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. Gentiles were getting the benefit from the ministry of Elijah during that time. Thus, the implication here was that the Israel was in the same state as it was in the days of Elijah and the Gentiles were going to receive the blessing that were to come. This held true for John for he was in the spirit of Elijah.

Then farther afield were the charlatans, exorcists and magicians. Right off, Jesus' enemies charged that His supernatural power came from Satan. This shows that sorcery and magic were well known. We see in the Bible during the days of Moses and Aaron, their miracles were duplicated by the Magicians of Egypt. Luke made sure throughout the Book of Acts that the miracles performed by them were of God and not of any magical powers. You may remember that Saul went to the witch of Endor. 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 9:22 ascribe witchcraft to Jezebel and then Ezekiel 13:17-23 prophesies against witches. Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar consulted magicians to interpret dreams and visions. King Manasseh of Judah practiced occultism. There were sages and priests within the tribes of the Medes and Persians. The birth, life and death of the Caesars were thought to be governed by strange omens and signs. There were magical scrolls denoted as the Greek Magical Papyri that contains many incantations, charms and spells that depended on certain recitations of names. The magicians threatened, coerced and even cursed the gods if they didn't perform properly. The Jews tried to

denounce Jesus as a demon-possessed Samaritan who exorcised demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons. The Sanhedrin asked Peter and John by what power or whose name did they use to perform miracles. But people could differentiate between the occult and the work of God. A magician named Simon Magus in Acts 8:9-25 offered to buy Peter's magical formulas for controlling the Holy Spirit. Peter rebukes Simon and he viewed the rebuke as a curse formula. Another encounter was with a magician named Bar-Jesus who was a sorcerer. He tried to stop Paul and Luke from seeing the proconsul but Paul spoke against him in the name of Jesus. Luke explains that Paul's action was in the name of God and through faith in Him, not magic. He said that Bar-Jesus was connected with witchcraft, false prophecy and the devil. Acts 16:16-40 is about a slave girl in Philippi who was possessed by a Phthian spirit. She said that Paul and the others with him were servants of the most high, who are telling you the way to be saved. Paul spoke against the evil spirit controlling her and freed her. In Ephesus, people were healed by touching Paul's make shift belts. People thought this was magical and sons of the chief priest Sceva wanted this magic to influence the spirit world. Luke made it clear that it was God who performed these healings through Paul. But Ephesus was like a major centre of magic with the cult of Diana serving the city. It didn't take long for people to repent of these things and come to Christ. In Gal 5:20 Paul lists witchcraft as one of the acts of a sinful nature.

The Herodian family ruled various parts of Judah and Palestine for 150 years. At the same time, they were a political group that guarded itself very well. They involved themselves in murder of the Jews, their own family, John, Jesus and countless others in order to remain on the throne. Herod the Great and Herod Antipas were the socio-political group of Jesus' day. They originated from Idumean ancestry and were proselytes to Judaism and also client kings of Rome.

In 40 B.C. Herod was declared King of the Jews. This was after Antigonus made an alliance with the Parthians. Roman General Ventidius fought them in 39 B.C. and it took five months to retake Jerusalem. The results, King Herod was given reign over Judea, Galilee, Perea and Idumea. After Octavian, whom Herod supported, won a battle against Antony, Herod purged Jerusalem of all hostility and received

Augustus' full support. Men, women and children were slaughtered without mercy. He became so hated that he had to have round the clock protection. His building projects were immense. Besides building eight different residential palaces, he had the Temple renovated which employed 20,000 workers. He built great fortresses at Jericho, Herodium and Machaerus and also at Masada. He also built Caesarea Maritima. He abolished the lifetime position of the office of the high priesthood. He appointed his own friends to the Sanhedrin. After suspecting the Queen of disloyalty, he had her killed. He had his mother-in-law's son drowned after assigning the priesthood to him. He had a golden eagle hung over the gates of the Temple but the Jews tore it down. The Jews who did this were burned alive in public. He had his own sons, Alexander, Aristobulus and Antipater killed for an imaginary plot to overthrow him. He slaughtered the infants of Bethlehem after the Magi told him of the coming Jesus. His other sons, Archelaus, Herod Philip and Herod Antipas succeeded him.

Archelaus (23 B.C. – 18 A.D.) was designated king with Antipas and Philip given tetrarchies. He reigned from 4 B.C. to 6 A.D. and was the worst of all the family in his evil practices. Because of this, he was banished to Vienne in Gaul. It was because of him that Joseph took his family to Nazareth which was under Herod Antipas.



Philip was raised in Rome and was more peaceful than others in his family. He really didn't involve himself with political squabbles. He ruled from 4 B.C. to 34 A.D. in the east of the Jordan. Most of his subjects were Syrian Gentiles. Dying without an heir, Rome gave Herod Agrippa I all his territory.

Antipas (21 B.C.) was Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Jesus ministered a lot in Galilee while John the Baptist ministered in Perea. Herod built the city of Tiberius and changed the name of the Sea of

Galilee to Lake Tiberius. He had John beheaded and conspired with Pilate to have Jesus crucified. He wanted Jesus to perform a miracle for him but in the end both were happy not to have an uprising from the Jews. Gaius Caligula retained Herod Antipas as Tetrarch but Herod Agrippa I became king. But in 44 A.D. during a celebration in honour of Claudius in Caesarea, he fell ill and died. Josephus and Luke thought this was divine retribution.

Finally there were the Roman Rulers. The Roman Republic came into being in 509 B.C. and was set up as a representative government. It contained an elected Senate with two consuls who were elected based on wealth and military service. Roman rule expanded through military conquests by generals such as Sulla, Pompey and Julius Caesar. It came to a point that the republic was so unstable that the Senate invited the Caesars to take control.

Julius Caesar assumed the throne in 49 B.C. and was murdered by Gaius Cassius and Marcus Brutus. He defeated Pompey in 48 B.C. and this was the turning point for the republic. Marc Antony was the second Emperor who served from 44 to 27 B.C. Augustus took over the throne in 27 B.C. and died in 14 A.D. He used his army to defeat Antony at Octium in 31 B.C. and declared Caesar Augustus. He brought reforms to the Senate and tried to improve public morality and encouraged the growth of families. He built roads throughout the empire and created a pax roman which aided the spread of Christianity. He ruled Rome for 54 years. Tiberius was Emperor from 14 -37 A.D. Jesus' adult life and ministry happened during the reign of Tiberius Caesar. John the Baptist was beheaded, Jesus was crucified and Saul was converted during this time. Tiberius was stiff, arrogant, secretive and duplicitous in speech and actions. In 27 B.C. he moved to the island of Capri never returning to Rome. He murdered thousands of people he thought were plotting against him. Macro, the commander of the Praetorian Guard killed him. Caligula who was thought to be insane ascended the throne in 37 A.D. and was murdered by the Praetorian Guard. He committed incest with his sisters and had the wives of famous Senators in his bed. He was an epileptic insomniac. He squandered the imperial treasury and used over taxation and extortion. He declared himself the god, Jupiter and accepted sacrifices as a god.



He tried to put a statue of himself in the Temple in Jerusalem but was talked out of it by Herod Agrippa I. The Senators and Praetorians had him killed.

Jesus came into contact with the Roman Centurions on one occasion. The New Testament meaning for the word is a ruler over one hundred. It appears twenty different times in the New Testament. Similarly, there were the Praetorian Guards in Rome who numbered about 6,000. A Centurion was a Roman military officer with the status of a non-commissioned officer but with the responsibilities of today's army captain. They were the most important men in the Roman army. There were two types: Centurions and Legionaries could only be recruited from Italy whereas Centurions were from the provinces. They received citizenship upon completion of their military service. Many became rich and owned land and slaves. They were the link between soldiers and generals. One such Centurion mentioned in Acts 10:1-48 was a Godly person who lived in Capernaum. In Mark 15:39 after the death of Jesus, a Centurion said, 'Surely this man was the Son of God.' Cornelius was an auxiliary officer probably given his freedom from Roman General Cornelius Sulla in 82 B.C. Luke describes him as a devout God fearing person. Peter understood that God fully accepted Cornelius and his household as the Holy Spirit came upon them. So Cornelius played a critical role in the establishment of the early church. A Roman Tribune put Paul in irons and saved him from the mob. Paul was to be flogged but once they realized he was a Roman citizen this didn't happen. He was given to another centurion, Julius who was freed by Julius Caesar. Over time, he came to trust Paul and listened to him throughout their voyage to Rome.

In the Roman Empire, Hellenistic thought and ideas served to



booster intellectualism, especially the Greek Philosophers. Plato and Aristotle's influence still affects us today. Two schools eventuated, the Epicureans and the Stoics. Epicurus' premise was that truth was gained from a contemplative life, with drawing from

society. Nature runs the universe, not gods. Truth comes to the individual through sight, sound, taste, smell and touch. All material is made up of particles and nothing comes from nothing. There is no life after death, neither any judgement nor punishment. The pursuit of pleasure is the highest good but this good isn't a life of debauched, wantonness or gluttony. It is freedom from pain. But the Christian doctrine of life after death and the belief of a final judgement with the choice of heaven and hell is opposite of what Epicurus taught.

Zeno was the founder of the Stoics around 300 B.C. He wanted his ideas to become a guide for living in a complex world. Hellenists actually favoured and adopted the Stoic thought. He taught that life was physical, ethical and logical. Different aspects of Plato and Aristotle were used but there was no perfect world as Plato visualized. The cosmos is a single entity driven by logos. God created the four elements of fire, water, air and earth. Anything that exists must be able to act or be acted upon. Knowledge and goodness go hand in hand. God is un-generated, indestructible and creator of all. Many aspects of Stoicism are represented in the thought and practice of the early church. The Logos is the eternal Creator of all things as clearly stated in John 1:1-4.

The historians felt that recording the ideas surrounding slavery was beneath mentioning. It was sub history to them. A fellow by the name of Seneca encouraged people to treat slaves well and judge them on their character not station. He rebukes ill treatment of them. For the world, slavery was an accepted fact and part of the social structure. One such question that permeated the time was whether slaves were 'things'

or 'human'. This idea was contrary even to Roman law which stated that slaves were humans. It became a major part of the Roman economy during the 1<sup>st</sup> century. They were usually a product of war; those that weren't killed were made into slaves. Some think that a third of the population of Rome and Athens were slaves and ninety per cent of the people of Rome were from slaves that were made free. Caesar employed tens of thousands of slaves in public works and agriculture. Augustus purchased 20,000 slaves to use as oarsmen in his ships against Pompey. Even the Hebrews enslaved those they conquered, but they were forbidden to enslave other Hebrews. Aristotle maintained that slavery was contrary to nature yet he owned slaves himself and even felt that it was a necessary contradiction. But he maintained that all men were born free. The life of a slave anywhere was very grim; they had no rights whatsoever. They could be treated any way their owners saw fit. But at different times, freeing of slaves was encouraged as they were expensive to feed and care for. The Bible never endorsed slavery but it did tolerate them. At the time of Jesus' birth, slavery was common in all corners of the Empire. The Gospel of Christ was a spiritual revolution not necessarily a social or economic revolution. But with the Gospel came love for one another. Because of this love, how could there be slavery?

### **III. Daily Life in Biblical Times**

We know that due to Israel's location in the Fertile Crescent; it presented a staging area by which God dealt with the kingdoms that were surrounding Israel and eventually the world. Borowshi compares village life to city life in ancient times by describing different aspects of the people and their culture. Other cultural points centred on musical instruments, written language and physical arts which they used. The economy of Israel was dealt with extensively from describing village markets to international shipping. Three additional topics looked at health and welfare of its society and how they went about conducting wars.

Of course when the Israelites arrived in Palestine, the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Hivites and Philistines were already there. The Israelites spoke a language from the West Semitic family of languages which was similar to that of the Canaanites, Moabites and Ammonites. Many of the Hebrews were also familiar with Aramaic. So the Israelites and others of this 'land bridge' were influenced by the people there. The hill country, the Negev, Upper and Lower Galilee, Mount Herman, Mount Ephraim, the coastal plain, Sharon, the slopes of Mount Carmel which descend steeply into the Mediterranean are some of the major features of this land bridge. There's a group of low hills that run between the southern coastal plain and the highlands of Judah. South of the highlands of Judah, we find Beersheba Valley and the Negev Desert. East of these highlands, the Jordan valley and its river run from the foot of Mount Herman into Lake Galilee all the way to the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth, a little over 400 meters below sea level. East of that is the Transjordan, a high plateau some 1300 meters high. In certain places along the Jordan Valley there are hot mineral springs showing a bit of seismography activity. Generally, the country is mineral poor. It has two seasons: winter and summer. The rainy season is in the winter from October, December through March. Precipitation in the North is 40 to 60 inches of water annually whereas in the south it's only about 5 to 10 inches. Temperatures reach about 15 C - 47 F degrees in the winter and 20 C - 75 F degrees in August. The Beth-Sheen Valley is hot and humid.

Typical rural living and small village life included a three to four room mud house or several houses with a wall around it; monuments nor major preplanning was considered as to positioning of houses. A collection of houses often grew into a village and villages were always situated near water sources. Some villages were just ring shaped with an open space in the middle while others consisted of structures with irregular placements and open spaces. Other villages consisted of a single or group of buildings within a wall where animals were kept. The houses consisted of four rooms, some roofed and some not. Often, houses would have second stories that contained a bedroom or storage spaces while the roof was used for sleeping, especially in the

summer. Sometimes the ground floor was used for storage, food preparation or keeping animals. Houses were usually built out of sun dried mud bricks on a foundation of stone. Crossbeams, covered with branches or reeds with packed mud. The walls were plastered and even white washed. Furniture consisted of a bed, a table, a seat and a lamp. Liquids were stored in large jars of clay or stone. Well-to-do families usually had more items for serving meals. Even now, in many places in the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa, people still build houses like this. In Yemen, a typical mud house would consist of two or three stories. The walls at the bottom would be as wide as a metre with plastered and white washed walls and ceilings. Village authority consisted of village elders who also had military responsibilities. Generally males were used for the heavier work and the protection of the villages while women tended the flocks and farmed the fields. Women also had the responsibility for the education of the children. Family and village hospitality was a cultural requirement having also to provide sleeping places, food and protection if needed. Often travellers would go to the city square if there was no inn and wait for someone to invite them in and villagers understood it was their responsibility to look after such travellers. This same spirit of hospitality still exists in the Middle East in the same identical way. The head of the house will take a sheep or goat and cook it over an open fire and his wives would cook the best meal for the visitor. I have experienced this many times. This hospitality is shown throughout the Bible, an example is the woman who invited Elisha in for a meal. (See 2 Kings 4:8-11). But in Islamic society of the Middle East, a woman would never do this but obviously in Ancient Israel this was permitted.

Larger cities consisted of public buildings, a fortification of some kind and a water system. Preplanning included fortifications, gates, and outer rings verses inner rings, palaces and storage facilities, market places and places to build dwellings. Like villages, cities were built at water sources or certain travel locations or built at defensible positions. As cities expanded, they would add additional tiers with additional walls and more public buildings. These cities were protected by walls and strong gates. The walls were very thick and extremely

high sometimes and the gates were extremely sturdy. Some walls were so thick that horses pulling chariots could run along the top. Sometimes there were double walls or walls with deep moats attached to them. There were water systems such as shafts and tunnels that were dug within the city reaching the water level or reservoirs that collected water. Solomon divided his kingdom up in to twelve provinces, each under an official charge. This new socioeconomic and political condition created an upper class in Israel made up of royalty, nobility and priests. Each city had its own governing body of elders who had certain assigned tasks to do.

In terms of religion, many of the people worshipped different gods with small shrines set up in their own houses and paid fare to various cult practices. Jeremiah described it this way: 'Do you not see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? But this is this not with everyone. Many were devout Jews who worshipped God and lived by his laws. Of course, those outside of the Judaism worshipped many different gods. 'They make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke me to anger' (Jer 7:17-18).

The Hebrew culture also included musical instruments, especially the flute and the lyre plus other forms of art. Music was used in the home and on public occasions and dances were performed on different occasions. Many of these musicians became professional. In Daniel, other instruments were mentioned, for example: the horn, pipe, zither, triangle and dulcimer. There were also percussion instruments that made sounds when shaken or struck. Cymbals, strums, bells, rattles, and clappers have also been discovered in several archaeological excavations. There were also trumpets; two were found in the tomb of Tutankhamen. These were made of copper or bronze with gold overlay. There were other kinds of art in the ancient Middle East such as drawings, paintings, ivory, wood, stone and clay carvings, metal and glass fashioning and wood and clay works and statues and various figurines. Israelite and neighbouring cultures developed special signature seals which sometimes were made of precious and semiprecious stones. For writing, the Hebrew language used a script that was developed from proto-Phoenician script which had twenty two

letters. Writing was used mostly for official use. Discovered documents show a certain amount of writing was taking place by individuals. It's not known how many people could read and write. One would think, not very many people could but there's no proof one way or another. As already mentioned, there were professionals who called themselves scribes who could both read and write. Many scribes were given the job of copying the Scriptures, especially later in the life of Israel. Writing was used everywhere, on stone, metal, clay tablets or papyrus. And of course, much of the Pentateuch was written as a history or a chronicle of what happened in Israel. Esther 6:1 calls it, 'the book of memorable events, and the chronicle'. There were



several other books; The Book of Jashar and also the Book of the Wars of YHWH, both were books of poetry which were lost.

The economy for the rural area centred on farming of land and sheep and goats and basic self-sufficiency. Depending on the season, work would go from sunup to sundown except perhaps in the hottest time

of the day. Early commerce depended on the barter system, however, once the country entered the monarchical system, taxes were paid of the surplus of agricultural production. Most of the land in Israel is hilly and rocky with large parts being arid, but wherever there was additional water; irrigation was employed for growing crops. The work year would consist of preparing and planting the fields and then later when ready, harvesting grapes, wheat, grain, barley, hay, fruit, etc. These took anywhere between one to two months. For example grapes took about two months to harvest where as other fruit gathering took about a month. All of these actions were done at a certain time of year and these events eventuated into a calendar. (When I was a kid living on the farm, my parents thought like this: winter time, spring time, preparation of the fields and picking the cotton from the fields. These were calendar events.) Where ever there was water, the Israeli climate gave an

abundance of crops because of the long summer. The process of harvesting required other chores such as separated the grain from the stalks and chaff. This was called threshing. The Israeli farmer also raised legumes, peas, chickpeas, grass peas, broad beans, etc. Grapes had to be dried in the sun to turn them into raisins. Besides sheep and goats, there were donkeys, bulls, camels, mules and horses. Goats and sheep provided milk and meat, wool (wool was also used for payments) was woven into cloth and tent materials and colour pigments were used for colouring. Weaving also involved special patterns and even gold was used sometimes, being woven into garments. Leather was used for containers, belts, footwear. Milk gave them yogurt, butter and cheese. The horse was used for military purposes. Besides farmers, there were also people who made pottery, cooking pots, jars, bowls and kitchen vessels. Tanning or reddening as it was called in Hebrew and Greek was used to make leather soft and pliable. Many city inhabitants worked in various manufacturing activities of this sort. There were village commodities taken to the larger cities by donkeys and camels. There were village and city markets just like there is today. Weighing was done by a balance scale which is still used in some places today. Trade was usually carried on through a middle person in the cities. Commodities were measured by units of volume while worth of goods was determined by the unit: silver shekel. Solomon introduced the kingdoms own trading fleet in the Red Sea but maritime commerce was in effect for hundreds of years before, usually first carried on by the Phoenicians.

So the life of an Israeli was not easy. Eating well and correctly was very important. They were allowed to eat fish but not insects, rodents or lizards. They cooked cakes and also ate calf, curds and milk and roast fowl and wild beasts of the desert. Bread was probably prepared much like it is still being prepared in places like many Middle Eastern and Asian villages today. There they eat nan which is a whole wheat bread and very good for you. Other meal dishes included beef, veal, mutton, and lamb. Having meat at a meal usually indicated something special such as guests, wedding etc. The Bible indicates that there were certain parts that were considered choice. The Bible also



seems to indicate that any preparation of meat laid out was immediately consumed.

(Back in Afghanistan when I was there, out walking as I was; a man with a camel was coming into Kabul. He was obviously a village person. He was following a small creek and had just entered the edge of the city, not more than 200 meters from my house. I was admiring this situation and wished that I had a camera. Suddenly the camel just fell



over dead, just like that. Perhaps the camel driver knew his camel was sick; I don't know. Well the camel driver set up a stall right there in the dirt beside the stream, He laid out a cloth and began cutting the camel up into pieces to sell to the people who passed by. The blood drained into the stream as the

camel driver cut the camel into pieces. To me, it was the most strangest scene I had ever seen. I ask myself while this was happening what was wrong with the camel, what caused its death and would this hurt the people buying the meat. This scene seemed to fit into the ancient villages of Israel, except they would not have eaten a camel.)

So, other meats included chickens, geese and ducks which were eaten also. The Israelites also had fruit trees of different kinds. Most of the fruit was most likely dried, alcoholic drinks were made from grapes. Some were boiled to make thick, sweet syrup. Beer was long produced in other countries and the author assumes that it was also produced in Israel. And last but not least, the production of olives for its oil was invaluable. Even though the Bible doesn't say too much about the planting and raising of vegetables, they were common to the ancient Middle East. Carrots, cucumbers, musk, watermelons, onions, garlic plus some wild plants were consumed. Many spices were native to the region: salt was very important, also black cumin, dill, coriander, thyme, black mustard, hyssop, mint, marjoram, fitches, capers, dwarf chicory and more was available. Meals include bread, cheese and yogurt, vegetables in season, dried fruit, sometimes meat and water. Most cooked meals were eaten at home. Food was eaten using the right

hand. Turning the plate upside down was an indication you were finished.

In regards to health and welfare, there are quite a few types of sicknesses mentioned in the Bible, including mental illness. One common handicap was blindness and being humpbacked, there was also deafness, dumbness and then there was lameness. Also mentioned is mutilation, long limbs, scabs and scars, itches and rash. A type of leprosy was a serious disease to have back then. A person was usually restricted from others and anything they touched was burned. Boils was another skin disease and there was knowledge about fevers, inflammation, anaemia and jaundice. Quite a few people are mentioned in the Bible that got sick, some the Lord gave them their sickness for their sinful ways. According to the author, Israelites considered two sicknesses; one was from sin and the other physical. The first was dealt with by prayer, observing the covenant and by sacrifice and the second was dealt with by quarantine and ritual purification. The Bible talks about washing a person's feet which was a common occurrence and even represented a hospitality ritual. This was done in a large bowl or pot. The priests were required to wash their hands and feet before performing their duties. When Jesus offered to wash Peter's feet, Peter wanted him to wash his body but Jesus directed Peter that what he was doing was about just cleaning feet. Bathsheba was taking a bath when David saw her so bathing was obviously common. Perfumes were obvious in use also; remember Mary used the expensive perfume to wash Jesus' feet? Refuse and rubbish were usually swept directly into the streets as it is done today in most villages in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The Israelites had designated areas outside their house for toilet use. Males usually relieved themselves on walls or anywhere. Marriage was also a very common act. People got married and often had more than one wife and had children. Later, it seems that it became custom to have just one wife. Having children was considered a blessing for the woman. As already mentioned, children were circumcised after eight days. This was a God ordained ritual that partly made a Hebrew a Hebrew. As far as inheritance was concerned, only sons could inherit with the first born receiving a double portion but women also inherited only under special situations. A dowry was given

to the woman by the parents and the husband. This was hers. Divorce was allowed but only in writing which represented divorce papers. When a person died, they were buried before sundown. Some were buried in caves, pits, or in bench tombs, ceramic coffins, jars or anthropoid coffins. In the next paragraph, we'll look at how war was conducted.

It seems that before Solomon, very few Israelis had tools or knowledge to make tools of iron. In 1 Sam 13:19-22, the Israelis had to go to the Philistines to have their swords and other tools to sharpen. Later after King David and King Solomon, they learned these trades themselves. According to the author and the Bible, conflict was common but in Judg 3:11, it says, 'Thus the land was at peace for forty years'. Is this any different than the life we have today? I was born near the end of WWII. After that was the Korean War which my oldest brother served in. Then there have been endless other conflicts throughout the Middle East and the world. There was the Vietnam War, then the Iraqi war and the War in Afghanistan. During early Israeli wars, people were recruited from families and clans. Individuals were responsible for supplying their own weapons and shields. They also used slings and stones, bows and arrows, spears or javelins, swords and helmets. Training was done by individual practice and perhaps within the immediate family. Of course, the story of David with his sling and stone going against Goliath comes to mind. David was obviously good with the sling otherwise he would not have beaten the Philistine giant. However, in the battles of Israel, some clans would not help; there were inter-tribal conflicts that would make one tribe not help another. The use of spying was in common use in war. It was even used in the time of Moses and Joshua. Treaties were often employed to avoid bloodshed. Israel learned to use a number of strategies in fighting battles. They would use the enemies own fears against them in psychological warfare. They would employ acts that confused their enemies such as shouting or noises to surprise or stun people. Sometimes, they would lure the people away from their cities and then send in another force to fight them in the back. Then there were commando raids such as the one done by Jonathan against the Philistines in 1 Sam 14:1-16. Those

who won the battle collected whatever they could find in people's houses or on the battle field. Those who lost the battle lost everything, their houses, their families and even their cities were sometimes burned to the ground; no mercy was given sometimes. Saul waged defensive wars when he was in office but both David and Solomon conducted offensive wars for the purpose of expanding their Kingdom. David was the first to hire mercenaries whom he used as foot soldiers. They came from the Cherethites and the Pelethites, the sea peoples group. Uriah the Hittite was most likely a mercenary. As mentioned already, efforts were made to avoid war with the signing of treaties with Israel's neighbours. The conquest of Jerusalem was done by David's forces. According to Scriptures, Solomon's reign was a time of peace from Dan to Beer-Sheba, the Bible says. They had skirmishes with Edom and continued the conflict with the Philistines and fought with and against the Arameans with and without treaties. Later, Ahab of Israel provided some two thousand chariots and then a thousand foot soldiers to the Aramean coalition. Of course the worst wars brought about the death of both kingdoms where both were carried away into exile, Israel never again being heard of.

#### **IV. The Early Days of Jesus**

We have now covered the background to the life and livelihood of a Jew; now we turn to have a closer look at the early days of Jesus. What we do have of these stories only come from the four Gospels. I would recommend that you stop and read them first before proceeding. Matthew takes a certain angle while Luke takes a certain angle on the same materials and they don't necessarily overlap that much. It's only on the basic ideas you will see any over lapping. Matthew takes the story from the angle of Joseph's involvement while Luke looks at Mary's involvement, thus creating a variety of details. In the recommended readings, 'Jesus According to Scripture', page 52, 'As we study the accounts of Jesus' birth, the tendencies to become caught up into questions about supernatural elements and miss the emphasis of the message in the process. We know that the modern world has no place for virgin births and angelic announcements and prophetic

fulfilments and guiding stars. But reading the Gospels is a tricky business; some who read these accounts see only what they want to see or what they have already decided is important and exclude the rest. There is a genealogy in Matthew showing the legal rights to the throne through Joseph. But Luke's material is structured making Jesus as being greater than John. The relationship is the Son of God and the prophet of the Most High. Jesus' relationship with John and John's ministry itself are put in very ethical terms very early. And we see that Jesus' real enemies are the spiritual forces of the day.

In regards to extra Biblical evidence of Jesus, there are a handful of passages that allude to this, but the most clear is from Josephus, the Jewish general and later historian writer. Later on in Antiquities 20:200, there is a discussion of James, the brother of Christ who was put to death. Jesus was a Jewish person; he represented an ethnic minority in a very tiny section of a vast empire. We have no documents from the governor of Judea to show you how isolated this was. There was a passage from Gaius talking about Christians that said that they got their name from Christ who was executed by the sentence of the procurator Pontus Pilate in the reign of Tiberius. There was an allusion to John the Baptist in antiquities, a very short text describing him as a good man who taught the Jews to practice virtues which comes later on in chapter 18 of the Antiquities.

Focusing closer, we have John the Baptist and the early Galilean ministry. We think about John and his teachings which involved the call of Israel back to covenantal faithfulness. John is the eschatology prophet who announces the arrival of the Messiah and the Eschaton, the new age. This new era that Jesus brought in ends with the eschaton. Now the eschaton has to do with the last days when Jesus will return. With the first coming of Jesus; this was the cause and start of the last days. But let me be clear that eschatology is concerned with the final events in the history of the world. And the roots of this are in a series of passages from the Hebrew Scripture. The first being Deuteronomy 30: 1-6, we have a promise to re-gather the nation and to circumcise their hearts. In Ezekiel 11:17-21 there is another promise to regather the people in the land with a new spirit and a new heart. In Jeremiah 31:31-

34, a promise of a New Covenant, the idea of the Law being placed within people and the context of forgiveness and then in Ezekiel 36:24-28 is a picture of being sprinkled clean and purified with a new heart and spirit. All of this is operating in the background of what John the Baptist is doing. John the Baptist is engaging in a baptism that is unique in Jewish background. There is a cleansing in Judaism to bring people back to proper status with God.

So, this is a call for Israel to return to the faithfulness of the Law and be ready for the coming of God; the coming of the Eschaton (pronounced Eskaton), the beginning of the New Age. This forms the back drop or back ground of Jesus' ministry. Now, when Jesus gets baptized by John, he is endorsing the ministry of John the Baptist. So John the Baptist is a divine messenger prophet. And in the wilderness, there is a call to escape the exile, the judgement through divine release because the Kingdom of God is at hand. The Spirit represents the sealing of the relationship between the person and God. There is not specific passage in the Old Testament that ties the bringing together of the Messiah bringing the Spirit. Being a prophet declaring the will of God, John shows us something new. So you have the eschatological era with the Messiah being the key figure and then you have the Spirit. The Spirit represents the purifying work of cleansing and fire which is the purging judgement.

One of the things we learn with Jesus; what he says illustrates what he does and what he does illustrates what he says and there is constant interaction between these two. Part of what makes Jesus' authority is not just the speaking but the fact that he acts. It is teaching but not just in a verbal sense.

Major points in the Galilean Ministry

- So we get miracles and exorcisms side by side. In Jewish teaching, the testament of Moses says when Satan is defeated; the Kingdom of God is come.
- We get a confession at one exorcism of Jesus being the Holy One of God. Then later on, there is a unique remark in Luke 4:41, 'he placed his hands on every one of them and healed them.'

- Demons also came out of many, crying out you are the Son of God! But he rebuked them, and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.’
- In chapter 5:1-11, Luke gives us his version of the Call of the Disciples. This is the place where Jesus takes them out fishing and he instructs them to cast the net having a huge catch of fish. The boat begins to sink as the catch is so large. Peter falls down at Jesus’ knees asking him to go away.
- In verse 12, we have the cleansing of the Leper which then leads to observance of the law. All of these acts are declarations of how the oppressed are being released in the book of Luke.
- In the healing of the Paralytic, as he was lowered down before Jesus, he said, ‘your sins are forgiven.’
- And this action portrays the otherwise unseen authority, thus miracles must be audio visuals of other things. In flashing back to Jesus in the boat with Peter, James and John and the miracle of the huge catch of fish, Jesus tells them, ‘I will make you fishers of men.’
- Matthew is telling a story but at the same time adding his own commentary to that story that comes to fulfillment, saying this is a realization of the program of God.
- Luke contrasts Jesus and John and uses hymns of praise as theological explanation in the text. There is a language of Scripture, of joy, of engagement that comes from the characters themselves within the story.
- In Matthew, we have a tone of conflict and opposition. If you think about the story from Matthew, we get the announcement of Jesus, we get Herod being angry that the Messiah has come, we get him sending out troops to kill all those under two years of age in order to remove Jesus, we get the tragedy of people being killed in Bethlehem; in a little village just to the south and within four miles of Jerusalem.
- In Luke, we have a completely different tone, one of joy and of excitement. In Matthew, as already noted, Joseph is the key figure who has to deal with the problem of having this young

girl to whom he is engaged who happens to be pregnant. Joseph is directed to marry the girl and this is by the Holy Spirit.

- Contrasting Luke, this story is from Mary's perspective. In fact, it says that Mary treasured these things in her heart.

## V. The Sermon on the Mount

First, let's talk about the Sermon on the Mount. From Matthew we see the first major teaching of Jesus. The book contains five different teaching units: the Sermon on the Mount, the discussion in chapter 10 about missions, chapter 13 has the kingdom, chapters 16-18 have teaching in regards to relationships and the new community and then 24 and 25, the Olivet

Discourse. So those are the units in Matthew. The first one is an exposition of the true Torah as Jesus presents it. This complements what we've seen of Jesus' ministry about the challenge to Jewish practice. We now pick up the account in Matthew 5-7. Many see Matthew as topical, especially in chapters 8 and 9 focusing on his presentation of the works of Jesus' ministry which follow the presentation of his teaching. Luke's first teaching block is the synagogue appearance in chapter 4. Mark lacks any parallel to the Sermon on the Mount and the

Sermon on the Plain. Note that is the reason why Mark is viewed as being the first Gospel.

We see that the beatitudes of the sermon represent a proclamation of blessings for the needy, the type of person for whom God reaches out. We will see people on the fringe, who don't exercise





power, people who are neglected. In Matthew, we have nine beatitudes and in Luke we have four. In Matthew, we have the better known, those who are poor in spirit, the hungry, the meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, clean in heart, peacemakers, persecuted for righteousness sake and the persecuted restated. The list in Luke is different: poor, hungry now, weeping now, when you are hated because of the Son of Man. It's seems to be an eschatological reversal and in this reversal, you will be blessed and the reversal speaks of either being received by him or by the Kingdom of Heaven. These categories are not purely social, but neither are they purely spiritualized. Here is who God blesses and looks after and the passage is an invitation in sharing grace by having such a character. So, in a sense, Jesus is announcing that God blesses these kinds of people.

In Matthew 5:13 you are the salt of the earth. Mark and Luke have a similar image, Mark 9 and Luke 14. He warns them if the salt loses its saltiness, it will only be thrown out to be trampled on. Jesus, like John the Baptist, is calling the nation back to covenant faithfulness. Basically he says; don't relax in doing the least of these commandments. Jesus' ministry represents a realization in morality and promise of what the Law was given for; so it is relevant for disciples, not as an abstract Law of externals but something to be penetrated to see what God really desires.

The Sermon on the Mount shifts to discussing images and practices that influence a person. We have a picture; which basically says the eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy then your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is diseased, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the dark. There is some debate in the ancient world as whether the eye is seen as that which takes something in or it is seen as something that comes out of a person. We seem to think of the eye as taking in the outside world. The ancient world suggests that what comes into the eye reflects what's inside the person. We talk about a person having a gleam in their eye; that kind of reflects what they are feeling on the inside. Another example would be like seeing someone or an animal in headlights of your car. So from a person's eyes, you can see

what going on inside of them. So the image is probably from the inside out, not outside in. The point here is, the eye is sending out healthy signals; thus it is sending out light if the body is made up of light, but if it's unhealthy, the body is dark and that darkness is really dark.

In Matthew 7:5; everybody learns that you are not to judge, unless you are to be judged. This passage is not about a lack of spiritual accountability which is the way unbelievers want to use it. By the standard you judge, you will be judged. Be very careful how you treat others for you might be treated the same way. The measure you use will be the measure you receive. Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye but fail to see the beam of wood in your own? How can you say to your brother, let me remove the speck from your eye, while the beam is in your own. You hypocrites first remove the beam from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. There is accountability in this passage. There is an assumption that it is appropriate to be accountable, but it's to be accountable with a humility and recognition that we are capable of doing the very same thing we are encouraging someone else not to do. We need to pay attention to the fact, whether or not we are doing those things as well. Look at the following points.

The Beatitudes and Woes: These represent a proclamation of blessings for the needy, the type of person for whom God reaches out to. These are people on the fringe, who don't exercise power, people who are neglected. There are nine beatitudes in Matthew and four in Luke. Matthew covers the better known: those who are poor in spirit, the hungry, the meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, clean in heart, peacemakers, persecuted for righteousness sake and the restated persecuted. Luke covers the poor, those who are hungry now, those who are weeping now and those who are hated because of the Son of Man. These are people who God blesses and looks after and the passage is an invitation in sharing grace by having such a character. God blesses these kinds of people. As for the poor; this is social, physical and spiritual. Jesus is sensitive to people on the edge of society: the poor, the tax collectors, the lepers; the kind of people Jesus ministers to and the people that society tends to forget and care about.

Salt and Light of the World: In Matthew 5:13 you are the salt of the earth. Mark and Luke have a similar image, Mark 9 and Luke 14. He warns them if the salt loses its saltiness, it will only be thrown out to be trampled on. It ceases to be used for which it was created for and is no better than dust. The point of the exhortation is to be useful and live out your calling, you are accountable to God. The image then both informs and warns. This is followed by another image of being the light of the earth. Both Mark and Luke have similar versions of this in Mark 4:21 after the kingdom parables and Luke 8:16. 'You are the light of the world. A city located on a mountain cannot be hidden. People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.' There is some discussion whether it is the 'light of the world' or 'light for the world.' A better translation would be, 'a light is to be a benefit to the world. Let your light shine before humanity.' Why? 'That they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven.' This is a mission statement in the Sermon on the Mount. So how is God glorified? One of the ways God is glorified is by his servants shining appropriately before humanity through the good works they engage in. Thus I remind you that Jesus' ministry is a ministry of Word and deed together. The deed re-enforces the Word and the word re-enforces the deed. The church should have the same kind of ministry, a Word and deed ministry, where deeds re-enforce the Word. The call is to do good works in the world as a testimony to God. These passages are a preamble to the entire sermon.

The Law # 1: The conceptual parallels in Luke 16:16-17, Jesus expounds on his mission in the Law and the point is found in verse 20, his people are to have a righteousness which exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees, something that permits entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. This is not a race or just Jewish oriented. In verses 21-48, the explanation follows with the summary in verse 48 recalling this point, 'unless your righteousness exceeds that of the experts in the Law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.' The topics include anger, adultery, divorce, oaths, retaliation and love of enemies, six topics. The mission that Jesus says he has come to perform is to fulfill, not abolish the Law and the prophets. Nothing of the Law passes

away until all is accomplished. Note that the mention of the prophets tells us that more than rules are in view here. We aren't just dealing with the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament interpreted abstractly on their own terms. We are talking about the Law as expounded through the call and the rebuke of the Prophets. Why; because Jesus, like John the Baptist, is calling the nation back to covenant faithfulness. Basically he says; don't relax in doing the least of these commandments. Jesus' ministry represents a realization in morality and promise of what the Law was given for; so it is relevant for disciples, not as an abstract Law of externals but something to be penetrated to see what God really desires. And that's how Jesus expounds it and in expounding it, he fulfils it. He fulfils it, not in the sense of reading it as a raw external letter.

The Law # 2: Matthew 5:25-26 shows up in Luke 12:57-58. The Antithesis is structured the same way. You have heard it said, but I say to you. (Anti-thesis means here, a correction, a change from that previously stated.) This is a claim of authority that Jesus is making. He has the authority to interpret the Law. He is not only Lord of the Sabbath; he is Lord of the Torah (The first five books of the Old Testament, commonly known as the Law). He is dealing with the sixth commandment here. You shouldn't murder, but beyond murder, he points out, there is accountability for anger, for insulting someone and for disrespect. The anger is seen as inappropriate; there are times when a person can be challenged which the passages alludes to Matthew 23 are about. If your brother has something against you, you are supposed to go and reconcile with him. Why, because reconciliation is a high value to Jesus. Your relationship with God should impact with your relationship with others. He says that you should reconcile before worship; vertical relationship is tied to horizontal relationship. The issue is not staying in anger and alienation, but making friends with the accuser before judgement renders you beyond that. Moral righteousness that Jesus teaches demands an initiative to reconciliation to be made rather than abiding in anger. This is cutting murder off at the root by dealing with the anger.

The Law # 3: In Matthew 5:27-32, Matthew deals with adultery. Verse 5:30 appears in a distinct context in Mark 9:43 and 45, but that's

like Matthew 18:8-9. The summary appears in Luke 16:18. Here, we are dealing with the seventh commandment, the commandment on adultery. Lust is adultery of the heart; before we get to adultery, note that lust is what leads to it. The figure is, if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Jesus is being rhetorical here because if this was literal, it would be two strikes and you would be blind. The point is to separate that which causes sin. For deprivation of opportunity to sin is better than judgement. The member sins but the whole body is judged; divorce can lead to adultery and there is an assumption in this passage in talking about adultery that remarriage will occur if one gets a divorce. Think about it: why does divorce occur? There are many reasons; rebellion, hardening of the heart, refusing to follow God; all leads to be free to remarry. In some cases, we are not included in any bondage in regards to this. If you look at the divorce certificate; in Judaism you will see that with it comes the right to remarry. 'He who divorces his wife must give her a legal document.' You get a description of the rights that come with divorce. This is controversial because you have exception clauses in Matthew that you don't have in Mark and Luke. This is from the Mishna, the written collection of Jewish oral tradition. You are to examine yourself from the heart and keep your vows. You aren't supposed to look for a way out of marriage, even though there is an exception that's noted. My sense is that there are tolerated exceptions in divorce. Jesus' standard is, don't get divorced; that's the emphasis and that's why you get the no exception in Mark and in Luke. But Matthew qualifies it, there is a certain exception and that that exception is unfaithfulness and in that case divorce is permitted. It's tolerated, not recommended, not required; it's simply tolerated. The reason I think that is important, when we come to 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7 and Paul is ask about an unbeliever's desertion and whether or not it's proper to divorce in that situation. Paul knows the Lord's teaching because he cites it. If Jesus' teaching had been, 'no divorce,' Paul would have never opened up what is called the Pauline exceptions. He creates this other category in the mitts of his writings alongside this idea of adultery. This seems to be seen as an

intense marital unfaithfulness, to desert a spouse; and so he permits it. Those are the two exceptions in Scripture.

Oaths # 1: In regards to Oaths in Matthew 5:33-37, the Old Testament background comes from the third commandment. The need to take an oath assumes a lack of integrity, so your integrity should be strong enough to speak for itself. There is also retaliation in Matthew 5: 38-42 and Luke 6:29-30. The phrase is also from Exodus 21:24 and Leviticus 24:20 and Deuteronomy 19:21 discusses how the laws are to be applied in cases of personal injury. The context is in regards to what judgement should do. Jesus, in contrast, advocates non-retaliation in personal interaction. It involves how to respond to personal legal attack. If you look at this text in the way Jesus presents it, 'you have heard that it was said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, do not resist the evildoer.' As Jesus has made changes in the way this is seen, some people get nervous when Jesus talks about the Torah directly. They say that Jesus is dealing with the Jewish interpretation of the Law, not the Law. But that presents a problem with this example which cites the Torah. But Jesus is showing his authority here also. You are to remain vulnerable; this is the point as you minister on God's behalf. You are to be vulnerable and remain vulnerable to rejection. With regard to suing, you not only give the shirt, but you give your coat also. The same as a forced journey, you go double over what's requested. You give when ask and you don't refuse nor look for interest. Luke's phrasing comes with the discussion of loving the enemy as an example and again, it is the same sequence as in Matthew. Thus non-retaliation is the ethical standard in relationships as is an element of generosity and service. Thus, this is a new revelation and a fresh emphasis, justice is something that is left to God and God's people are going to serve and they will serve willingly, rather than be self-protective.

Oaths # 2: 'You have heard that it was said to love your neighbour and hate your enemy, but I say to love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be like your Father in heaven. The love aspect of the saying is in Leviticus 19:18 and the second could be a summary of Old Testament teaching given in some of the Psalms. It also appears in certain Jewish texts, like the testament of Benjamin 4:2.

If you love only those who love you and greet you as brothers, that is only what publicans and Gentiles do and nothing more. The standard for a disciple is greater than the way the world relates to people. This is the point being made here. 'Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' Cause to love and do good things and bless, pray, love and do good things. You will be sons and you will be merciful as the Father is merciful; be gracious to friends and enemies. It's an interesting text because Jesus changes it by saying, 'but I say to you love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be like your Father in heaven, since he causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good alike, and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous. God treats the unrighteous with provision; you should do the same because you are supposed to be a child of and like the Father. This is the end of the beatitudes and now we talk about certain kinds of acts of charity.

Acts of Charity and Christian Service: In regards to charity and Christian service; on the one hand, you have the freedom to engage society with your values, but you have to be open to rejection on the other hand, and your goal is to engage and serve. Due to the cultural wars today, we tend to see everything through a confronting mode. But do we ask how we can serve. We can complain about abortion, but do we spend the money and take the effort and open up the clinics that will take care of people who choose not to have an abortion; or might even serve people who are emotionally disturbed by having an abortion? Does our word match our deed? The church and many Christians often have a confrontational attitude toward others instead of a servant's attitude that the Scriptures teach. We think the Gospel is most effectively moved by using power like the world does, when in fact the Gospel is often used most effectively through service and through caring, which sometimes mean not acting out of power. But we don't want to take the risk of vulnerability.

Serving One Master: In Luke 11:33-36; Luke's context seems to be a little more distinct here. It may include; watch what you take in. But the point is, either way; the passage is a warning about what one is on the inside and you are to be healthy on the inside, regardless how you interpret the imagery presented. The point is to be clean on the

inside and thus the emphasis of the entire sermon. Part of this thinking has to do with knowing which master you serve. You cannot serve two masters at once. In the end, you will make a choice between one and the other. You will hate one and love the other and in applying this to God, you can't serve God and something else, such as the world or money or material possessions. Luke only supplies the idea of a householder or domestic slave serving two masters. Again the choice is about life's values and here the idea is concerned with the call to honour God and being devoted to him above all else, even that which is most likely to get our attention from being faithful to God.

Seek first the Kingdom of God: In Matthew 6:25-34; the next passage is a unit on anxiety. We see it as well in Luke 12 and again because of the two masters' issue. The point might be; don't worry about food, drink or clothing, if you are dependent upon God, you can trust him for that as well. Relating to Greek, if you ask a question, you can expect a positive or negative answer depending on how you ask. So the question that is ask here, is not life more than food and clothing? One would expect a positive answer to this question; there, life is more than food and clothing. God takes care of the birds, he takes care of us. Worry doesn't add to any of this, to you as a person; God takes care of you like the flowers in a field and they don't work. Solomon wasn't even clothed like these. God even takes care of the grass and you are so much more important; you of such little faith. This is the way Jesus sometimes addresses people when they don't stand up to the spirituality he thinks they should. So don't worry about food, drink or clothing, the nations do that; rather focus on the kingdom of God, for God knows you need these things. Thus, seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and these things will be added to you. Don't worry for tomorrow, for tomorrow has enough worry for itself. All this is designed for you to trust God and pursue righteousness and God will care for you.

Judge Not: In Matthew 7:5; everybody knows that you are not to judge. This passage is not about a lack of spiritual accountability which is the way unbelievers want to use it. By the standard you judge, you will be judged. Be very careful how you treat others for you might be treated the same way. The measure you use will be the measure you



receive. Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye but fail to see the beam of wood in your own? How can you say to your brother, let me remove the speck from your eye, while the beam is in your own. You hypocrites first remove the beam from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. There is accountability in this passage. There is an assumption that it is appropriate to be accountable, but it's to be accountable with a humility and recognition that we are capable of doing the very same thing we are encouraging someone else not to do. We need to pay attention to the fact, whether or not we are doing those things as well.

The Way: Two ways that Jesus starts to finish the sermon are in terms of the choices. The call is to enter by the narrow gate, for the way of destruction is wide and easy and many enter into it; whereas the gate of life is narrow and hard and those who find it are few. This is a real exhortation to say that the way in is not easy, it is not straight forward; it's the narrow way. Sometimes preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ is seen as narrow. Well, it is! Luke has this saying in response to a question in Luke 13 about whether the saved will be few. Jesus replies by saying strive to enter the narrow door for many seek and will not be able. So he turns the question around and says, 'the question is not whether the saved will be few, the question is whether the saved will be you.' He turns the question to get the person to reflect on whether they are walking down the narrow way or not. The way to life is narrowly defined and it's not easy. You've got to watch the choices you make and you also have to watch the teachers that you follow, but you will know the teachers you follow by their fruit. This is the next to last section on the sermon. Watch out for the false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are voracious wolves. You will recognize them by their fruit; as you know, grapes are not gathered from thorns. In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. The exhortation is to pay attention to the kind of fruit that the teachers teach you. Test the prophets and test the teachers by the products of their lives.

The Way # 2: We come to the closing part of the sermon, the house built upon a rock. Those who hear the words of mine are like the man

who built his house on a rock, dug deep and laid a foundation. The rains and flood and wind did not destroy the house, but those who hear and do not do are like the foolish man who built his house on the sand where the floods and winds caused the house to fall and great was its fall. The emphasis in this passage is the tragedy of having had the opportunity to hear and not respond. Look at where the passage ends by saying, ‘and the fall of it, the destruction of it was great.’ The sermon is saying that you have been given an opportunity, don’t stop here. Jesus refers to his teachings in ways the rabbis referred to the Law. That it is something that is built upon the rock. It is a radical claim that divulges authority, especially in light of the previous verses about calling Jesus Lord and not doing what he says. Don’t be foolish; hear and do what I teach. These are stable words that prevent ruin. The crowd’s reaction to this sermon, they are astonished at Jesus’ teaching. This is with the same tone as that in Capernaum where it says that he taught with authority, and not like the Scribes. Verse 29 says, ‘he taught them like one having authority, not like the experts in the Law.’ So there is recognition of Jesus’ authority. Luke has a shorter version of the beatitudes, he doesn’t have the six antithesis, and he doesn’t discuss the religious practices relating to fasting, prayers and alms giving. In fact, nothing of Matthew 6 appears here. It is scattered throughout other portions of Luke’s Gospel. So Luke’s version is in three parts of the beatitudes and woes, of loving ones enemies and then a discussion on judging, fruit and how you respond to what Jesus is saying.

## VI. Parables

We see these in Mark 4 – 8 and also Luke 8:4-9:7. Matthew and Mark run fairly parallel through this unit as does Luke except that Luke lacks Mark 6:45-8:26. There is an assumption that Luke and Mark know each other, yet this unit is missing in Luke.

- The issue is about the disciples coming to realize who Jesus is
- Jesus explains the Kingdom and its special character.
- Matthew has eight Kingdom parables
- Mark has five kingdom parables

- Luke has two kingdom parables – he has two more in chapter 13
- The Sower represents the key parable as it shows the obstacles of the kingdom message.
  - Satan
  - Persecution
  - Life’s distractions – the cares of life
- The Parables are designed to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom to insiders
- Mark talks about the secret of the kingdom, a kingdom of divinely directed growth leading to blessing and judgement.
  - The picture is a kingdom that goes from small to large
  - This mystery is completely new because the Old Testament saints longed to see it.
  - Some mysteries are things that are revealed but not completely understood or appreciated.

The fruit that we see in the Parable of the Sower is varied in Matthew and Mark, but there’s a single yield in Luke. Both of them take a receptive heart, but they make the point that different people have different levels of fruit, at least Matthew and Mark do. Luke is simply interested in the fact that sometimes it takes root and there is a product. The Parable of the Lamp and Measure are ways of saying that revelation is like light. Jesus’ teaching gives the idea that it starts out small.

The Parable of the wheat tells us that the kingdom is mixed with the world until the end and that the devil is also at work planting seeds of evil in the world alongside the seeds of the kingdom. The kingdom operates and makes a claim on the entire world. We should think in terms of the church will take over the world in the framework of what Jesus is saying. The place where the kingdom is supposed to be particularly manifested is in the communities of God. The place where you are to see kingdom principles at work is in the community of the people of God.

In another parable: the kingdom of heaven is like a person who sowed good seed in this field. But while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. The weeds were eventually collected and burned. In 13:36 the Son of Man sows the good seed and the field is the world and the good seed are the people of the kingdom. The field is not merely the church. The kingdom is the Word sown in the world and thus makes a claim on the entire world, but it doesn't force itself on the world. The reaping will happen when Jesus decides.

We see that the role of Christians is not to create a theocracy and I don't believe anyone really think this. We must make sure that a kingdom ethic is being modelled in the church in such a way as you experience its culture. Our calling is to represent God faithfully in the world; that's a significant difference. And note that the growth in one sense of the kingdom, are the people who opt in and participate in it, but alongside of it, you've got this other sphere, the world which is doing its own thing and then there is the contrast between the two spheres.

- Many of the religious right in practice are post-millennials – a theological doctrine that states the second coming of Christ will occur after the millennium instead of before it.
- Engagement with the culture is what progressive dispensationalism is all about – Progressive dispensationalism is a variation of traditional dispensationalism, dispensationalists view the dispensations as chronologically successive. But progressive dispensationalists view the dispensations as progressive states in salvation history. This is not related to progressive Christianity.
- Our calling is to represent God faithfully in the world. There are two spheres, that of the Kingdom of God and that of the world.

- The Post-millennialists are arguing for the process; and so are some Amillennialists – Millennialism involves the rejection of the belief that Jesus will have a literal thousand year physical reign on the earth. This rejection contrasts with premillennial and some post millennial interpretations of chapter 20 in the Book of Revelation.

Parable/Lesson	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Absent householder	13:33-37		
Barren fig tree			13:6-9
Children in market	11:16-19		7:31-35
Fig tree	24:32-35	13:28-32	21:29-33
Lamp under basket	5:14-16	4:21-23	8:16-18
Dinner guests			14:15-24
Divided kingdom	12:24-30	3:22-27	11:14-23
Faithful & evil servants			12:35-40
Feast invitations			14:12-14
Friend at midnight			11:5-13
Good Samaritan			10:25-37
Great physician	9:10-13	2:15-17	5:29-32
Groom's attendants	9:14-15	2:18-20	5:33-35
Growing seed		4:26-29	
Hidden treasure	13:44		
Humbled guest			14:7-11
King's war plans			14:31-32
Laborers in vineyard	20:1-16		
Leaven	13:33		13:20-21
Lost coin			15:8-10
Lost sheep			15:4-7
Marriage feast	22:1-14		
Mustard seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
Net of fish	13:47-50		
New cloth	9:16	2:21	5:36
New wine	9:17	2:22	5:37-39
Pearl of great price	13:45-46		
Persistent widow			18:1-8

- Why is there a second coming? Is Jesus returning simply to say that we did a great job or he is coming back to really set things right? Note that the world has its own sphere of influence, doing its own thing and becoming more radical at the same time. Conflict and pressure in many respects is rising. We need to be prepared for persecution.
- There is a difference between being faithful, pursuing Biblical values and understanding that the pursuit of Biblical values may not always be successful. We are to equate success with being faithful and carrying out biblical values and representing them.
- We are called to be faithful – this is pursuing justice and being concerned about things that reflect Biblical values.

- The church is basically a holy huddle – We need to share Christ with our community and reach out to the down trodden, poor and where the destitute abode. We need to sort out God’s expectations for us.

There is the parable of the mustard seed and the Yeast – Matthew 13:31 is an example of small to large. The background to this is like Ezekiel 17:23 which speak of a sprig being pulled, out of which a tree will come where birds will nest that reflects the Davidic House. The Parable of Yeast also reflect

small to large. Matthew 13:35 in allusion to Psalm 78 says, ‘I will open my mouth in parables; I will announce what has been hidden from the foundation of the world. In verse 44, the Kingdom of God is like a treasure, hidden in a field that a person found. He sold everything he had to buy the field. And then the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant searching for pearls and a person sold everything he had to get the pearl. It is like a net cast into the sea where the good and bad fish were separated. These parables are a combination of things you’ve already seen and of new things.

<b>Illnesses / Injuries Healed</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Woman's chronic blood hemorrhaging stops	Matt. 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48
Malchus' severed ear restored	Luke 22:50-51
Peter's mother-in-law healed	Matt. 8:14-15; Mark 1:30-31; John 4:38-39
Centurion's servant healed	Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10
Royal official's son remotely healed	John 4:46-54
<b>Evil Spirits Removed</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Gentile woman's daughter delivered	Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30
Boy delivered of demon-possession	Matt. 17:14-20; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43
Man delivered of demon-possession	Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37
Two demon-possessed men delivered	Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-33
<b>The Dead Raised to Life</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Widow's son raised from the dead	Luke 7:11-17; Mark 7:24-30
Lazarus raised from the dead	John 11:38-44
Jairus' daughter raised from the dead	Matt. 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43
<b>Other Supernatural Acts</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Temple tax placed in the mouth of a fish	Matt. 17:24-27
Jesus invisibly escapes through an angry crowd	Luke 4:28-30
Jesus turns water into wine	John 2:1-11
Jesus fills Peter's net with fish	John 21:1-14
Jesus feeds 5,000 with 5 loaves & 2 fish	Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15
Jesus feeds 4,000 with 7 loaves & a few fish	Matt. 15:32-39; Mark 8:1-10
Jesus causes a fig tree to wither	Matt. 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-14
Jesus calms a raging storm	Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25
Jesus walks on water	Matt. 14:22-27; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:16-21

## VII. Miracles and Signs

Jesus immediately starting performing miracles in his ministry. So the five thousand being fed; it is a foretaste of the banquet to come where we all meet together. This is a miracle of hope. So Peter walks out on the water until he is distracted. You really just have to love Peter in what he does. Many of us are so like him. Jesus is in control of Creation in this parable. Creation just didn't happen over billions of years but God did a miracle in bringing it into being. Matthew highlights the product of the event, the deeper appreciation of who Jesus was

whereas Mark highlights the lack of understanding of the event. Both are historical. Then there is the Syrophenician woman, another example of humble faith by a Gentile, which is commented on. She comes out of Tyre and Sidon and understands that Jesus is the Son of David. She understands that

she has the rights only to the crumbs. This attitude is very different than the attitude of many people today, even Christians. What we see in the healings is Jesus removing impediments for people.

The four thousand are fed is a mirror event that mirrors

<b>Permanent Disabilities Healed</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Mute man's speech restored	Matt. 9:32-34
Deaf & mute man's hearing & speech restored	Mark 7:31-37
Crippled woman's spine straightened after 18 years	Luke 13:10-17
Lame man (at Bethesda pool) walks after 38 years	John 5:1-9
Paralytic man (carried by friends) healed	Matt. 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26
Man's withered h& restored	Matt. 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11
Blind, mute & demon-possessed man healed	Matt. 12:22-32; Luke 11:14-23
Blind man (born blind) receives sight	John 9:1-41
Blind man's sight restored	Mark 8:22-26
Two blind men's sight restored	Matt. 9:27-31
Another two blind men's sight restored	Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43
Ten lepers healed	Luke 17:11-19
A leprous man healed	Matt. 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45
<b>Illnesses / Injuries Healed</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Woman's chronic blood hemorrhaging stops	Matt. 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48
Malchus' severed ear restored	Luke 22:50-51
Peter's mother-in-law healed	Matt. 8:14-15; Mark 1:30-31; John 4:38-39
Centurion's servant healed	Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10
Royal official's son remotely healed	John 4:46-54

something earlier to see that something has been learned by reproducing the event and seeing the later action. It seems that in the feeding of the four thousand, nothing has been learned. The reactions are all the same. Interestingly, Jesus has been performing miracles and then someone walks up and says to him, give us a sign!. This leads us into the declaration of Peter in Matthew 16:13 and now we get the remainder of the lesson of understanding and appreciating that Jesus is the Messiah. He is at the hub of what God is doing. He is the central point in the arrival of the new era. Jesus can now begin to shape that understanding and he's got to do it by saying before there is glory there has to be suffering.

### **VIII. The Journey to Jerusalem**

This takes in all the journeys Jesus made to Jerusalem as he was there several times. This takes in Peter's Confession, the keys of the kingdom, the Son of Man, the transfiguration, continued discourses, parable of the lost sheep, the unforgiving slave and three other points; Jesus in Samaria, the 72 being sent out and the good Samaritan.

The sections of this in Matthew, Mark and Luke overlap with Luke going his own way. There's a unique section of the Journey to Jerusalem in which much of the material is uniquely structured. It's when Jesus turns his face to go to Jerusalem, yet training his disciples as he launches into the journey of providence that is going to take him to his death in Jerusalem. He wants to prepare his disciples in the midst of that journey. It's not direct but it is one important segment that Luke highlights. We get instruction and silence about who Jesus is; he instructs them on one hand but tells them to keep quiet about it.

And why the silence, it's because the disciples still need instructions. So at the transfiguration, we get the voice from heaven saying, 'this is my own dear Son, in whom I take great delight, listen to him!' This is a call from Deuteronomy 18, 'there is a prophet like Moses that needs to be listened to.' Then we get Jesus introducing his upcoming suffering and what that means for the disciples and what they need to understand about it. This is a major paradigm shift for the disciple's expectation of the Messiah. They expected a Messiah who



would use his power to take care of things. They think the solution is to forcibly take control. For Mark, this is the second part of his narrative emphasis. Mark pivots with Peter's confession in Caesarea, Philippi. Luke uses this introductory instruction to set up the following journey to Jerusalem. Matthew mostly parallels Mark with a few additional points in his discourse materials of Matthew 18.

I think what makes this declaration so important is that Peter is confessing that Jesus is the anointed one of God. That Jesus is at the hub of the eschatological program of God. He's not merely a prophet and then from that Jesus builds the portrait of who he is. : In Mark 8:32 Jesus continued teaching them, saying that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and experts in the law, and be killed, and after three days, rise again. He spoke openly about this. So Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But after turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan. You do not have your mind on God's interests, but on man's.'

The transfiguration is a preview of the glory, a repetition of the baptism and a call to hear in a language of a prophet like Moses. You are supposed to obey the prophet that is like Moses. He is a leader delivering prophet. He is sometimes described as the eschatological prophet, which is what Jesus also was. And he is to be obeyed.

We also have what is called the sign of Jonah and exhortations to the Pharisees. We have the story of the rich landowner and the a call to faithful stewardship. There are mirror miracles, the Kingdom of God and a discussion on possessions and values.

So we pick up our story in Luke 11:14 a normal miracle is told in one verse with the remainder of the passage being the reaction. The key verse in this passage is verse 20, 'But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has already overtaken you.' We have talked about the 'not yet' make-up of the kingdom and that Jesus is coming is the centre of the kingdom which represents the arrival of that kingdom. This will be the background as we move through this section. Jesus is giving an opportunity for people to respond and how they respond becomes very important. We get this parable that we also

have in Matthew about the unclean spirit being cast out of a person and the person left empty and doesn't fill it with anything so the spirit comes back with seven more spirits like himself and enters the person. So the situation is worse than before. We then look at the Sign of Jonah in 11:29. This is a good example of a parallel passage between two Gospels that's doing something slightly different. In Matthew, we are concerned with the image of the three days and three nights in the belly of the whale and the sign representing the resurrection. 'As the crowds were increasing, Jesus began to teach, this generation is a wicked generation; it looks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.' Most Christians know that this is dealing with the resurrection. 'For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh; so the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation. The queen of the South will rise up at the judgement with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the Wisdom of Solomon – and now, something greater than Solomon is here! The people of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented when Jonah preached to them – and now, something greater than Jonah is here!' So what is the sign of Jonah in this passage? It is the preaching and the message and the call to repentance. This is the only sign that will be given.

The second exhortation, 'woe to you Pharisees, you give a tenth of your mint, rue, and every herb, yet you neglect justice and love for God!' Now, about what it takes to tithe this stuff. It takes a lot to do it properly. When he says, 'you give a tenth of your mint, rue, and every herb; even down to the smallest amount, even the spices. 'Yet you neglect justice, mercy, faithfulness and love for God. But you should have done these things without neglecting the others.' The third exhortation, 'woe to you Pharisees, you love the best seats in the synagogues and elaborate greetings in the marketplace!' They had special greetings for those who were teachers, marking the teachers out as being separate. 'Woe to you, you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without realizing it!' Note that an unmarked grave in Judaism means a lack of cleanliness.

Finally, we have discussions on the faith and the kingdom of God, the persistent widow, the self-righteous pharisees, the tax collector

and the little child. There is the rich man and the poor man and the vineyard workers and the triumphal entry.

The apostles said to the Lord, increase our faith! So the Lord replied, if you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this black mulberry tree, 'be pulled out by the roots and planted in the sea, and it would obey you.' Okay, obviously trees don't grow in the sea; interestingly a black mulberry tree has an extensive root system and to extract it would take a lot of work. So Jesus is saying that you can do very unusual things with very little faith. We think we have to have lots of faith to do things but this passage says that we only need a small amount of faith. The importance is not how much faith is present but that faith is simply present. Just use the faith that you have is what Jesus is teaching us. Luke continues, 'would any one of you say to your slave who comes in from the field after ploughing or shepherding sheep, come at once and sit down for a meal? Won't the master instead say to him, get my dinner ready, and make yourself ready to serve me while I eat and drink. Then you may eat and drink? He will not thank the slave because he did what he was told, will he? So you too, when you have done everything you were commanded to do, should say, we are slaves undeserving of special praise; we have only done what was our duty.' Note that after the account of the ten Lepers it reveals the faith of foreigners. Jesus heals the ten lepers but only the foreigner comes back. It's really important to appreciate what God has done for us and for you.

Then Jesus told a parable to show them they should always pray and not lose heart.' This is in the context of the coming of the Son of Man. 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected people. There was also a widow in a city that kept coming to him, saying, give me justice against my adversary. Later on he said, I neither fear God nor have regard for people, yet because this widow keeps on bothering me, I will give her justice, or in the end she will wear me out by her unending pleas. The Lord said, listen to what the unrighteous judge say! Won't God give justice to his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will it be a long delay before he helps them? I tell you, he will give them justice speedily. Nevertheless, when

the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?’ Let me paraphrase that; judgement will come quickly in reference to God’s time in regards to eternity, but it will be delayed long enough that when the Son of Man returns there will be some who may have given up the faith as a result. So this is explaining that it isn’t going to come so soon that people shouldn’t persistently pray for it and plea for judgement. And it is not going to be so soon that when the Son of Man comes back, some people may have given up.

We have John describing other aspects of this journey.

A. John 11:7 – Let us go into Judea again – They crossed back over the Jordan at Bethabara and then went to Jericho where Jesus heals a blind beggar. From there to Bethany and then to Jerusalem. Lazarus was raised from the dead.

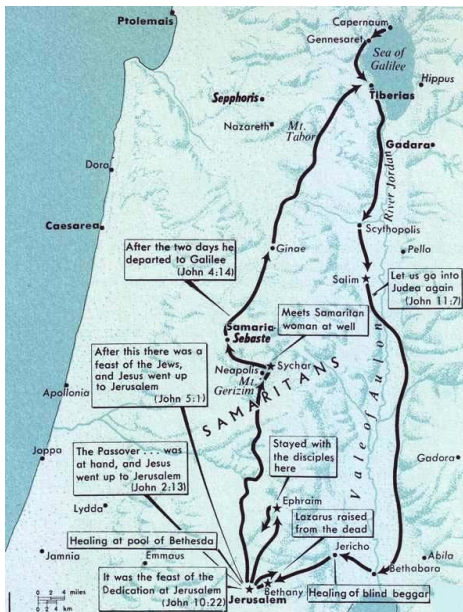
B. There were two instances in John 5:1 and John 2:13 where it says that it was a feast of the Jews and Jesus sent up to Jerusalem and the Passover was at hand.

C. John 10:22 – It was the feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem

D. Jesus heads back to Galilee visiting Sychar where he meets the Samaritan woman at the well.

After two days at Sebaste in Samaria they then headed back to Galilee. They go through Ginae and past by Mt Tabor and then on to the Sea of Galilee

1. Peter’s Confession of Jesus being the Christ. This comes after Jesus asks who do people say that I am. Christ is now recognized to be more than a prophet or rather



he isn’t just a prophet. In Matthew it reads, ‘you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.’ In Mark, it reads, ‘you are the Christ.’ And in Luke, it reads, ‘the Christ of God.’ Peter is confessing that Jesus is the

anointed one of God. After this Jesus starts to predict his death (Mark 8:32), but Peter's concept of Christ can't accept this.

2. In Mark 8:34 Jesus then says, 'if anyone wants to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.' The cross was a sign of a horrible Roman death. Then he continues, 'for whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and for the Gospel will save it.'

3. We have the Transfiguration. This is when Jesus was transfigured and becomes radiant in glory upon a mountain. Jesus is then called 'Son' by God. This supposable takes place on Mount Hermon being a high mountain as described in Matthew 17:1, located near Caesarea Philippi. 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 2 talks about this event in verses 16-18. The background to this is Malachi 4:5 and Syriac 48:10. Moses and Elijah are present probably representing the Law and eschatological restoration from Mark 9:4.

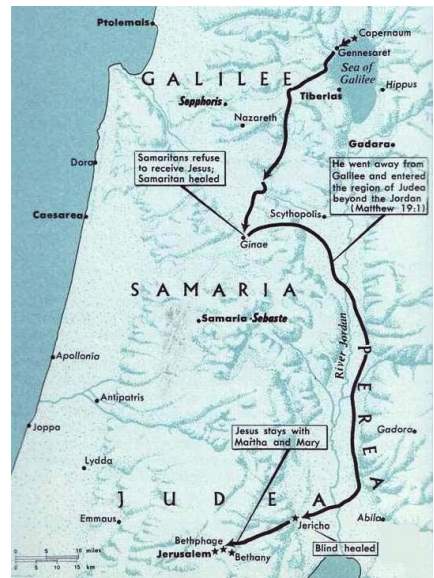
Now we have the final journey to Jerusalem which is highlighted in Matthew, Mark and Luke, returning to Ginea where the Samaritans refuse to receive Jesus; here a Samaritan is healed. They head into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan in Matthew 19:1 crossing back over going to Jericho where a blind person is healed and then on to Bethany, Bethphage and then Jerusalem. While in Bethany, Jesus stays with Martha and Mary.

Jesus travelled throughout the towns and villages, teaching and making his way toward Jerusalem. Someone asked him, Lord, will only a few be saved?’ Note, like in other places, Jesus doesn’t answer this question. So he said to them, ‘exert every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, then you will stand outside and start to knock on the door and beg him, Lord, let us in! But he will answer I don’t know where you come from. Then you will begin to say, we ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets. But he will reply that he doesn’t know where you came from! Go away from me, all you evildoers! Then there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves thrown out. The people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and take their places at the banquet table in the kingdom of God. But indeed, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.’

Jesus takes the question of whether the saved be few and turns it into, will the saved be you? This is exactly what he does with these kinds of questions. Someone asked who is my neighbour? Jesus tells us to be a neighbour. Someone asked is this for us or everyone? Respond and be faithful to what you hear. Will the saved be few? No, the question is, will the saved be you?

Concentrate on your own accountability for God and his will. That is what Jesus is doing with these passages.

We have kingdom mission in the face of rejection. When they return, they have some interesting things to talk about. There’s the image of Satan’s fall and the Messiah’s victory. Remember that one of the signs of the arrival of the kingdom is Satan being defeated. It is



language about Satan falling and being defeated and the kingdom coming and there is the exhortation to rejoice because this is being offered to babes, while it's what others long for. There are two parts of this passage that are really important that you don't want to miss. One of them is Luke 10:17-20 which says a lot and many in the church should be very aware of it. 'Then the seventy-two returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name!' Jesus said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Look, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions and on the full force of the enemy, and nothing will hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice that spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names stand written in heaven.' This passage shows how Jesus prioritizes the activity of miracles to the activity of new life. What are you supposed to appreciate? Not that you have this power, but the relationship. In 10:23-24, another interesting passage, 'then Jesus turned to his disciples and said privately, blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it!' When I think about this passage, the way some people react. Some people react when they watch the Ten Commandments movie and their reaction: I would have like to have been there with them to see the Red Sea part and the Ten Commandments delivered. But this passage is saying the opposite. What Moses, David, and Isaiah would want is to experience what I am offering to you now. This emphasizes that the new era has come, that which was promised and looked forward to, is now being realized and that's why those prophets and kings longed to look forward to this day.

There is a call to be loyal to others, to Jesus and to God. And so we get the Good Samaritan. Near the old Jericho to Jerusalem road are caves where bandits could hide. This is a perception of what the parable is built on. So here the scene: 'now an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus, saying, teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? He replied by a question, what is written in the law? How do you understand it? The expert answered, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with your entire mind, and love your neighbour as yourself. Jesus said to him, you

have answered correctly; do this and you will live.’ But does he really understand it? The next question tells you no. ‘The expert, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, and who is my neighbour?’ He’s actually trying to ask, there are people who are neighbours and there are people who are not neighbours. It’s like they don’t exist. So he’s trying to exclude people to whom he is accountable, and so he’s justifying himself. ‘I’m doing this’, he is saying indirectly.

So Jesus begins the Parable of the Good Samaritan, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him up, and went off, leaving him half dead.’ That’s the image of what we have here. It’s the heat of the day in the desert. ‘Now by chance a priest was going down that road, but when he saw the injured man he passed by on the other side; so too a Levite, when he came up to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.’ The text is very clear, they saw the person in need and they simply went to the other side and left him. Whatever reason, they just left him.’ Now the story slows down. We are now getting every action this person performed for the person in need. It’s like going to slow motion. ‘But a Samaritan who was traveling came to where the injured man was, and when he saw him, he felt compassion for him.’ He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.’ The Samaritan put him on his own animal so the Samaritan had to be walking now. ‘The next day he took out two silver coins and gave the two coins to the innkeeper, saying, take care of him, and whatever else you spend, I will repay you when I come back this way. Which of these three do you think became a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ The expert in religious law said the one who showed mercy to him. So Jesus said to him, go and do the same.’ Notice that there are two things happening here. The one who showed mercy to him; the expert can’t even say the word, Samaritan. So who is my neighbour? Are there some people that aren’t our neighbours? Jesus’ answer, be a neighbour. Don’t ask to be a neighbour to someone, just be that neighbour and remember that neighbours can be very different. Jesus begins to discuss with the disciples in regards to what is necessary as they walk with him. In doing so, we realize that we



need to be available to serve literally anybody. There is no restriction on who our neighbours are; the call is simply to be a neighbour and of service.

For the sign of Jonah, we pick up our story in Luke 11:14. The key verse in this passage is verse 20, 'But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has already overtaken you.' We have talked about the 'not yet' make-up of the kingdom and that Jesus is coming is the centre of the kingdom which represents the arrival of that kingdom. This will be the background as we move through this section. Jesus is giving an opportunity for people to respond and how they respond becomes very important. We get this parable that we also have in Matthew about the unclean spirit being cast out of a person and the person left empty and doesn't fill it with anything so the spirit comes back with seven more spirits like himself and enters the person. So the situation is worse than before. We then look at the Sign of Jonah in 11:29. This is a good example of a parallel passage between two Gospels that's doing something slightly different. In Matthew, we are concerned with the image of the three days and three nights in the belly of the whale and the sign representing the resurrection. 'As the crowds were increasing, Jesus began to teach, this generation is a wicked generation; it looks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.' Most Christians know that this is dealing with the resurrection. 'For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh; so the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation.

In Luke 14:7, we have the paragraph in regards to seeking seats of honour in the banquet. This is a major scene and Luke usually places these scenes during a dinner or a banquet. This is another case of Jesus teaching about having sensitivity toward people on the fringe. The passage is very well known and talks about how guests chose places of honour. It can be very embarrassing if you are told to move further away if someone really important shows up. It's better to take the furthest seat and have the host to move you up to the important seat. 'For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.' Jesus goes on to tell us not to invite important people necessarily so we can be invited back by them but

instead invite the needy and the poor, then you'll be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. In the Jewish culture there was a tradition of inviting people and they would invite you back. Even today we invite those friends of ours who usually invite us back. The focus here is to be generous, not with just those who can pay you back with those who can't pay you back. In this sense the generosity is genuine generosity. 'When one of those at the meal with Jesus heard this, he said to him, 'Blessed is everyone who will feast in the kingdom of God!' This person may be sensing a bit of tension with what Jesus has said. So he suggests, isn't it going to be great in the future when we are all at the banquet table of God. Jesus replies by telling a story of a person inviting different people to a banquet but they all gave excuses why they couldn't come.

So the master told the slave to go out and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame. So this happened and the master said that the other people who didn't come will never taste his banquet. Of course today, one sends out an invitation with RSVP which asks those invited to say whether they are coming or not. A similar situation is assumed in the above banquet. So those who were invited and said that they would come all gave excuses why they couldn't come. So everybody knew the time and place of the banquet and had said that they would come, but when the time came, other things were more important to them. You will see that verse 21 matches that of verse 13 in regards to inviting the poor, the crippled, and lame and the blind. So here the people that were included were people that most others would not think about including. Still having room to spare, others were invited from the highways and country roads. This could refer to the Gentiles. Interestingly, the one who said, 'blessed is everyone who will feast in the kingdom of God' is assuming he will be there. The parable is a warning, maybe not! Jesus was at a dinner held by the leader of the Pharisees and the people there was probably his friends and they assume because they're righteous, they are included. But Jesus is saying that it is not so automatic.

'There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.' Purple was a sign of wealth and fine linen in those ancient days. 'But at his gate lay a poor man

named Lazarus whose body was covered with sores, who longed to eat what fell from the rich man's table. In addition, the dogs came and licked his sores.' This means that he was labelled as being unclean by Jewish Law. There is a passage in Jewish tradition that says a man who cannot eat, a man who is licked by the dogs and a man who is nagged by his wife has no life. So Lazarus is two out of three. If in calling this a parable, some are afraid that they will lose the teaching about the afterlife as portrayed here. Without question there is teaching on the afterlife whether a parable or a narrative, but the answer often given as to why it is not a parable is the idea that Lazarus has a name. And the claim is made that this is the only parable like narrative where a character has a name. But there is a reason why he has a name. 'Now the poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. And in hell, as he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far off with Lazarus at his side.' One aspect in believing this is a parable is the communication that takes place between the below and the above. 'So he called out, father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in this fire.' There are two points here: how does the rich man use the poor man, to the rich man, the poor man is still below him; he needs to serve me. He can even serve me even though he is in heaven and I'm down here in hell. So what is the danger of riches? It views people as objects. I have already mentioned the name of Lazarus being used; why is the poor man in this parable named? The rich man knew who he was because he saw him in his comings and goings, but did not help Lazarus in any way, even though it would not have cost him anything. This parable is in a chapter about money. 'Child, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus likewise bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in anguish. Besides all this, a great chasm has been fixed between us, so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to here.' So the rich realizes that his fate is sealed so he tries to help his family. 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house for I have five brothers to warn them so that they don't come into this place

of torment.’ He still thinks that Lazarus is anyone’s servant. ‘But Abraham said they have Moses and the prophets; they must respond to them.’ Moses and prophets would have taught the brothers to take care of the poor.

The irony here in this is what is being denied in the story. Abraham refuses to send anyone from the dead to the brothers but what’s the narrative of the parable. Someone speaking beyond the grave to the living; so what is denied in the story? The rich man becomes a voice from beyond death, speaking to the living saying, watch how you live. ‘Then the rich man said, no, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent. He replied to him, if they do not respond to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’ If they aren’t open to what the Scriptures are already saying, they will not respond to a sign when it appears right in front of their eyes. This is actually in the story of Jesus’ ministry. Jesus has been providing signs right in front of them, on the Sabbath, not on the Sabbath and what was the response? They haven’t embraced it, even if someone has spoken from the beyond. So if you send someone from the dead, they will still miss it, which of course is what happens. If you are not open to the Word of God in the world, you will not see the Word of God when it happens, even if it happens in an amazing way. People will find some way to explain it away. Being a parable doesn’t undercut the theological point that is being taught here. Once you are dead, there is no opting out, there is no purgatory. Your fate is sealed and as well as the responsibility you have to respond to Moses and the prophets, the implications about caring for the poor and being sensitive. This was the state of discussion during the time of Jesus when he speaks about the afterlife. This is the image that is presented, he doesn’t cite 1<sup>st</sup> Enoch. Remember that in Judaism, there is an intermediate state until the final judgement takes place. This passage is leaping over the intermediate state idea. You have the righteousness in one place and the unrighteous in another. In a world of cleanliness you cannot mix the clean and the unclean. The unclean here is represented by the rich man in hell and the clean is represented by Lazarus in heaven. The gulf is there between the two which cannot approach each other. In addition, this parable is told from the view point; we know

where people have ended up. Lazarus has ended up on the side of Abraham and the rich man has ended up in hell, a place so dreadful that he was in anguish in the non-consuming fire. Of course, this is told in a very Jewish context being with Abraham and being in hell.

This story is not framed by early church theology; this is Jesus speaking to his Jewish audience. Hell here is Sheol and in Jewish thinking, it is where the dead gather. With this, there is a distinction and a distance and the unrighteous do not end up in the same place as the righteous in the afterlife. In Judaism also, there was the common thought that if a person was rich, they were blessed. We will see this later when the rich young ruler comes to Jesus and he is told to sell all he has but he goes away sadly. Jesus says that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into heaven. So in human terms, it's impossible. So the disciples asked, 'then who can be saved?' If it's hard for the blessed to get in then who can get saved. The disciples said that they had left everything to follow Jesus and Jesus affirms them at that point. So here, again in Jewish thought, riches means blessings, means salvation. Not so. Jesus is undercutting this idea radically. So if riches means salvation, then what does poverty mean? It would mean condemnation. But who is Jesus telling his disciples to pay attention to? They are to be sensitive to the poor! In the chapters of Acts, thousands of Jews are coming to the Lord but the leadership is not. And the leadership directs where the nation as a whole is going. They become representative to some degree of the nation.

## **IX. Cleansing the Temple**

We have Jesus entering the city as king. Items of interest include the authority of Jesus. There also involves six different controversies along with three parables. There are the woes of the Scribes and Pharisees and the Abomination of Desolation and Times of the Gentiles.

This is a very key section on Jesus' life and ministry. It's out of these events you will come to appreciate what was going on with Jesus. These represent less disputed events where people talk about the life of

Jesus. It is probably the earliest portion of Jesus' life that has been reordered in a more structured way. But the passages are filled with controversy about Jesus' authority. Where did he get the right to do the things he was doing. And for Mark, this is almost half his Gospel which has been described as a passion with a long prologue. The events start with the entry into the temple area with the first major incident being the cleansing of the temple by Jesus. However, before this there is the triumphal entry in Luke 19:28 at a place called the Mount of Olives near Bethpage and Bethany; Jesus sent two of the disciples ahead to get a colt that was tied up. Jesus told them if anyone questioned what they were doing, they were just to say, 'the Lord needs it.' In going down from the Mount of Olives, his disciples began to rejoice and praise God. They began to spread their cloaks on the road before Jesus. And the next scene is where Jesus weeps for Jerusalem under Judgment. Then the incident at the temple happens, of which two major views are often heard; one is the prediction of the destruction of the temple by which we mean the permanent destruction of the temple. The other is the temple cleansing which is calling for the reformation of the temple practice, but not the destruction of the temple. N.T. Wright holds this view.

He then entered the temple and drove out the people selling things at the temple quoting, 'my house will be a house of prayer', but you have turned it into a den of robbers!' The selling of these items was a fairly recent happening and was moved from a location farther away to the temple. The money changers were required as people were to pay the temple tax in a certain way and sacrifices were supposed to be spotless. But in moving the location of these within the temple, they made it a den of robbers for they were robbing the people.

The Sadducees were in charge of it and it was run by the Sanhedrin and the high priest family. But Jesus declared the temple to be corrupt which didn't make the Sadducees very happy. The Qumran community also thought this for they withdrew from Jerusalem altogether off to near the Dead Sea. The Sadducees wanted to kill Jesus there and then but they were afraid of the people.

The question of authority to do the things that Jesus did comes from above. Like John the Baptist, Jesus was appointed. He asked them

about John's baptism being from heaven or from people but they were afraid to answer and so Jesus didn't answer them when they ask by whose authority did he do these things. They refused to answer Jesus and thus Jesus refused to answer them!

Then we have three parables that relate to this question of authority. First from Matthew 21:28 about the wicked tenants and then the king's marriage feast and lastly about the son going to the vineyard. In this, Jesus also showed that the tax collectors and prostitutes would go ahead of the religious leaders into the Kingdom of God. The parable of the wicked tenants is seen as a clear allegorical parable, this is not the same as allegorical interpretation; often times, Israel is pictured as a vineyard as stated in Isaiah 5. Here, the father represents God, the vineyard represents Israel, the tenants represent Israel's leadership, the slaves represent the prophets and the son represents Jesus. Jesus is telling them that they no longer have a right to be in charge. The third parable is comparing the Kingdom of Heaven to a wedding banquet with those invited not coming. They were indifferent and gave excuses why they couldn't come, while others who were also invited actually killed the slaves that had been sent out with the invitation. This is a picture of killing the prophets.

There is the confrontation in regards to paying taxes to Caesar. This was asked by the Herodians. This is a political question designed to get Jesus into trouble. If he says to pay taxes, he sides with Rome and if he says not to pay taxes, he is against Rome. But Jesus turns the question showing the denarius had already belonged to Caesar seeing his image was imprinted on it. Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.

The Sadducees tried to trick him in regards to a question about resurrection and marriage in heaven. Of course they didn't believe in the resurrection. But Jesus simple told them that there was no marriage in heaven. Jesus said that they simply didn't know the Scriptures! Another test by the Pharisees asking which of the commandments are the greatest; Jesus answered, 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all of your mind and the second, love

your neighbour as yourself.’ Everything, the way we live and relate to one another hinges on this. They knew that they had failed to do this!

Jesus asked them a question in regards to the Christ. Whose son is he? They replied, the Son of David. But Jesus then said, how then David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, the Lord said to my Lord; sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. If David then calls him Lord, how can he be his son? They knew what Jesus was talking about there, but no one was able to answer him and from that day on, no one dared to question him any longer.

This is from psalm 1:10. This is about the Messiah outranking David. This answers the authority question; it also makes it clear that if Jesus outranks the king who is at the top or in a category above that? If he is Lord over David what does that mean for everyone else in Israel? There is an allusion of him to being at the right hand of God. This Refers to the Messiah and thus to Jesus.

## **X. Olivet Discourse**

The Son of Man is coming, is it literal or symbolic? Some people say (N.T. Wright) that the return is a strictly symbolic picture. We shouldn’t think about an actual physical return of Jesus to the earth. Acts 1:9-11 is against this point where it shows that Jesus ascended into heaven. So the coming of the Son of Man will be literal. Two angels said the Jesus would return in the same way. This is not symbolic! The second coming involves a descent from heaven. The Son of Man coming is not AD 70; we are dealing with cosmic chaos and the return is at the time of Judgement. This is why the Son of Man comes riding the clouds. The Son of Man is the human divine eschatological judge. The angels will gather the elect because it will be the time of vindication.

The application in Mark and Luke, both tells us to take heed and watch. In Luke the application is very concrete. Don’t engage in dissipation and don’t be weighted down with the cares of life. The day is a time of judgement and accountability. Matthew says that you have to be ready; the day will come suddenly, like in the times of Noah. Then Matthew follows uniquely with five parables starting in Luke 12. First,



was the parable of the house holder; if he had known he would have been ready? The second was about the good and wicked servants; be ready when he comes to the door. In the ten virgins; be prepared. In regards to the parable of the talents; we are to be faithful. We are to make use of our stewardship and as in the parable of the minas; don't be caught out by the delay of the return. In the parable of the sheep and goats; there is a separation that comes through the Son of Man and the response is related to how you respond to those associated with Jesus.

This was brought on by a remark about the destruction of the temple that happened around AD 70 and the return of the Lord. This is a name given to an orderly and extended teaching given by Jesus on the Mount of Olives. The subject is the end times. This rendering is the generally accepted theology on the subject. Christ was speaking of God's future program for Israel.

The disciples asked when were these thing to happen? The discourse in Matthew emphasizes what is coming in the future while the discourse in Luke emphasizes what is coming in the near future or present. So we have one present and the other future. Each side picks that model and imposes it on the other version.

a. Mark and Matthew basically pose two different questions: when and what will be the sign of these things? In regards to the destruction of the temple; they don't see a future in which the city gets abandoned by God. But perhaps the importance is not so much in regards to the questions but rather the implications: First, what is hard to understand is the language of Jesus' return. He is predicting an eschatological event. They didn't understand what they were asking. This is not allegory, it is a simple explanation of what is happening; there is Jesus and the end of the age.

b. Jesus tells us to watch out that on one misleads us. Many will come in Jesus' name, saying, I am he, and they will mislead many. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars do not be alarmed. These things must happen, but the end is still to come. So the end is still future at this point. This is basically from Luke 21:9. Mark 13:8 says that nation will rise up against nation, kingdom against kingdom, there will be earthquakes in various places, there will be famines. Luke says there will be great earthquakes, and famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights and great signs from heaven. But before this other things will happen; they will seize you and persecute you, handing you over to the synagogues and prisons and this will be a time for us to serve as witnesses. The Holy Spirit will provide us with what to say.

c. The discourse covered the temple's destruction in AD 70, the interim period in between and the return of the Son of Man. Events in the early part of the discourse are not yet the end; the divided nations, famines, natural disasters, all must come first and are the beginnings only, according to Matthew and Mark. Luke has more temporal notes, but what follows is what is before the end. So it's going backwards in time. In the interim, there is intense persecution, but the Spirit of God is there to aid his people. The call is to believe until the end, until Jesus actually returns. There will be lawlessness and betrayal and the disciples must be prepared to meet with rejection. This will be true all the way until Jesus returns, not just to AD 70. The desolation in Matthew and Mark is long term; it's the temple desolation of the holy place. In Luke we look at the short term with the desolation of the temple and the city. If the Lord had not cut short those days, even the elect would have died. The tribulation will be like nothing seen before; this is not in Luke. Matthew and Mark show a period of false Messianic claims. The end is not coming until the Word has been spread throughout the world.

1. Matthew 24:1-25:46
2. Mark 13:1-37
3. Luke 21:5-36
4. Daniel 9:24-27

We have Revelation 6:1-19:21 which refers to the future seven-year period called the tribulation. According to some, God's program for the church concludes with the rapture, which is not taught in the Olivet Discourse. We have already briefly mentioned that some scholars don't think there will be a Rapture as such. I reference a group of books written by Hal Lindsey. The Rapture of the church is found in John 14:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 and 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonian 4:13-18. Again, according to this, the second coming of Christ will be at the end of the tribulation. Daniel 9:27 indicates that the tribulation will be divided into two equal parts. The first half in Matthew 24:4-8 refers to birth pangs which is the sufferings that Israel will experience during the first 3.5 years. The signs with reference to the end of the age are the coming of false messiahs, the threat of wars and widespread conflict and various natural catastrophes. The second half of the tribulation is described in Matthew 24:9-14. Persecution of the Jews and death will be the result of the Beast's rise to power. The antichrist will also persecute anyone who refuses to follow him. The salvation promised in Matthew 24:13 is deliverance from the Beast's persecution. Whatever conclusion we may individually come to in regards to the end times, the two angels said that Jesus would return in the same way. This is not symbolic. It involves a descent from heaven. Yet, the chances are that there will indeed be a tribulation, a Rapture, Jesus' return, a White Throne Judgement and a thousand year reign on earth. So there will be a judgement and accountability; for Jesus, the end starts with him but for us, we tend to think that the end is strictly the future. We need to take

heed and watch and not get weighted down with the cares of life. The day will suddenly come. In the parable of the sheep and goats; there is a separation that comes through the Son of Man and the response is related to how you respond to those associated with Jesus.

## **XI. The Lord's Supper, the Trial and the Resurrection**

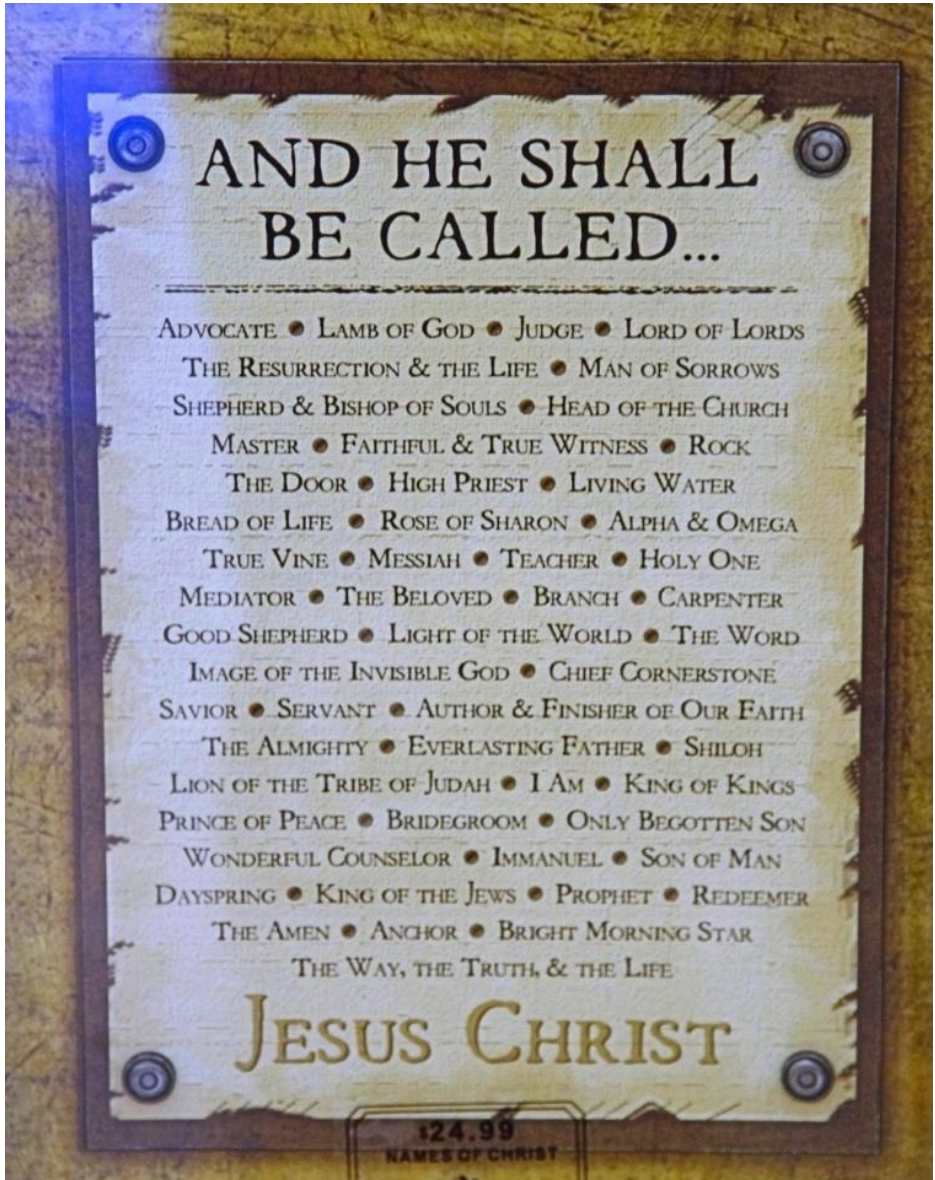
The Lord's Supper, the Trial, and the Resurrection. This is the resurrection as it was presented in the synoptic Gospels. I'll first briefly mention some of the particularities of this scene. We'll look at reasons why the resurrection wasn't just created in someone's mind and in this we will consider first the choice of the women. (This is an apologetically defence of the Resurrection of Jesus due to the liberal standing of the then, Jesus Seminar movement) Culturally, women were not regarded as worthy witnesses in most cases. If you are creating an event trying to persuade the culture of a difficult idea such as a physical resurrection, would you create an event and have your first witnesses be women? A second point, in looking at the resurrection in three days, there would have been a way to have Jesus alive without it being on the third day. Judaism believed in a resurrection for everybody. So all you would have needed was a resurrection in the end where Jesus would be in charge. You could have had a Jesus who would end up being alive and carrying out a judgement, but instead you get a resurrection in three days. So a question here, where does this mutation of the resurrection come from? So we are still in a defense mode here; why create a resurrection after three days, you would have far less problem if it had not used the tomb and the witnesses and the guards, creating more problems. If this was a made up story, it would have been much easier just to say that Jesus was in charge after he was resurrected. This is much less problematic. So there was a Christian mutation of a Jewish belief of the resurrection by having the three days.

The supper is a deliverance meal reinterpreted for a new era. Jesus is no long hiding his identity. Jesus highlights greatness in service. We see that Peter's defection is predicted and Jesus' arrest is predicted. But before this we have the woman anointing Jesus with perfume. Judas is announced as a betrayer. The supper is a deliverance

meal reinterpreted for a new era. Jesus is no long hiding his identity. Jesus highlights greatness in service. So then Judas commits suicide declaring Jesus innocent. There are final charges: subversion of the nation, forbidding tax to be paid to Caesar and claiming that he was a king. The text portrays the Jewish leadership as being out to get Jesus and the Roman leadership being indifferent. Pilate is really portrayed as being politically calculating. Jesus was scourged in preparation for his execution. People around the cross taunted Jesus as well as one of the thieves. We have a darkness that came and the veil of the temple was torn. This was creation testifying as to what was going on. A reference in Psalms 22:1 – Jesus cries out, ‘my God, my God why have you forsaken me?’ Another reference in Psalm 31 – ‘into your hands, I commit my spirit.’ The background of this matches the culture of the day. He is buried immediately as the culture demanded. Joseph of Arimathea offers a grave site for Jesus. Women came that Sunday to anoint the body as they hadn’t had time that evening before the Sabbath. The women reported the tomb was empty with Peter and James running to it. Luke shows no appearance to anyone else until later on the Emmaus Road. Jesus appears and rebukes them for being slow of hearing to believe everything he taught. Thomas’ reaction was somewhat different than the twelve for after seeing Jesus’ hands, he said, ‘my Lord and my God.’ Jesus proclaims the great commission.

Psalm 110 and Daniel 7 - These are the two most cited Old Testament passages in the New Testament. They explain where Jesus is and why he’s doing what he is doing. Jesus is alive and one day we will be with him in heaven. There will be a resurrection for the rest of us. Jesus is in heaven at the right hand of the Father. Matthew has a commission relating to Galilee where all authority has been given to Jesus and people were out to make disciples by going and baptizing and teaching them to obey all that has been commanded and his probably includes the Sermon on the Mount. Luke talks about the fulfilment of Scripture; that Christ would suffer and would be raised from the dead and repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all the nations

beginning from Jerusalem. The core of what the early Christian expression was about the coming of the Spirit enabling God's people to perform the mission of God.



## **XII. Titles of Jesus**

We look at Jesus as Rabbi, the Jewish name for teacher. This name is ministry used by many toward Jesus and is present in Mark and also in John. It only comes from Judas in Matthew. Luke uses the synonym teacher that comes only from observers of Jesus which Mark also uses. This is probably the most basic category of which Jesus is referred to and lacks Christological content. It is just a way to emphasize that Jesus did teach. The next title is prophet. It was the most popular view of Jesus by his observers and there is some merit to this title. Jesus, himself, compares his ministry to that of the prophets Elijah and Elisha; this becomes part of the portrait of Jesus. But this wording is more of a leader prophet like Moses or a greater than Jonah than just one among many prophets. But I think the populace looked at Jesus as one among many prophets. He follows John the Baptist and he comes as a prophet, a fresh read on the Law. All of those features belong to Jesus as prophet. Then there is the title, ‘Son of David.’ This is the connection that begins to move in a messianic direction. It shows up in the infancy accounts but it doesn’t give us insight into Jesus’ own view or those who saw his active ministry. It still falls short and is a basic category like that of the Christ around which he builds his portrait. It comes from the Son of David, a declaration that comes from some of the healings as well, it appeals to the royal Psalm imagery. It is close to the messianic claim because it puts him into a regal category. It reflects the voice of the baptism at the transfiguration, ‘you are my son’ also in Psalm 2:7. It is often used by people in Jesus’ audience; the most famous was from the blind man. The connection to healing is an interesting link.

## **XIII. The Characteristics of the Disciples**

Jesus sends people to preach the Gospel into all the World. We are supposed to be bearing fruit in such a way that when people look at our work, they praise God who is in heaven. And when the future

judgement comes, that is part of what will be in it. Jesus is worshiped, yet Jewish, but distinct. He was not concerned about issues of purity and preventing certain actions of mercy from taking place. He wasn't concerned about issues of hand washing that got in the way of fellowship. He gave a distinct community prayer and changed the liturgy at the Last Supper, but there is no discussion anywhere by Jesus as to the form of worship. It was only the integrity that is supposed to come when one worships. If you have something against your brother as you go along the way, don't come into worship; take care of your relationship with your brother first and then show up for worship. This is the integrity of worship. It is regularly seen in acts of prayer and acts of charity to the image of the community as lost sheep in need of a shepherd. Where they need to be shepherded is to this category of integrity of worship and commitment is to the mission and commitment to carry out the call of the church. The best way to carry that out is to be engaged in mission; it is where you work, with your neighbors, not just within the four walls of the church building. Instead, think in terms of the walls of the church extending around the globe. This is my Father's world and I am called to serve the Father in it. This is done by working within the concepts of the cultural scripts of the Gospel.

Love and mercy are to be seen as a reflection of knowing, trusting and imaging God. You are a reflection of him when you live with love and mercy and forgiveness with a pursuit of righteousness. Next to love and mercy, there is a righteous integrity. There is a righteousness that is to be part of the person that comes from within. What you see is what you get and our light should be such that we shouldn't have to worry about doing things in private. We should become comfortable with the world that sees us in terms of righteousness. The righteous has nothing to fear and nothing to hide. So, we get the anti-theses, we get the call for the disciples to be salt and light; the picture of the light, lights up the way of darkness with people seeing what we do and praise God as a result.



## **XIV. Concluding Facts about Jesus**

1. Jesus was a wonder worker and a teacher of wisdom. Pilate was the immediate leader in Jerusalem of the Jews and Jewish leadership that led to Jesus' condemnation on the Cross. Two other ancient historical facts in reference to Christians. It was Emperor Claudius expelling the Jews from Rome and the Roman Governor Pliny. The world is not concerned with a virgin birth, or angelic announcements or prophetic fulfilments. They are only interested in the natural, not the supernatural. The Jewish language is unique as far as numbers are concerned. They use letters as numbers and numbers become very important in the Jewish language. In regards to genealogy, five women were included in the line of David and that was unusual. What can we learn from this, that Tamar, Rebah, Bathsheba, Ruth, all had questionable backgrounds. God can use anyone who has given their lives over to him. Why did Matthew think it important to provide a genealogy through to Joseph? Who was left out of that line? It was culturally accepted that the legal line go through the man. Jeconiah was cut off from the legal right of being an ancestor of the Messiah.

2. The ministry of Jesus was twofold. First, restoring the people to God and also the reconciliation of the fathers and their children and disobedient to the just. What is the one idea that both Elijah and John were associated with? It was the new era. Who is the ultimate enemy in the hymn said by Zechariah? It is the devil and the spiritual forces against God. The three pieces in the infancy material includes the Magnificat, the Benedictus and the Nunc Dimittis. The three titles given to the baby from the priest Simeon were saviour, He is Christ and He is the Lord. The synoptic Gospels tell the story of Jesus from the ground upwards. John tells the story from heaven downwards. From the readings, we see that the ancient writers thought in terms of parallels and patterns while western society thinks in terms of the linear.

3. John the Baptist announces the arrival of the Messiah and the beginning of the Eschaton. Remember the Eschaton is the last days when Jesus comes back a second time, but Eschaton as in the Last Days began when Jesus went into heaven. The regathering in the passage in Ezekiel 11:17-21 referred to the gathering the people in the land with a new spirit and a new heart. The baptism of John includes a special eschatological baptism that prepares for God's coming. It is a call for Israel to return to the faithfulness of the Law. Luke says that repentance impacts on our relationship with other people. Jesus baptized with Holy Spirit and fire. The Spirit in the life of a person is an important aspect of the Gospel. It represents the sealing of the relationship between the person and with God. The fire purges judgement. The new era represents the reestablishment of the just rule of God on behalf of the righteous. When Luke attaches the phrase 'Son of God' to son of Seth and son of Adam he says that Jesus becomes the second Adam, where Adam had one temptation, Jesus will have three temptations. Adam failed the temptation. In Jesus' three temptations, Jesus is even more qualified to represent humanity. As Jesus entered into the early Galilean ministry, Jesus demonstrates in regards to his teaching his authority and the announcement of the Kingdom; the synoptic Gospels are more concerned about what comes with Jesus than talking about who Jesus is. The message of Jesus is to repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is near. Jesus referred to Elijah and Elisha because Israel is in the same state now as it was back in their day and that the Gentiles received the benefit of them instead of the Jews. That is what was going to happen with Jesus in his day. The Gentiles were the ones who would receive the blessings. We see in the theology of Jesus that Jesus is holy and thus Peter couldn't be in his presence. Jesus can work with people who recognize themselves as sinners.

4. The beatitudes represent a proclamation of blessings for the needy. Matthew has nine, including the poor in spirit, the hungry, the meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness. Luke has four, including poor, hungry now, weeping, etc. These are people that are isolated on the fringe of society in part because of the faithfulness to God. Matthew

says about salt, if you cease to use it for which it was created, it is no better than dust. For light, people don't hide their light; a light is to be benefit to the world. We are to be the Salt of the Word and the Light of the World. This only comes through a humbleness as we try to serve those who are spiritually and physically in need. This also requires us to be vulnerable to rejection in our service. Jesus' ministry represented a realization in morality and promise of what the Law was given for, it is something to be penetrated to see what God really desires. We know that Jesus has already said that he is Lord of the Sabbath. What else is he Lord of in the context being shown in Matthew 5:25-26 and Luke 12:57-58. He is Lord of the Torah as well. He has the authority to interpret the Law. Jesus demands reconciliation to be made rather than abiding in anger. This is cutting murder off at the root by dealing with anger. What about the anger in your own life? How do you deal with it? What does Jesus tell you to do about it? Do you find his instruction hard to do? Is it hard to ask forgiveness from our Father in heaven and to forgive those who have wronged you if that is the case. If you are angry at someone, you need to go to that person and reconcile yourself to that person. This takes humility and vulnerability.

5. Jesus advocates non-retaliation in personal interaction; the context involves rejection; a slap on the cheek; we are to remain vulnerable to rejection. Justice is something that is left to God but God's people are going to serve and they will serve vulnerably, rather than be self-protective. The standard that Jesus has set for us is greater than that of the world. We are to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect. We are to cause to love and do good things and bless, pray, and love our enemies. The Lord's prayer addresses God the Father which communicates the intimacy of being in a family; respect, the name being set apart and the kingdom to come; requests include giving us bread and forgiving our sins and leading us into temptation and delivering us from evil. We see that a fast was required only on the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament. There were voluntary fasts held for many reasons such as remembrance, group confession and petitioning

God. We can fast whenever we want to but only in private, not like the Pharisees.

6. According to Luke 11:33-36, we need to watch what we take into our minds, if we play CD games of violence, DVD's that are sexual oriented and the like and television programs then these will have an effect on our minds. If you choose this type of life, it will draw you away from the things of God. You will have no choice in the master you choose. However, if you choose things that are wholesome, Bible studies, Praying, Study of the Word as in [Biblicalstudies.com](http://Biblicalstudies.com), Christian fellowship, then God will become your master. So, be involved in Jesus! Have you proven this in your life, 'ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks will receive; and the one who seeks finds and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. I have certainly experienced this in my own life. I can say that as you draw closer to God, He will draw closer to you and reveal to you the things that should be important in your life. In regards to the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus starts to finish the sermon in terms of choices. There is the right way and the wrong way, but even the right way can be difficult at times. When we embrace what Jesus is saying to us, we are entering into a relationship with the Living God. Chapters 8 and 9 in Matthew are said to contain mostly miraculous material. Four healing episodes include the Lepers, Centurion's servant, Peter's mother-in-law and the Demon possessed people. We see extraordinary faith with the centurion. He understood that Jesus did not have to be physically present in order for Jesus to affect something. He understood what humility was by considering himself unworthy. He crossed ethnic boundaries, by being a Roman gentile, he went to a Jew. Jesus is saying, those who should have responded and didn't are going to end up weeping and gnashing their teeth and those who were seemingly on the outside by the Jews, they will be in: that is the Gentiles. The Jews will end up on the outside while the Gentiles will end up on the inside. From the beginning what does Jesus tell the disciples to expect by following him? There is a commitment and nothing, not even family comes ahead of this. Faith is the focus in Matthew 9:18-26. In both these scenes, we have a woman

whose faith is very weak and we have a man whose faith lacks patience. The woman realizes that her faith needs to be stronger. Jairus learns about the Lord's timing and the Lord's power over death. Jesus compares his generation to children sitting in the marketplaces who call out to one another. Two miracles that was never performed in the Old Testament and another having no Old Testament preference is the healing of the blind man and the idea of lepers being cleansed. The Kingdom will come despite the violence or opposition it faces! We see that the yoke of Jesus and then what it could refer to in the Old Testament. It is easy to bear and is not hard to carry; it sometimes refers to wisdom in the Old Testament. In the section, Jesus According to Scripture, what does his deeds picture? The restoration is the bringing people back to him. We see how the Jesus' miracles supported the controversies surrounding Jesus.

7. The kingdom parable shows the responses to obstacles of the kingdom message. In the Parable of the Lamp and Measure revelation is likened to Light. Jesus came for us all and his Word goes throughout the world. Those who have accepted Jesus' walk and mix within the world and become responsible for their actions or lack of actions in regard to Jesus. We see that the kingdom does not necessarily equal to what we understand as the church.' The church represents the kingdom only when the church community interacts with the lost, not creating a theocracy. It represents the kingdom in only being an agent of persuasion to the claims of Jesus in the world. Thus the kingdom ethic must be modelled in the church. We see that Progressive dispensationalism is a variation of traditional dispensationalism; dispensationalists view the dispensations as chronologically successive. But progressive dispensationalists view the dispensations as progressive stages in salvation history. Amillennialists reject the belief that Jesus will have a literal thousand year physical reign on the earth. We need to interact with the world, the world being the down trodden, the poor and going where the destitute live, helping those with physical needs and sharing the good news of Jesus; that he can save them from their sins and he can transform their own lives into something new.

8. Matthew 13:31 and Ezekiel 17:23 speak of a sprig being pulled and out of which a tree will come where birds will nest that reflects the Davidic House of God. It parallels with Matthew 13:31 in the Parable of the Yeast where something grows from something small into something larger. We have studied miracles such as the Feeding the Five Thousand; Walking on the water; Healing of the Syrophenician gentile woman; The feeding of the Four Thousand; The yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees What is the Feeding of the Five Thousand a foretaste of? We see that Peter got out of the boat and starts walking on the water and then gets distracted? We need to consider that in times of faith and realization of what and who Jesus is in our life, it is easy to get distracted from this because of the cares of the world and non-spiritual things that are going on around me. people were only concerned with physical needs of their life.

9. In Caesarea Philippi there were a series of temples: Zeus, Tanner Anips, Temple of Augustus which was near the Bunya Springs, and Grotto of the god, Pan where a spring ran out of a cave. It was Herod's son who renamed the place Caesarea, Philippi and it eventually became the capital of one of the regions. But the name Paneas was its earlier name from the Hellenistic period and that mutated in time to Baniyas, as it is known today. The sanctuary as it was called continued worship of these gods well into the age of Christianity.

10. In Matthew – you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God; In Mark – you are the Christ; In Luke – the Christ of God. Even before Christ's death, the meaning the cross to people in the Roman Empire was a sign of the most horrific culturally humiliating form of death. The two basic commitments that's required in taking up the cross and following Jesus which in turn involves taking up the way of suffering; To deny oneself; We try to put Jesus' needs first and the needs of others even in the face of rejection by those who are not Christians. Even though we often fail in doing this, we should always try. We also see in the transfiguration, that Moses and Elijah were there probably

representing the Law and the coming eschatological restoration of the Kingdom of God. Luke says they spoke about Jesus' coming death.

11. For children, Jesus said, I tell you the truth, unless you turn around and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven! Whoever humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom. Jesus wants us to forgive others who do things against us. He doesn't want us to keep an accounting of this, but must simply forgive. How do you find it in your own life in regards to forgiving those that offend you? We are to face it within the community of brothers and sisters that God has given us. Interesting James and John in the village that rejected them in Samaria; they wanted to bring down fire on the village. In regards to mission and our lives, Jesus has given us the authority to tread on snakes and scorpions and on the full force of the enemy and nothing will hurt us. We learn to inherit heaven, we are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbour as yourself.. In the scene with Martha, Mary and Jesus, Mary was spending time with Jesus, getting to know him as God.

12. The three exhortations given to the Pharisees was a call to repentance and the hypocrisy of those who are watching Jesus. On one hand you are so strict in your giving ten percent but you neglect he justice and love for God. They think they are source of cleanliness but the opposite is true, they are a source of uncleanness and they even create uncleanness for the people around them. Their generation will be held for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel to the Blood of Zechariah. The call for faithful stewardship involves being ready because the Son of Man will come in an hour you least expect it. There is eternal life to those who by perseverance in God's work along with glory and honour and immortality, but wrath and anger to those who live in selfish ambition and do not obey the truth but follow unrighteousness.

13. We know that the Holy Spirit is to generate Christ likeness, which are the fruits of the Spirit, righteousness, sanctification and good works. The Holy Spirit produces someone who walks in the way of God. Jesus described the Kingdom of God is like yeast that a woman mixed with three measure of flour; We are part of it here on earth. We are part of a family of believers who have been saved from their sins and who are trying to live a righteous life in Christ. These are people that tell the truth, people that help others who are in need.

14. Jesus performed and described the two competing theologies: a woman who was disabled for eighteen years; Healing of the man with dropsy; The leader of the synagogue says that healing can take place any day except on the Sabbath; Jesus' theology says what better way than on the Sabbath to celebrate what God has done and to free some from the devil. The kingdom is coming with Jesus and when he issues the invitation, that's our opportunity to participate. Because the Kingdom exists with the coming of Jesus. If you are a believer and following the words of Christ, you are already participating in the Kingdom of God. We see that the parable of the Compassionate father, the father is the subject and how he reacts to the prodigal is the key. Of course you know the story; the man had two sons and one wants to take his inheritance and leaves and eventually finds himself eating the corn that is being fed to the pigs. For a Jewish person, this is about the lowest you can be. So not only is he feeding pigs, he wants to eat their food. He then decides to return home and the father accepts him with open arms, but yet the other son is upset because he has never been treated that way. (Interestingly, it's found in the apocrypha warning of not giving his children the inheritance too early as that is irresponsible. The expectation is they may not be older enough to deal with it.) This also pictures the fact that God does let us go our own way. He didn't lose his ethical core and he acknowledges that he has sinned against heaven and his father. The father is so excited to see his son return with his son immediately confessing his sins. The father doesn't let him finish and orders a celebration for his returning son. The father has returned the status to the son, which he had before he left. Up to this point, this parable mirrors the other parable but now we get an



additional feature of his brother becoming angry and refusing to attend the party. But his father appealed to him. God's grace is so much more important than our own desires and wistfulness.

15. In regards to the Rich Man and Lazarus, how would you feel if you were in heaven and saw a friend or family member across the gulf that separated you from hell? The attitude of the Rich man in hell toward Lazarus even in heaven says what to our own attitude today about different things? Ask God to clean us of our negative thoughts toward others and their situations. God loves those people and we should love them also. According to Jewish tradition Hell is Sheol and it is where the dead gather.

16. Jesus means what he says about a little faith compared to what we think is a large amount of faith; this shows that we need to realize that we could do so much more for the kingdom of God with the faith that we do have. All we have to do is use it. What were people doing in the days of Noah and in the days of Sodom right before God destroyed them. They were eating and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage, unconcerned about some person saying that they needed to repent from their sins. They enjoyed their eating and drinking and living too much to be concerned about sin and wrong doings. The coming judgement will be like the days of Noah and the days of Lot. They ask Jesus, where will this take place? It will take place where the dead are, where the vultures gather. Who were the two people that went to the temple to pray? What were their attitudes? It is a Tax Collector and a Pharisee; The Pharisee looked down on everyone else and gloried in his righteousness while the Tax Collector was ashamed to even look up to heaven for he knew he was a sinner. What is the major theology of the Gospels? If you understand you are a sinner and in need of the forgiveness of God, then God can work with you. The story of the vineyard workers would not go well today in this age of unions. The two things being taught here was being envious over generosity and God's grace in saving those who he so chooses. What is the Criterion of Embarrassment? It is people's inability to understand who Jesus is and

what he came for. The creation is seen as living and breathing and accepts the witness of Jesus and who he was even though people may not have.

17. So, the mound of Mount of Olives. It was near Bethpage and Bethany. By whose authority did Jesus drive out the money changes? God's authority. The Book of Enoch and Book of Jubilees categorized as documents that are assigned to authors from the past. In some cases this was perfectly acceptable within the culture of the time. Who was in charge of temple and who was it run by? The Sadducee; It was also run by the Sanhedrin and the high priest family. What does the cursing of the fig tree represent? It was a picture of judgement of the nation of Israel. What were the religious leaders really saying in asking Jesus by whose authority are you doing these things? They didn't give Jesus the authority. How is the picture of the wicked tenants an allegory? The father represents God, the vineyard represents Israel, the tenants represent Israel's leadership, the slaves represent the prophets and the son represents Jesus. In regards to paying Taxes – The coin belonged to Caesar, he printed it – Herodian; We learn that people will not be married in heaven. When Jesus laments over Jerusalem, it is the exile and the prophet in Jeramiah. In the Olivet Discourse, Luke emphasizes the near future or present; Matthew emphasizes the future. We see in the Olivet discourse, that both the destruction of the temple in AD 70 and Jesus returning in the end times are both represented. The wording of what the disciples asked represented both present and future, how they were not aware of what they were actually asking since Jesus had not died and rose from the grave yet. They asked when these things were going to happen and this was in reference to the temple. The abomination of desolation as shown in Daniel is when Antiochus Epiphanies stood in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. It was when Titus, the Roman General did the same thing in AD 70..

18. We see in Acts 1:9-11 the second coming involves a descent from heaven. The Son of Man will come riding the clouds to pronounce judgement over the world; the angels will gather the elect. We have five parables in Matthew; of the house holder – if he had known he would

have been ready; the good and wicked servant – be ready when he comes; the ten virgins – be prepared; the Parable of the talents – be faithful; the sheep and goats – there is a separation that comes through the Son of Man; So what exactly was the Lord’s Supper? It was a deliverance meal reinterpreted for a new era. It’s a new sacrifice for a new deliverance. What would have been sources to gather information from the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin? It is Joseph of Arimathea; Nicodemus; Paul and the debate that would have followed. What was the specific question that Caiaphas asked Jesus in regards to the Christ? What was Jesus’ reply and its full meaning? Are you the Christ, the Son of the blessed one? If would have meant, are you the Christ, the Son of God? I am, and you will see the son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven. Caiaphas actually heard that Jesus was claiming to be able to sit at the side of God in heaven at God’s invitation, thus sharing God’s glory. What was the Exigolgy of Ezekiel? A dream of Moses inviting him to sit on the thrones of heaven from Daniel 7 and was regarded as part of the Midrash of Exodus 7:1. What was it that brought on the Maccabean War, a century or so before the coming of Christ? It was when Antiochus Epiphanies stood in the holy of holies and offered a pig sacrifice on the altar. The three charges against Jesus were the subversion of the nation; forbidding us to pay taxes to Caesar and claiming to be a king. According to Josephus, the Jewish people were responsible for the death of Jesus. Pilate washed his hands of it but yet he still gave the final word. It was Judas who turned him into the Jewish leaders. Can you imagine a situation or history where Jesus wasn’t crucified? Consider the history of the world since Jesus’ death. On one hand Jesus suffered terribly on the Cross and that should sadden everyone; yet it was because of his death that I am now free and have a place in heaven also. What were the actions of Jesus in his last week classed as? Messianic; The future was brought backward into the present and that the thief would join us when everyone else would be gathered to go to heaven. There was darkness; the graves were opened; the temple curtain was torn.

19. Women were the ones who reported the missing body; culturally it would have been men. If this were made up, it would have been men. The three days was different and added a new dimension to the resurrection, a sort of mutation to the already accepted idea of resurrection. The three days created more problems than a simple resurrection; the background matches what is happening culturally. What does Mark and Matthew tell the disciples to do? He told them to go to Galilee where Jesus would appear to them. So the resurrection has taken place, it's been announced, the women have heard about it, their initial reaction was fear because they were overwhelmed by the situation. The piece may have gone missing earlier. Jesus eventually explained why these things had to happen as it was foretold in the Scriptures. Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7 the two most cited Old Testament passages in the New Testament explain where Jesus is and why he's doing what he is doing. Jesus is alive and there will be a resurrection one day for the rest of us. We have the coming Spirit of God to work of the coming of the Spirit in providing sanctification for God's people. Because of the Spirit of God in us, we have the power to perform the mission of God. Jesus being the Word of God comes out of the Jewish background of what is called, 'The Memra', another term for the Word. This is the creative word of God, a picture of wisdom operating in the world. It is seen as the manifestation of God's presence and Jesus as the revelatory of God, as the light and the message, the reality and the truth. We see truth is not merely ideas, it is not merely concepts; the truth is a person in the revelation of God; the Word was God, it was flesh, it was Jesus who was also the locus point, the lens through which reality is to be seen, through which truth is found, through which truth is embodied. In the Gospel of John, what does John the Baptist operate as? As a witness to coming Christ. What did John the Baptist call Jesus as he walked by? He called him the Lamb of God. How do you relate to Jesus as being the Lamb of God in your own personal life and relationship to him. He is pure, without blemish offered up as a sacrifice for me personally. This makes us have together a personal relationship, a personal friend, someone I can trust in and rely on every day. In turning the water into wine at the wedding in Cana; how has Jesus presenting himself? As the new wine, better than what came before him; in regards

to the Greek word, *pneuma*, what must a person have to see the kingdom of God? I person must born of the Spirit of God; they must be born again from above. What are the two cultural surprises in the scene of the Samaritan woman? That Jesus would have a conversation with a woman in public. The second cultural surprise what to have a conversation with a Samaritan. Summarize chapters 2 to 4 of John's Gospel: We have the wedding at Cana where Jesus presents himself as the new wine; We have the Samaritan woman were Jesus presents himself as the Living Water; We have the Official and his son's healing where Jesus presents himself as power over life

20. We see that some of the titles of Jesus include that of Rabbi; Prophet; Son of David; Christ; Suffering servant; Messiah; Holy One; Shepherd; Lord; The Son of God; The Son of Man; God. What was behind the name, the Son of David? That comes with the idea of being very wise and having control even over spiritual forces. The idea of the Lord of David came with the idea of having the power to heal. This is a serious Christological title. What did Jesus begin to be introduced after the confession of Peter? The idea of the suffering Christ. We see in the psalm of David, here is the LORD's proclamation to my lord; sit down at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool! Even though the title, The Lord of the Sabbath wasn't used as a title for Jesus, what did this phrase show? This points to the comprehensive authority the Lord has, even though David is the ancestor of Jesus who calls his descendant Lord and the issue that this raises about Jesus' identity. Where do the roots of the title, 'Son of God' come from? From Psalm 2, 'you are my son, today, I have begotten you.' From Samuel 7, 'I will be as a father to him and he shall be as a Son to me.' Which of the titles is the most widely used and why? And what is the key text of it? The Son of Man; Jesus is human, saturated with divine authority, it is one of self-designation. It has a mix of human and divine authority that Jesus can fill with context. Daniel 7:13-14. Who used the term, 'God'? Thomas. We see that God was pleased with Jesus and this this, we see that God loved Jesus and loves us as well. This makes God a loving Father to us. In the Last Supper, Jesus redirected the meaning of the

Passover representing the Exodus out of Egypt to him and his own death. He transferred this imagery to his own death and thus redesigned the liturgy associated with it. Explain the intended theology of what Jesus wanted the church to be versus what it is today in terms of Judaism. The church and Judaism were to be the same but this didn't take place as the Jews rejected Christ and the Christians. What was Jesus' mission? And as Christians, what should we be characterized as? To call sinners to repentance or to call people to repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. As Christians we are characterized by forgiveness in a community of forgiveness and a community of love and a community of service. Talk about these three terms: faith, repentance and turn. These are three key response terms in the Gospels and in Acts. Each can be an accepted response to the Gospel. It's a change of mind or direction. In turning, you end up with faith. What does following Christ entail? It will entail sufferings and taking up the Cross in this world. It is a process of growth and destruction. If you want acceptance by the world don't sign up for Jesus because the world will not accept you and Jesus together.

21. What is the mission of the church? Preaching the Gospel throughout the world. We are to engage in mission. What is meant by the integrity of worship? If you have something against your brother or sister, you need to sort that out before you worship. It involves prayer and acts of charity to the image of the community as lost sheep in need of a shepherd. What should the character of the disciple be in the world? Love and mercy are to be seen as a reflection of knowing, trusting and imaging God along with forgiveness with a pursuit of righteousness. What does suffering as a Christian entail? Suffering means to be willing to bear the cross, to bear the rejection, to lose one's life to a life to gain the soul. Where is Jesus now? What is he doing? He is sitting on the right hand of the Father, distributing the Holy Spirit and overseeing the Kingdom of God. What is the idea of vindication and Jesus? Jesus was innocently hung on a cross; the vindication comes from the fact that he rose again and is alive and he will come back and judge those who judged him. What does Matthew 28:18 say? All authority has been given to me under heaven and earth. Write the Apostles Creed out. I believe in God

the Father almighty and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord who was born by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, was crucified by Pontus Pilate and was buried, the third day he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of the Father. From there he shall come to judge the quick and the dead and in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body. What did Simeon say about the infant child? Jesus was the salvation, the light and a revelation to the Gentiles. The cause of the falling and rising of many in Israel and this will be a sign that will be rejected by many.

## **XV. Conclusion: The Deity of Christ**

Here we have more on the deity of Christ, and also with Christ's humanity and Christ as saviour of the world. These three elements are all bound up together revealing that God came amongst mankind in order to reunite a relationship between God and Man which had been destroyed through sin. The Christian sees in Christ's deity the fact that He wasn't just a person but part of the Godhead. We see the two natures of Christ and His purpose for us. Knowing Christ isn't just head knowledge but it is a relationship of love with Christ and one another.

- Christianity and its doctrines centre on the person of Jesus Christ.
- Faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour transforms a person's life. Jesus, himself, made implicit and explicit claims to his own uniqueness and divinity.
- At His own baptism Jesus announced the arrival of the Kingdom of God and often referred to himself as the Son of Man who had authority to forgive sins.
- The doctrines of the Person of Christ are also intimately associated with the Doctrine of the Trinity; that God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Those who confess that Jesus is the son of God confess his deity.
- One of the reasons for disbelief, heresies and difficulties in the church is the attempt to explain the mystery of Jesus Christ and his

Deity. Many false doctrines have been brought into being because of this. The scriptures described Jesus as the eternal Creator of the Universe. In John, one of the apostles called him, “my Lord and my God”. Acts says that he was made both Lord and Messiah. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus finishes his ministry on earth saying, “And remember. ‘I am with you always, to the end of the age’.”

- The miraculous conception of his mother,
- Wise men from the East saw his star in the heavens and came to worship Him.
- Angels went amongst shepherds’ who then heard singing and rejoicing.
- Jesus’ birth was the most exciting events in the history of humankind as he was both a complete human being and at the same time, the eternal Son of God.
- God came to be amongst us!
- His pre-existed in being the ‘Word of God’. John (from the book of John) states that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- He came to be the ‘Light of the World’. So Jesus came from God, He became flesh and lived among us.
- Even though Jesus was God, He was also human, and because of His humanity he also experienced tiredness
- Jesus, in his deity, never made an error in statement, action or judgement. Unlike us, He was without sin. In fact, it was for our sins that Jesus came for.
- He came as Saviour of the World.

The humanity of Christ helps us understand what he went through living amongst us on earth.. Jesus experienced temptation but was without sin. He resisted temptation and overcame it. At Gethsemane his struggles were real. Because of this human nature, He understands our own suffering because He has experienced them.

- Throughout the New Testament Jesus is referred to as the Saviour of the World.



- In the book of Matthew, an angel of the Lord instructed Joseph to name the child Mary had conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, ‘Jesus’, for he will save his people from their sins.’
- At the moment Jesus was born, an angel of the Lord told the shepherds in the fields, ‘Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people; to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’
- Jesus was often referred to as ‘Lord and Saviour’.
- The apostle Paul writes, ‘nobody should doubt that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners’.

In the Book of Acts, Jesus is described as the Saviour of Israel. Peter and the apostles testified before the Jewish council in Jerusalem that God had exalted Jesus at his right hand as Lord and Saviour, that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Later, we will study the Doctrine of Salvation which will give us a much deeper understanding of Jesus as Saviour to the World

In the following charts, show references from the Old Testament on prophecies of the Messiah:

## XVI. Charts

### 44 Messianic Prophecies of Jesus

	Prophecies of Jesus	Old Testament Scripture	New Testament Fulfilment
1	Messiah would be born of a woman.	Genesis 3:15	Matthew 1:20, Galatians 4:4
2	Messiah would be born in <a href="#">Bethlehem</a> .	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1, Luke 2:4-6
3	Messiah would be <a href="#">born of a virgin</a> .	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:22-23, Luke 1:26-31
4	Messiah would come from the line of <a href="#">Abraham</a> .	Genesis 12:3 Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1, Romans 9:5
5	Messiah would be a descendant of <a href="#">Isaac</a> .	Genesis 17:19 Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:34
6	Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Numbers 24:17	Matthew 1:2
7	Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33 Hebrews 7:14
8	Messiah would be heir to <a href="#">King David's throne</a> .	2 Samuel 7:12-13 Isaiah 9:7	Luke 1:32-33 Romans 1:3
9	Messiah's throne will be anointed and eternal.	Psalms 45:6-7 Daniel 2:44	Luke 1:33 Hebrews 1:8-12
10	Messiah would be called <a href="#">Immanuel</a> .	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
11	Messiah would spend a season in <a href="#">Egypt</a> .	Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14-15
12	A massacre of children would happen at Messiah's birthplace.	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16-18
13	A messenger would prepare the way for Messiah	Isaiah 40:3-5	Luke 3:3-6
14	Messiah would be rejected by his own people.	Psalms 69:8 Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11 John 7:5
15	Messiah would be a prophet.	Deuteronomy 18:15	Acts 3:20-22
16	Messiah would be preceded by <a href="#">Elijah</a> .	Malachi 4:5-6	Matthew 11:13-14
17	Messiah would be declared the <a href="#">Son of God</a> .	Psalms 2:7	Matthew 3:16-17
18	Messiah would be called a Nazarene.	Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 2:23
19	Messiah would bring light to <a href="#">Galilee</a> .	Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 4:13-16
20	Messiah would speak in <a href="#">parables</a> .	Psalms 78:2-4 Isaiah 6:9-10	Matthew 13:10-15, 34-35

21	Messiah would be sent to heal the brokenhearted.	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
22	Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek.	Psalms 110:4	Hebrews 5:5-6
23	Messiah would be called King.	Psalms 2:6 Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 27:37 Mark 11:7-11
24	Messiah would be praised by little children.	Psalms 8:2	Matthew 21:16
25	Messiah would be betrayed.	Psalms 41:9 Zechariah 11:12-13	Luke 22:47-48 Matthew 26:14-16
26	Messiah's price money would be used to buy a potter's field.	Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 27:9-10
27	Messiah would be falsely accused.	Psalms 35:11	Mark 14:57-58
28	Messiah would be silent before his accusers.	Isaiah 53:7	Mark 15:4-5
29	Messiah would be spat upon and struck.	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
30	Messiah would be hated without cause.	Psalms 35:19 Psalms 69:4	John 15:24-25
31	Messiah would be crucified with criminals.	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38 Mark 15:27-28
32	Messiah would be given vinegar to drink.	Psalms 69:21	Matthew 27:34 John 19:28-30
33	Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced.	Psalms 22:16 Zechariah 12:10	John 20:25-27
34	Messiah would be mocked and ridiculed.	Psalms 22:7-8	Luke 23:35
35	Soldiers would gamble for Messiah's garments.	Psalms 22:18	Luke 23:34 Matthew 27:35-36
36	Messiah's bones would not be broken.	Exodus 12:46 Psalms 34:20	John 19:33-36
37	Messiah would be forsaken by God.	Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46
38	Messiah would pray for his enemies.	Psalms 109:4	Luke 23:34
39	Soldiers would pierce Messiah's side.	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
40	Messiah would be buried with the rich.	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
41	Messiah would resurrect from the dead.	Psalms 16:10 Psalms 49:15	Matthew 28:2-7 Acts 2:22-32

42	Messiah would <a href="#">ascend to heaven</a> .	Psalms 24:7-10	Mark 16:19 Luke 24:51
43	Messiah would be seated at God's right hand.	Psalms 68:18 Psalm 110:1	Mark 16:19 Matthew 22:44
44	Messiah would be a <a href="#">sacrifice for sin</a> .	Isaiah 53:5-12	Romans 5:6-8

### Jesus in all the books of the Bible...

The Bible is about Jesus. He is pictured or prophesied about in each of the 66 books as well as in countless types in the lives of different characters in the Bible. Here is a breakdown of how He is pictured in each of the books...

O.T Book	Main Revelation	Key Prophecies* / Types of Jesus
Genesis	The Seed of the Woman	Messiah would be born of the seed of a woman (Gen 3:15, Luke 1:34-35) Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob (Gen 12:3, 17:19, 28:14, Luke 3:23-34) Messiah would be a king in the line of Judah (Gen 49:10, John 1:49) Typified in the person of Melchizedek (Gen 14:18) <a href="#">The life of Isaac</a> - the sacrificed son (Gen 22) <a href="#">The life of Joseph</a> - the rejected brother (Gen 37)
Exodus	The Passover Lamb	Typified in <a href="#">the life of Moses</a> - the deliverer <a href="#">The Passover Lamb</a> (Ex 12, John 1:29,36) <a href="#">The Manna from Heaven</a> (Ex 16, John 6) <a href="#">The Rock struck at Horeb</a> (Ex 17, 1 Cor 10:4) The Tabernacle (Brazen Altar, Lampstand, Table of Showbread, Ark of the covenant etc) (Gen 25-30)
Leviticus	The High Priest	Typified in the sacrifices and offerings (Lev 1-7) In the Jewish festivals (Passover, Atonement, Lev 16, 23) In the scapegoat (Lev 16:7-9) In the person and duties of the High Priest (Lev 16)
Numbers	The Cloud and The Fire	Messiah would be a King (Num 24:17) Typified in the bronze serpent (Num 21:8-9) <a href="#">The Water from the Rock</a> (Num 20)
Deuteronomy	The Prophet Like Moses	Messiah will be a prophet (Deut 18:15-19, John 6:14) Messiah would be worshipped by angels (Deut 32:43, Luke 2:13-14) Typified in the cities of refuge (Deut 4:41)

## An Archaeological Biblical Presentation

Joshua	The Captain of Our Salvation	Typified in the person of Joshua (our leader into the promised land) In the Promised Land In the Commander of the Army (Josh 5:13-15)
Judges	The Judge And Lawgiver	Typified in the Judges (for He is true Judge of the living and the dead)
Ruth	The Kinsman Redeemer	Messiah would be a descendant of Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 4:12-17) Typified in the life of Boaz - The Kinsman Redeemer (Ruth 2:1)
1 & 2 Samuel	The Prophet of The Lord	Messiah exalted by God with power (1 Sam 2:10, Matt 28:18) Messiah would be a descendant of David (2 Sam 7:12-16, Matt 1:1) Messiah would be the 'Rock' (2 Sam 23:2-3, 1 Cor 10:4) Typified in <a href="#">the life of David</a> - The King in Exile (1 Sam 22) The <a href="#">life of Jonathon</a> - the faithful friend (1 Sam 18:1-4)
1 & 2 Kings	The Reigning King	Typified in the <a href="#">life of Solomon</a> (the Millennial Reign) In the life and miracles of the prophet Elisha (multiplying bread 2 Kings 4:42, healing leper 2 Kings 5)
1 & 2 Chronicles		Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron 5:2, Luke 3:23-32) Typified in Solomon's temple In the Wisdom of Solomon (2 Chron 9:22)
Ezra	The Faithful Scribe	Typified in person of <a href="#">Zerubbabel</a> , the rebuilder of the temple (Ezra 4)
Nehemiah	The Rebuilder of the Walls	Typified in <a href="#">the person of Nehemiah</a> , the rebuilder of the walls of salvation

Esther	Mordecai	Typified in the person of Mordecai
Job	The Dayspring From on High	Typified in the sufferings of Job and the blessings that would follow
Psalms	The Lord Who Is Our Shepherd	Messiah would be the Son of God (Ps 2:7, 12, Matt 17:5) Messiah would be resurrected (Ps 16:8-10, Acts 13:30-37) Messiah would be despised & crucified (Ps 22:6-8, 14, Luke 23:21-23, Matt 27:35) Messiah would be hated without cause (Ps 69:4, Luke 23:13-22) Messiah would be Lord, seated at the right hand of God (Ps 110:1,5, 1 Pet 3:21-22) Messiah would be in the line of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4, Heb 6:17-20) Messiah would be the 'stone' rejected by the Jews (Ps 118:22, Matt 21:42-43) Key Messianic Psalms: Chapters 2, 8, 16, 22, 45, 69, 89, 109, 110, 118
Proverbs & Ecclesiastes	The Wisdom of God	Messiah would be from everlasting (Prov 8:22-23, John 17:5) Messiah would be the Son of God (Prov 30:4, Matt 3:16-17) Typified in the Wisdom of God (Prov 8:22-31)
Song of Solomon	The Lover & Bridegroom	Typified in the Bridegroom's love for, and marriage to, the bride

Isaiah	The Suffering Servant	Messiah would be born of a virgin (Is 7:14, Luke 1:34-35) Messiah would be Immanuel "God with us" (Is 7:14, Matt 1:21-23) Messiah would be God and Man (Is 9:6, John 10:30) Messiah would have the 7-fold Spirit upon Him (Is 11:1-2, Matt 3:16-17) Messiah would heal the blind, lame, deaf (Is 35:5-6, Mark 10:51-52) Messiah would be preceded by a forerunner (Is 40:3, Luke 1:17) Messiah would be a light to the gentiles (Is 42:6, John 8:12) Messiah would be despised by the Jewish nation (Is 49:7, John 10:20, Matt 27:23) Messiah would be whipped and beaten (Is 50:6, Matt 26:67, 27:26) Messiah would die as a guilt offering for sin (Is 53:10, John 18:11) Messiah would be resurrected and live forever (Is 53:10, Mark 16:16)
Jeremiah & Lamentations	The Weeping Prophet	Messiah would be God (Jer 23:6, John 13:13) Messiah would be a righteous Branch (Jer 23:5) Messiah would be our righteousness (Jer 23:6, 1 Cor 1:30)
Ezekiel	The Son of Man	Messiah would be a descendant of David (Ez 34:23-24, Matt 1:1)
Daniel	The Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven	Messiah would be 'a son of man' given an everlasting kingdom (Dan 7:13-14, Luke 1:31-34) Messiah would come 483 years after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Dan 9:25, John 12:12-23) Messiah would be killed (Dan 9:26, Matt 27:35) Revealed as the 'stone' (and His kingdom) that smashes the kingdoms of the world (Dan 2:34,44) Typified in the 4th man in the fiery furnace - one like 'the son of gods' (Dan 3:25)
Hosea	The Bridegroom	Typified in Hosea's faithfulness to his adulterous wife (Hos 3)

## **XCII. Profile**

Dr Phil Smith has written a number of related articles and books. He has been a Christian for more than fifty years and continues to faithfully serve God in whatever capacity he can. He is presently associated with Biblical Training.org in Washington State and also with the Missionary Training Institute in Yeosu, South Korea. He and his wife were missionaries in the Middle East for many years. They attend City Bible Church in Hamilton, New Zealand. Phil has the most experience in Linguistics, Old Testament history and Islamics, His educational profile is shown below. Phil's sole purpose is to further the kingdom of God in the world. His website and blog is *philsblog.online*.

His qualifications include a Dr of Religious Education, and a PhD in Biblical Archaeology, MA in Applied Linguistics, MA in Biblical Archaeology, Post Grad Diploma in TESOL, Graduate Diploma in Teaching, BA, Dip Writing, Dip Business Admin, Cert TESOL, Cert Applied Linguistics, His educational accomplishments grew out of his interest in tertiary teaching, biblical studies and biblical archaeology. His research and study has been an ongoing life process. (Many of the above diplomas and degrees are NZQA, with some having other educational standards).

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