

# **A STUDY OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

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## Introduction

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The inspired Gospel of John internally describes its human author as, “*he that saw and bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe*”; “*the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true*” (19:35, 21:24), and on five occasions, the disciple “*whom Jesus loved*” (13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 7 and 20). When the others fled at Jesus’ arrest, he followed right on into Caiaphas’ courtyard all the way to Jesus’ cross at Golgotha, where Jesus entrusted His mother Mary to him as his own mother. This author is none other than John, the son of Zebedee, who with his brother James and with Peter, made up Jesus’ inner circle, who witnessed Jesus raising Jairus’ dead daughter, Jesus’ Transfiguration on Mount Tabor when Moses and Elijah descended, and Jesus’ agony at Gethsemane. (Mk 3:17, 5:37, 9:2, 14:33, Mt 26:37, Ac 1:13, Gal 2:9).

John later was also the first apostle who saw Jesus’ empty tomb with the hollow rolled linen and believed! (20:2-10). He was present at three of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances (20:19-29 and 21:1-14) and at Jesus’ last appearance before His Ascension in the clouds to heaven (Act 1:2-11).

If there were three, and not four, women who stood by Jesus’ cross: Mary Magdalene; Mary the mother of Jesus, James, Joses Simon and Judas (Mt 13:55); and her sister, Mary of Cleophas, by parallel comparison of Jn 19:25, Mk 15:40, 16:1 and Mt 27:56, Mary of Cleophas, also named Salome, would be the mother of Zebedee’s children, which makes John a cousin of Jesus, and also of John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias (Lk 1:13, 36), which may explain why he was known to the high priest (18:15-16).

The Fourth Gospel, is John bearing true witness to what he had seen, heard, touched, and experienced first-hand in his encounters with Jesus (cf. 1 Jn 1:1-3).

### The Johannine Authorship

That John authored the Fourth Gospel is ascribed from the earliest of times, and confirmed in the title of the Gospel, and at its acceptance into the New Testament Canon! Modern scholars nevertheless increasingly question this traditionally accepted Johannine authorship (as they do of the other Scriptures), in disregard of the inspired internal evidence that John was the author as in 19:35, 21:24 above.

John’s authorship is also attested by the Church Fathers and early writers, including Irenaeus (130 - 200AD), Bishop of Lyons, who received his account from Polycarp (69 - 155AD), Bishop of Smyrna, who was John’s disciple; Clement of Alexandria (150 - 215AD), founder of the catechetical school in Alexandria; The *Muratorian Canon*, written in Rome (180 - 200AD); Eusebius of Caesarea (260 - 340AD), a scholar and church historian and Augustine of Hippo (345 - 430AD). Others include Theophilus of Antioch, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Origen. Even Porphyry and Julian, who were enemies of Christianity, ascribed the Fourth Gospel to John.

Those rejecting these witnesses find immediate difficulty understanding this Gospel, as Neander aptly puts it, “this Gospel, if it be not the work of the Apostle John, is an insoluble enigma.”

The Gospel was written circa 85 - 90AD. According to Irenaeus and Eusebius, John wrote from Ephesus, where he settled after the war of 66 - 70AD.

### Relation of John’s Gospel to the Synoptic Gospels

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are referred together as Synoptic (Greek *syn* “together” and *optic* “seen”) because they contain many of the same narratives, often narrated in the same sequence using the same or similar wordings, and thus thought to come from a common source; albeit with free literary independence of personal style and vantage-perspective in the observation of details.

John parallels the Synoptics in general chronological order, beginning with the ministry of John the

Baptist, Jesus' early contacts with disciples, His conflicts with the scribes and Pharisees, the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus walking on the water, the story of Passion Week beginning with His entry into Jerusalem resulting in His Crucifixion, followed by His glorious Resurrection! However John fills in details of the first year of Jesus' ministry that are absent from the Synoptic Gospels.

John's Gospel skips the aspects of John the Baptist's repentance preaching ministry and starts with the Baptist's introduction of Jesus as the Lamb of God, which takes place after Jesus' forty-day temptation in the wilderness. Jesus' initial contact with the disciples is reported with personal insight of one who was among the first four called. The discourses in John are more intimate and theological rather than the more ethical, practical public sermons, such as that on the Mount recorded in Matthew 5 - 7.

John mentions that innumerable miracles were performed by Jesus (21:24-25) but focusses only on seven astonishing examples: - 1. Turning of water into wine at the Cana wedding (2:1-11), 2. Remote healing from Cana of the royal official's dying son at Capernaum (4:43-54), 3. Healing the man lame for 38 years at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem (5:1-9), 4. Feeding of the five thousand near the sea of Tiberias (6:1-15), 5. Walking on the Sea of Galilee and calming a great storm (6:16-21), 6. Healing a man born blind in Jerusalem (9:1-7), and 7. Raising Lazarus at Bethany four days after he was buried (11:1-44). Of these seven, the feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the water are also narrated in the Synoptics.

With respect to John placing the cleansing of the Temple early in Jesus' ministry (Jn 2:13-17), while the Synoptics locate it in Passion Week (Mt 21:12-13, Mk 11:15-17) – an apparent chronological difference – we ought to take the entire accounts together, and so simply understand that Jesus cleansed the Temple twice; during His first as well as on His final visit to Jerusalem; for the zeal of God's house that consumed Jesus (Ps 69:9) at the first visit would not have abated at His final visit.

The events of the Last Supper, the betrayal, the hearing before Pilate, the Crucifixion and Resurrection are also reported in a deeper, more intimate way in John's Gospel than in the Synoptics, due to John's close personal insights. Many commentaries have been written on this most beautiful Gospel, which has been tremendously used for the saving of many souls. This Gospel contains the invitation of John 3:16, and its purpose of writing is “...that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” (Jn 20:31)

### **Outline of the Gospel of John**

The Gospel of John basically has two parts; the first covering highlights of Jesus' three and a half years of ministry, and the second, covering the final Passover week ending in Jesus crucifixion followed by His glorious resurrection and post-resurrection appearances. These two parts are completed with a prologue and an epilogue with the author's colophon. All in, a brief outline is as follows: -

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1:1-18      | Prologue: Revelation of Jesus Christ's Deity and Majesty          |
| 1:19-11:54  | Part I - Highlights of Jesus 3½ Years Public Ministry             |
| 11:55-20:31 | Part II – Final Passion Week, Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection |
| 21:1-23     | Epilogue: Sea of Tiberius Appearance and Peter's Restoration      |
| 21:23-24    | Colophon: The Disciple Who Wrote This Gospel                      |

## 1:1-18 PROLOGUE: JESUS CHRIST'S DEITY AND MAJESTY REVEALED

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### 1:1-5: "In the Beginning"

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

1:1: "In the beginning" (Εν ἀρχῇ - no definite article, yet definite, cf. Hebrew *be reshith* in Gen 1:1. This is plain yet grand language beyond the finite limits of our human comprehension. The "beginning" goes beyond the beginning of creation in time to eternity past (cf. Gen 1:1, Jn 17:5, Col 1:17, 1 Jn 1:1-2, Phil 2:6 and Rev 19:13). Also the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" in Rev 1:8, 11, 21:6 and 22:13, which pertains to God the Father and also to the Son. Heb 7:1-3 speaks of Melchisedec, "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God..."

"Was" (ἦν), imperfect of εἶμι "to be", is used three times in this one verse to convey continuous existence, rather than origin - "had been" for an indefinite time in the past. ἦν is found every time the Person of Jesus Christ is referred to in His eternal self-existent state (1:1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 15). In contrast, ἐγένετο the aorist of γίνομαι "became" or "to become" is used in 1:3, 6, 10, 14 & 17, for the beginning of the Incarnation of the Logos. This distinction is shown in 8:58 "before Abraham came (γενέσθαι) "I am" (εἶμι, timeless existence). In 1:14, "And the Word became flesh" - Jesus Christ at a particular time in the past took on a physical body and became a physical being. As God, Jesus is otherwise essentially Spirit (4:24). The perfect γέγονεν (1:3, 15), "becoming something that one was not before", has reference to some historical time in the past, as the beginning of this new state; and continuing to be that.

"The Word" (λόγος) is preceded with the definite article (ὁ). Logos is used for reason as well as speech. The Hebrew *memra* was used in the Targums for the manifestation of God as the Angel of Jehovah and as Wisdom in Prov 8:23. Logos is applied to Christ in 1:1, 14, Rev 19:13, 1 Jn 1:1 "concerning the Word of life". The pre-existent Person of Christ is taught in 2 Cor 8:9, Col 1:17, Phil 2:6, Heb 1:2 & Jn 17:5.

"With God" πρὸς τὸν θεόν. Though existing eternally with God, the Logos was in perfect fellowship with God. *Pros* with the accusative, presents a plane of equality and intimacy, face to face with each other. Cf. 1 Jn 2:1, "We have a Paraclete with the Father" παράκλητον ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. 1 Cor 13:12 πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον (face to face); triple *pros*.

Zodhiates: "Before there was any beginning, the Word had been, and the Word had been toward God, and God had been the Word."

"And God was the Word" (καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος); this exact language with only the definite article before Word, denies modalism, a non-Trinitarian belief that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are different *modes* or *aspects* of one God, as perceived by *the believer*, rather than three distinct Persons in *God Himself*.

1:2: "The same" (Οὗτος) = "this very one". This very one was in the beginning with God.

These opening verses uphold the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ from before time began: -

1. The Pre-Incarnate Logos has continually existed even before there was any beginning of time
2. The Logos was with God (from the beginning before time)
3. God was the Logos (from the beginning before time)

William Burkitt: The Person of the Son is distinct from the Father, but of the same essence and nature with the Father. He is God of God, very God of very God, being of one substance with the Father, by

whom all things were made (Nicene Creed).

1:3: “All things” (πάντα) (1 Cor 8:6, Ro 11:36, Col 1:16). “Were made” (ἐγένετο - became or came into being. Creation is “a becoming” (γίνομαι) in contrast with “being” (εἶμι). The action refers to an event rather than a process or continuous existence of ἦν in 1:1-2.

“By Him” (δι’ αὐτοῦ) = by means of Him as the intermediate agent in the work of creation. Heb 1:2 names God’s Son as the one “through whom he made the ages.” Col 1:16: “the all things were created in Him” (Christ) and “the all things stand created through him and unto him”. 1 Cor 8:6 distinguishes between the Father as the primary source (ἐξ οὗ) of the “all things” and the Son as the intermediate agent as here (δι’ οὗ). Without him (χωρὶς αὐτοῦ) = “apart from”. John adds the negative statement “not anything” (οὐδὲ ἓν); “not even one thing” (cf. Jn 1:20, 1 Jn 1:5) for completeness. The visible universe owes its origin to the creative activity and power of God. Apart from The Word, existence is impossible. This excludes two heresies: - 1) that matter is eternal; and 2) that angels or aeons had a share in creation.

1:4: “In Him was life” (Ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν). Robertson: That which has come into being in the Logos was life. The power that creates and sustains life in the universe is the Logos. Cf. the perfect passive verb ἔκτισται (“stands created”) in Col 1:16. This was the claim of Jesus to Martha in Jn 11:25 and the idea in Heb 1:3 “bearing (upholding) the all things by the word of his power.” Usually ζωὴ in John means spiritual life, but here the term is unlimited and includes all life. It is not *bios* (manner of life) but the very principle or essence of life; the spiritual behind the physical; the personal intelligence and power.

“And the life was the light of men” (καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων). The article with both *zōē* and *phōs* makes them interchangeable, i.e. “The light was the life of men” is also true. Jesus is the Life of men (*tōn anthrōpon*, generic use of the article) and the Light of men (cf. 8:12). John asserts this relation of the Logos to the race of men in particular before the Incarnation.

1:5: “Shineth” (φαίνει) present active indicative from “to shine” (*phaos, phōs*). The light keeps on giving light. “In the darkness” (ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ) from *skotos* (kin to *skia*, “shadow”) - an allusion to the darkness brought on by sin. Cf. 2 Pe 2:17 ὁ ζόφος τοῦ σκοτούς (“the blackness of darkness”). The Logos, the only real moral light, keeps on shining both in the Pre-incarnate state and after the Incarnation. 1 Jn 2:8 proclaims that “the darkness is passing by and the true light is already shining.” “Apprehended it not” (αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν) second aorist active indicative of *katalambanō*, to lay hold of, to seize.

### 1:6-18: John the Baptist’s Witness concerning Jesus

*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

1:6: “There came a man” (Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος) definite event in the long darkness; cf. 1:3. “Sent” (ἀπεσταλμένος), perfect passive participle of ἀποστέλλω, to send. “From God” (παρὰ Θεοῦ); from the side of God. Whose name was John (“Gift of God”); this name used always of John the Baptist in this Gospel.

1:7: “For witness” (εἰς μαρτυρίαν) from μαρτυρία, “testimony”, root *martus* of “martyr”. John’s ministry is to bear witness concerning the light. Men were blind and unable to see the light (1:26). John had his own eyes opened so that he saw and told what he saw, “so that all might come to believe” (ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσιν). John uses πιστεύω (believe) about 100 times. “Through him” (δι’ αὐτοῦ) i.e. through John the Baptist an intermediate agent in winning men to believe in Jesus, the Logos as the Light and the Life

of men; also the purpose of this Gospel (20:31). A preacher is a herald to point men to Christ.

1:8: “He, “that one” (ἐκεῖνος),” was not “that Light” (τὸ φῶς), “but” (ἀλλ’) came for the purpose *hina* of bearing witness of that Light; yet John was a definite light (τῷ φωτὶ) as are all believers (5:35, Mt 5:14).

1:9: “There was” (Ἦν), indicative imperfect active from εἰμί an emphatic position at beginning of the sentence. “The light that is the true, dependable, genuine” (τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν). This true light had been on hand all the time in the darkness (Ἦν imperfect, linear action) before John came. “Lighteth every man” (φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον), from *phōs*, to give light (Lk 11:35, Rev 22:5). “Cometh” (ἐρχόμενον), present middle participle of ἔρχομαι, “to come, to appear”. Cf. 3:19, 11:27 and 12:46.

1:10: “He was in the world” (Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν) - imperfect tense of continuous existence in the orderly universe before the Incarnation in 1:1-2. “Was made by or through him” (δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο). “Knew him not” (αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω) indicative aorist, negative, from γινώσκω = “refused or failed to recognize him”. His world that He had created and that was held together by Him (Col 1:16), not only failed to know the Pre-incarnate Logos but also failed to recognize Him when he became Incarnate (Jn 1:26).

1:11: “Unto his own” (Εἰς τὰ ἴδια), neuter plural = “unto his own things,” the same idiom used in Jn 19:27 when the Beloved Disciple took the mother of Jesus “to his own home.” The world was “the own home” of the Logos who had made it. Cf. Jn 16:32, Ac 21:6. They that were his own (τοὺς ἰδίους); “his intimates”, “his own family”, “his own friends”, as in Jn 13:1. Jesus said that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country (Mk 6:4, Jn 4:44), and the town of Nazareth, where he lived, rejected him (Lk 4:28, Mt 13:58). Probably here *hoi idioi* means the Jewish people, the chosen people to whom Christ was sent first (Mt 15:24) but in a wider sense, the whole world is included in *hoi idioi*.

“Received him not” (αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον) aorist active indicative of παραλαμβάνω, “to take with or along”, “to receive with favour; welcome”, used by Jesus in 14:3 of the welcome to his Father’s house.

1:12: “But as many as did receive Him” (Ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν,) aorist active indicative from λαμβάνω “to take hold of, grasp, receive Him.” “The right” (ἐξουσίαν) “power, domain, authority”, which is more than the notion of privilege. “To become” (γενέσθαι) infinitive aorist middle deponent from γίνομαι = to become what they were not before. “sons or children of God” τέκνα θεοῦ, “begotten of” “God”, in a fuller spiritual sense, not as mere offspring of God as is true of all men (Act 17:28). “Which were born” (*hoi egennēthēsan*) first aorist passive indicative of *gennaō*, to beget = “who were begotten” by spiritual generation (of God, *ek theou*) and not physical (*ex haimatōn*).

1:13: “Which were born, i.e. were begotten... of God” (οἱ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν), first aorist passive indicative of γεννάω, to beget. This is by spiritual generation (of God. “Not of blood” would mean not by birth into a family such as Abraham’s or into a “Christian family” no matter how illustrious (cf. 8:39). “Not of the will of the flesh” would mean not by the exertion of our human flesh-will to gain our own salvation, for by the works of the law shall no man be justified (Gal 2:16, 3:10, Deut 27:26). “Not of the will of man” would indicate not by the declaration of rulers or the Pope and cardinals or any religious council whatever pomp they may seem to have (7:26, 48). None of these can confer this new birth!

1:14: “And the Word became flesh” (Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο). The pre-existent Logos became flesh. See 1:3 and note its use for the historic Incarnation rather than Ἐν of 1:1. It is not “the flesh became the Word” as there is no article before σὰρξ. The Pre-existence of the Logos is plainly stated. John does not here say that the Logos entered into, or dwelt in, or filled, a man. His language is indicative of the Virgin Birth as recorded in Matthew and Luke; for what ordinary parent ever speaks of a child “becoming flesh”? Of the Incarnation, cf. 2 Cor 8:9, Gal 4:4, Rom 1:3, 8:3, Phil 2:7, 1 Tim 3:16, Heb 2:14.

“Dwelt among us” (ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν), indicative aorist - “to pitch one’s tent or tabernacle”. Cf. Rev 7:15, 12:12, 13:6 and 21:3 of God tabernacling with men and here of the Logos tabernacling - God’s Shekinah glory here among us in the person of his Son.

“We beheld his glory” (ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ), aorist middle indicative of θεάομαι, to come to see, visit, (cf., 1:34 of the Baptist gazing in rapture at Jesus. Also 4:35, 11:45, 1 Jn 1:1, 4:12 & 14). By this expression, in the plural, John insists that he and those who saw what Jesus did, beheld in Jesus the Shekinah glory (δόξα) of God (cf. Jas 2:1), Who was and Is the Logos who existed before with God.

“As of the only begotten from the Father” (ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός), strictly = “as of an only born (rather than only begotten) from a father,” as there is no article with μονογενοῦς or with πατρός. This is the first use in the Gospel of πατήρ of God in relation to the Logos; an eternal relationship per 1:18 and not the Incarnation here is in view. It distinguishes between the Logos and the believers as children of God. The word is used of human relationships as in Lk 7:12, 8:42, 9:38, and occurs also in the LXX and Heb 11:17. John means to say that “the manifested glory of the Word was as it were the glory of the Eternal Father shared with His only Son” (cf. Jn 8:54, 14:9, 17:5).

“Full” (πλήρης) “of grace and truth” (χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας), cf. Ps 57:10, 86:15, 100:5 and 108:4. All of God’s immense mercies and truth are embodied in the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ.

1:15: “Beareth witness” (μαρτυρεῖ). Vivid present active of this characteristic Johannine word (cf. Jn 1:17, 32, 34). The historical examples of John’s witness to Christ is proof of the glory, full of grace and truth already claimed for the Incarnate Logos. “Crieth” (κέκραγεν), perfect active indicative of κράζω for loud crying, repeated in dramatic form recalling the wonderful Voice in the wilderness which the Beloved Disciple can still hear echoing through the years.

“This was” (Οὗτος ἦν) imperfect indicative, which throws the tense back in past time when John looked forward to the coming of the Messiah (as in Act 3:10). “Of whom I said” (ὃν εἶπον) see 1:27. John describes “the Coming One” (Ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος) before he saw Jesus (cf. Mt 3:11). The beloved disciple had heard the Baptist say these very words. “Is become” (γέγονεν) perfect active indicative of γίνομαι – it was a realised fact when the Baptist was speaking. “Before me” (ἔμπροσθέν μου) “In rank and dignity”, the Baptist means ἰσχυρότερός μου, the one “mightier than I” (Mt 3:11, Mk 1:7).

1:16: “Of his fullness” (ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος), cf. Col 1:19, 2:9, Eph 1:23, 3:19, 4:13. “We all” (ἡμεῖς πάντες) = all of John’s own contemporaries as participants with him in the fullness of the Logos. “Received” (ἐλάβομεν) aorist active indicative of λαμβάνω, to take hold of, seize, take up and receive, a wider experience than beholding (ἐθεασάμεθα in 1:14) and one that all believers may have. “Grace for grace” (χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος). Here the picture is “grace” taking the place of “grace” like the manna fresh each morning, new grace for the new day and the new service.

1:17: The law “was given” (ἐδόθη), first aorist passive indicative of δίδωμι. “By” (διὰ) = as God’s intermediate agent; “Moses” (Μωσέως). “Came” (ἐγένετο), the historical event which began Christianity. “By Jesus Christ” (διὰ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ); Jesus Christ, as the Father’s intermediate agent. John identifies the Pre-incarnate Logos with Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah. The full historical name “Jesus Christ” is here for the first time in John; (also Jn 17:3, four times in 1 John and five times in The Revelation).

1:18: “God (Θεὸν - no definite article; in His general, total, infinite, eternal and special essence as Spirit) “no one i.e. no created being, has ever yet seen” (Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε - perfect active indicative of ὁράω i.e. seen physically, mentally or spiritually). God is invisible (Ex 33:20, Deut 4:12 or ἀοράτου Col 1:15, 1 Tim 1:17, cf. Jn 5:37 and 6:46). Yet he that has seen Jesus has seen the Father! (14:7).

“The Only Begotten Son” (ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός - cf. 1:14, “monogenēs” shows the very special relationship of the Son to the Father). “The only begotten” may give a wrong idea that in Christ’s eternal state, He was generated by the Father. The contextual meaning is “the unique Son who being (ὢν, the present participle of εἶμι - to be), in the bosom of the Father, He himself brought Him (God) out (ἐξηγήσατο – exegeted, explained, at a particular time in the past; to lead out; draw out in narrative, to recount (cf. Lk 24:35, Act 10:8, 15:12, 14, 21:19). The Logos is pictured in marvellous fashion as the Word of God in human flesh, the Son of God with the Glory of God in him, showing men who God is and what he is.

## 1:19-11:54 PART I - HIGHLIGHTS OF JESUS' 3½ YEARS PUBLIC MINISTRY

(In Galilee, Judah, Beyond the Jordan and Samaria including Seven Miracles)

### 1:19-2:11 The First Week

Day	Phrase	Events	Ref
1 <sup>st</sup> Sun	Implied first day	Priests and Levites sent from Jerusalem visit John the Baptist in Bethany beyond the Jordan.	1:19-28
2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon	"The next day"	Jesus comes to John the Baptist	1:29-34
3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues	"Again the next day"	John points out the Lamb of God! First disciples called. Stayed with Jesus that day from 10 <sup>th</sup> hour.	1:35-9
4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	Implied in 1:39	Calling of Peter from Bethsaida.	1:40-2
5 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	"The day following"	Departure for Galilee; calling of Philip of Bethsaida and Nathaniel of Cana	1:43-51
6 <sup>th</sup> Fri	Implied in 1:43 & 2:1	Arrive at Cana. Sabbath commences from evening.	Gen 1:5
7 <sup>th</sup> Sat	"The third day" from 1:43	Marriage at Cana in Galilee – first miracle.	2:1-11

Riesner: Marie-Émile Boismard notes the special emphasis of 'third day' indicates a chronology in Jn 1 & 2 with a theological significance. (Mt 16:21, 17:23, 20:19, Lk 24:7, 46, Ac 10:40. 1 Cor 15:4 - the day of Jesus' resurrection; the 'hour of Jesus' (2:4), that is His death on the cross (7:30).

### 1:19-28 First Day: John the Baptist's Forerunner Ministry

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

The term "Jews" in this Gospel describes the ruling class of Jerusalem. When their representative priests and Levites questioned John, he answered that he was not Elijah (who was to come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, Mal 4:5), nor that "prophet" (prophesied by Moses of Christ, Deut 18:15), but a voice crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord" as said the prophet Isaiah (Is 40:3). John pointed them to one among them whom they knew not, who coming after himself was preferred before him, whose shoe's latchet he was unworthy to loosen. He magnified Christ (3:30). Jesus in reciprocity testified that John was indeed Elias who was to come (Mt 11:14, Mk 9:12-13, cf. Lk 1:17).

### The Location of Bethabara (Bethany) beyond Jordan, where these things were done

The KJV, "*These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing*". ESV & NASV, "*These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing*."

Bethany beyond the Jordan is where Jesus drew His first disciples from among John's circle (1:28-51) and where He took refuge after Jews' attempt to arrest Him during the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem towards the end of His ministry. There, a great crowd of John's followers believed in Him (10:31-42).

Origen (AD 185-254) proposed "Bethabara" after he failed to a place named Bethany on the East bank of the Jordan, despite all the manuscripts in his time reading Bethania. "Bethabara" later came into many orthographic variants but remains a minority reading. Eusebius (AD 265-340) writes that the place of the baptisms is "Bethabara" on the far side of the Jordan. The Pilgrim of Bordeaux (AD 333) identifies the site of Jesus' baptism as five Roman miles north of the Dead Sea. At this location five miles east of Jericho is the Greek Monastery of St. John situated about 700 yards west of the Jordan on a low hill safe

from the spring flood waters of the Jordan. On the far side of the river at this location is the Wadi el-Kharrar which rises from a spring and flows westward into the Jordan. This is a popular choice favoured also by J. Carl Laney<sup>1</sup> in his 1977 doctoral thesis favours, but without archaeological support evidence.

Rainer Riesner's masterly study<sup>2</sup> however demonstrates that Bethany beyond the Jordan was situated in the North Eastern Jordan region known as Batanaea. He had made an excursion in 1982 with German missionary-archaeologist Bargil Pixner to Tel Salem, 12km south of Beth Shean, the old Scythopolis, identified with Salim, one of the places where John baptized (Jn 3:23). Less than half hour's walk away is Abelmeholah, where Elijah anointed Elisha his successor (1 Ki 4:12, 19:16). Was it coincidental that John the Baptist would baptize there? A two-hour walk across the Jordan is the valley of Pella, northern Transjordan, where the Jewish Christians fled before the siege of Jerusalem per Eusebius (HE III. 5. 3).

### The Necessity of a Location in the North:

In Jn 11, news came to Jesus at Bethany beyond Jordan that Lazarus was critically ill in Bethany near Jerusalem, where the Jews had sought His life. Jesus declared, 'This illness is not unto death, but for the glory of God', indicating that Lazarus was still alive. Two days later, Jesus announced, 'Lazarus our friend has fallen asleep' i.e. had died. He supernaturally experienced inwardly the death of his friend and sets out to go to him. When they arrived, Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days – the time taken to travel between the two Bethanies. (11:1-7, 11-14, 17-18, 39). The average day's march in Palestine in New Testament times was about 40 kilometres. Mishnah (*Ta'an* 1, 3) and Talmud (*b Pes* 93b) give about 45 kilometres for a full day's march, confirmed by Josephus (*Vita* 269-70). This would place both Bethanies at about 150 kilometres apart, which eliminates Wadi el-Kharrar and all of Peraea of Antipas, the furthest of which being less than two days' journey from Jerusalem. 150 kilometres eastwards from Jerusalem is the Arabian Desert, which leaves only a north-easterly direction.

In contrast, Wadi el-Kharrar is a one day journey from Bethany, Judaea. Even supposing Lazarus died the day the messengers arrived (and assuming our Lord did not know this), after the two days wait plus one day travel time, Lazarus would be at most be 3 days in the tomb.

In Jn 1:40-42, on the morning of the fourth day, Jesus is still in the proximity of Bethany beyond the Jordan. On the fifth day (1:43) he departs for Galilee. For this journey, He has at most only two days for on the seventh day, He is at the marriage feast at Cana in Galilee. The journey more likely took only one day, for the fifth day, Jesus calls two disciples whose home is in Galilee (1:43-51) and had already arrived at the region. We need to provide for the Sabbath when no exertive travel would be made, which would explain why there is no account of Jesus' activity for one day. From the Wadi el-Kharrar, Cana cannot be reached in one or two days. For the shortest way from Lower Galilee through Samaria to Jerusalem, Josephus reckons three days (*Vita* 269-70). A distance between Cana and Bethany of not more than a day's journey would indicate that Bethany beyond the Jordan lies nearer to Galilee than to Judaea.

The gathering of Galileans in Jn 1 is unlikely at the lower reaches of the Jordan. Compare the calling of the disciples on the northwest bank of the Sea of Galilee (Mt 4:18-22, Mk 1:16-20 and Lk 5:1-11). By mentioning mainly Galilean names, John indicates that these events took place in the north. Per Karl Elliger, 'Bethany beyond the Jordan must be sought nearer to Galilee than to Judaea.' Riesner discussed the other theories and then shewed convincingly that 'beyond the Jordan' must be sought either in the Decapolis or in the tetrarchy of Philip (Gaulanitis, Basanitis and Trachonitis), who, Josephus says was a tolerant ruler (*Ant.* XVIII 106-7). Jesus' successful ministry in Jn 10:41 would indicate the latter as Jews were a minority in Decapolis.

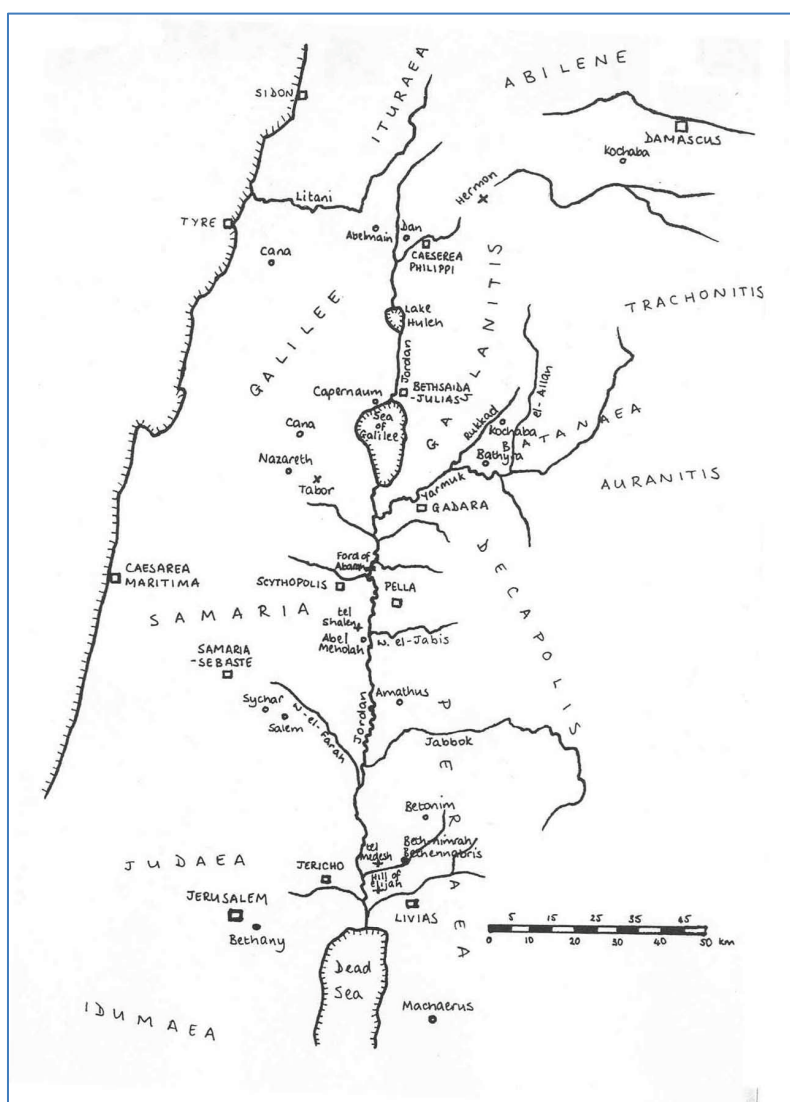
Per Karl von Raumer's geography of Palestine: "the Masoretic Jos 19:34 states, 'Naphthali touches on Zebulun at midday, on Asher towards evening, and on Judah of the Jordan at sundown.' Three things

<sup>1</sup> "The Identification of Bethany beyond the Jordan" from Selective Geographical Problems in the Life of Christ, a doctoral dissertation by J. Carl Laney (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1977).

<sup>2</sup> "Bethany Beyond the Jordan (Jn 1:28) Topography, Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel by Rainer Riesner, Tyndale Bulletin 38 (1987)

indicate that Mt 19:1 is a deliberate reference back to Jos 19:34; - 1. The parallel Mt 4:15, πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου concerns the borders of Naphtali. 2) Ἰουδαία πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου is in the context a good translation of יִרְדְּנָא. In Jos 19:34 (LXX) the Hebrew singular for border גְּבוּל is translated by the plural τὰ ὅρια. Matthew writes that Jesus went εἰς τὰ ὅρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου (19:1). An examination of the statements in the Gospels leads us to the conclusion that πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου nowhere necessarily means the Peraea of Antipas, which extended to the south of the Decapolis, from Amathous to Machaerus. The evidence indicates rather the northern Trans-Jordan, and the reference in Mt 19:1 to Jos 19:34 (MT) could indicate the region of Bashan-Batanaea, for in both the Septuagint (Nu 32:32, Deut 3:8, 4:47) and Josephus (*Ant.* VIII.37), Bashan is designated explicitly as πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου. Thus the suggestion that Βηθανία πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου in Jn 1:28 means the **region of Batanaea** becomes worthy of consideration.” 3) Mk 7:31 (“*departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis*”) also, would necessitate passing through the Batanaean region.

Map Identifying Bethany beyond Jordan



From “Bethany Beyond the Jordan (Jn 1:28) Topography, Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel  
by Rainer Riesner (Tyndale Bulletin 38 (1987))

Topography and Theology: Jn 10:42 is an important transitional passage. The beginning and the end of Jesus’ ministry is connected through the name Bethania. In Bethany beyond the Jordan, the ministry of Jesus once more reaches a highpoint through the faith of many who believe in him (10:40-2). With the

raising of Lazarus in Bethany near Jerusalem (11:1) Jesus performs his greatest ‘sign’, which also sacrificially brings him on the way of suffering (11:45-53). Theologically, what began in the region specially marked out by the Jewish messianic hope (Batanaea) through the proclamation of John the Baptist (1:29), finds its completion through the cross and resurrection of Jesus in Jerusalem, which is typified in the raising of Lazarus in the nearest proximity to the Holy City. The events in the north and in the south, the beginning and the completion of salvation, cannot be separated. If Batanaea is meant in 1:28, all four classical regions of the Jewish motherland - Galilee, Judaea, Samaria, and the land east of the Jordan - have a specially emphasized place in John’s Gospel. With the help of topography, the Evangelist makes it clear that the sending of Jesus is for the whole of Israel!”

At the end of the 40 years wilderness, the North-East is where the conquest of the Promised Land begun. Sihon, king of the Amorites and the land of Gilead and Og, King of Bashan, were delivered to Moses as a covenantal deposit for Israel (Deut 2:24-3:10, 29:1-9, 31:1-8).

### **1:29-34 Second Day: The Lamb of God, Jesus Comes to John**

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

John seeing Jesus, declared, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” He points to Jesus as our Passover (cf. Gen 22:7-8, Ex 12:3-5, 11, 21, 27, 43 & 1 Cor 5:7.)

1:31-33: John earlier spake of the One coming and the divine sign given by which he would recognise the Son of God who baptizes with the Holy Ghost, and he “bare record” (ἐμαρτύρησεν first aorist active indicative of μαρτυρέω) that he “saw” (μαρτυρέω) the descending of the Spirit from heaven upon Him.

1:34: “I saw”, present perfect active, or “I have seen”, referring back 40 days earlier when Jesus came to be baptized, after which he saw the Spirit of God descended like a dove upon Him. John bears witness, ‘this is the Son of God’ (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ). He also heard the Father’s voice hail Him, “This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mt 3:16, Mk 1:10, Lk 3:22) Nathanael and Martha use it as a Messianic title (1:49, 11:27). Cf. Mt 14:33, Mk 3:11, Lk 22:70. The phrase means more than just Messiah and expresses the peculiar relation of the Son to the Father (Jn 3:18, 5:25, 17:5, 19:7, 20:31) like that of the Logos with God in Jn 1:1.

### **1:35-39 Third Day: First Two Disciples**

*Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.*

John, standing with two of his disciples, saw Jesus as he walked and declared, “Behold the Lamb of God!” The two disciples left John and followed Jesus. Jesus knew their hearts and His grace drew them. Their question, “Rabbi, where dwellest Thou?” is answered by the most blessed invitation, “Come and see.” They were to abide with Him and commune with Him that day, for it was the tenth hour (4pm). What a privilege was theirs that day.

### **1:40-42 Fourth Day: Simon Peter Brought to Jesus**

*One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is*

*by interpretation, A stone.*

As it was already late on the third day, Andrew likely found his brother, Simon Peter, on the next or fourth day. Jesus named him Cephas (Aramaic for stone) or in Greek, Petros or Peter. (The other, unnamed, disciple was John, who probably likewise sought out his brother, James.)

### 1:43-51 Fifth Day: Nathanael of Cana Brought to Jesus

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

On the fifth day, Jesus determined to go to Galilee. He finds (εὕρίσκει vivid present, a purposeful finding) Philip of Bethsaida and called, “Follow me” (Ἀκολουθεῖ μοι - present active imperative), cf. Mt 8:22, 19:21, Mk 2:14, Lk 9:59, Jn 21:19). Philip finds Nathaniel (“gift of God”; “Bartholomew, “son of Tolmai” in Synoptics), who was sceptical upon hearing that Jesus was from Nazareth, a village next to his own Cana (21:2). When Jesus told him that he was a true Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile for He saw him under the fig tree before Philip called him, Nathanael was astonished and confessed Jesus as the Son of God and King of Israel. Jesus told him he shall see greater things – the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Jesus now has his earliest followers and His work has begun.

### The Sixth Day (Silent)

Likely a Friday; Jesus would have arrived at Cana or Nazareth nearby. The Sabbath observance rest begins on the evening (Erev Shabbat or eve of the Sabbath).

### 2:1-11 Seventh Day

#### First Miracle – Jesus Turns Water into Wine at Cana of Galilee

*And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.*

“The third day” must be reckoned from 1:43, the fifth day, and thus would be the seventh day. The mother of Jesus was invited to the marriage and so were Jesus and his disciples who had arrived not long before. The feast most likely begun in the evening after the Sabbath ended.

The bridal couple were of humble means and had ran out of wine. When Mary told Jesus of this, He replied, “Woman’ (a term of endearment), What have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.” Mary however told the servants to do whatsoever Jesus said to them, and this led to Jesus’ first miracle, a most astonishing turning of plain water into the finest wine! (One firkins approx. = 40 litres). Jesus thus manifested forth His glory and His disciples believed on Him.

### What Sort of Wine Did Jesus Make - Fermented or Unfermented?

The text itself is not specific and here there must be some liberty of conscience. Bible Presbyterians generally abstain from all alcoholic substances but Reformed Presbyterians do not.

The Greek οἶνον is the general word for “wine.” In Mt 9:17, Mk 2:22, Lk 5:37, the bursting of the wineskins implies fermentation. Where drinking wine could be a stumbling block to a brother, abstinence is best (Rom 14:21). 1 Tim 5:23 refers to a medicinal benefit of a little wine. *Oinos* is also used metaphorically of: - a) The evils ministered to the nations by religious Babylon (Rev 14:8, 17:2 & 18:3); and b) The Cup of Divine wrath poured upon the nations and Babylon (Rev 14:10, 16:19 & 19:15).

The Greek γλεύκος (*gleukos*) used in Act 2:13, denotes sweet “new wine,” where the accusation shows that it was intoxicant and must have been undergoing fermentation some time.

Note: In instituting the Lord’s Supper, Jesus speaks of the contents of the cup as the “fruit of the vine” (Mt 26:29, Mk 14:25, Lk 22:18) and the word *oinos* is not used in this connection.

There is a balance in Scripture contexts. *“John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.”* (Mt 11:18-19, Lk 7:33-34. Cf. Lk 1:15) *“And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.”* (Mt 9:15)

Prov 20:1 tells us, *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*

Prov 21:17 says, *“he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.”*

Prov 23:29-33 says, *“Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.”*

Eph 5:18 tells us, *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”* One drunk with wine is emptied and without control of self, which is lost to the control of the alcoholic spirit. One filled with the Spirit retain sober self-control, while controlled by the Holy Spirit, who gives us power, love and a sound mind or self-control (2 Time 1:17).

Cf. also 1 Tim 3:8, Tit 2:3 & 1 Pet 4:3.

## 2:12 FIRST VISIT TO CAPERNAUM

*After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.*

After the events at Cana, Jesus went down to Capernaum with His mother and brothers (James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas per Mt 13:55) and His first disciples (Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, John and possibly James). This was Jesus first visit to Capernaum at the start of His ministry and they did not stay many days.

This visit occurred before John the Baptist was imprisoned (Jn 3:24 cf. 5:35. Mt 4:12, Mk 1:14 and Lk3:24). After John was imprisoned, a year later (4:1), Jesus left Nazareth and dwelled in Capernaum per Mt 4:12-17 *“Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”* This was in fulfilment of Isa 9:1-2.

Jesus all in all did many miracles in Capernaum (Mt 8:5, 11:23, 17:24, Mk 1:21, 2:1, 9:23, Lk 4:23, 31, 7:1, 10:5, Jn 4:46, 6:17, 59) but finally had to upbraid the city, *“And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.”* (Mt 11:23)

## 2:13-3:21 FIRST PASSOVER VISIT TO JERUSALEM

### 2:13 Jesus' First Passover Visit

*And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*

#### The Number of Passovers during Jesus Ministry

2:13 records Jesus' first Passover visit to Jerusalem after the start of His ministry. Three other Passovers are recorded in Jn 5:1, 6:4 and 11:55. 5:1 actually does have the word "Passover" but reads, "*After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*" In the TR: ἡ ἑορτή, "*the feast.*" The three feasts of the Jews during which all males must appear before the Lord in the place He shall chose (Jerusalem in Jesus' time) are Passover, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths (Deut 16:1, 10, 13 & 16) with Passover *the* definitive feast. Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem every year with the family for Passover, where once when He was 12, Jesus stayed behind reasoning with and astonishing the doctors with His understanding. (Lk 2:41-47).

Prof Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (1802–1869)'s classic commentary on John notes that the phrase "at the feast" (Κατὰ δὲ ἑορτήν) in Mt 27:15 and Mk 15:6 denotes the Passover and is analogous to "the feast" in Jn 5:1. Jesus told Lk 13:6-9 in reference to His own ministry when at least 2½ years had already passed, "*Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?*" The vinedresser requested a final year respite, from which is obtained 3½ years of Jesus ministry, answering to 4 Passovers. Hengstenberg also cites Irenaeus (c. 115-202 AD), who held and proved that 4 Passovers falls into the period of Christ's Messianic work, and he demonstrated that this feast was not Purim (4:35 notes), and then concludes finally for Passover.

Of the four Gospels, John uniquely portrays Jesus as the Lamb of God and prominently features the Passover events and theme. Given John's intimate closeness to the Lord Jesus from the beginning, only he could present such a clear chronological account in terms of days as well as feast events and years, from which is established the full 3½ years period of Jesus' ministry.

### 2:14-22 Cleansing of the Temple

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

Jesus was saddened and stirred at the merchandizing and profiteering in the Temple, the House of the Living God, and he acted by pouring out the changers' money, overthrowing their tables and driving them all out, telling them not to make His Father's house a house of merchandise! Even as a boy, Jesus referred to this same temple as His Father's house. (Lk 2:49) This was a Messianic sign and His disciples were stirred to remember Ps 69:9, "*For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*"

The Jews challenged Jesus' authority and asked for a sign in their covetous preoccupation for signs (cf. 4:48, 6:30, and Ex 4:1, 8, 7:9). Jesus answered, "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*" referring to the temple of His body (1:14). The Jews thought He meant the Temple. King Herod (c. 74 - 4 BC) had c. 19 BC, commissioned a massive rebuilding-expansion of the Temple, which was completed after 46 years c. AD 28. This first visit by Jesus to Jerusalem was in AD 29, which would mean that the Temple was newly finished. During construction, religious use of the Temple was uninterrupted.

Mt 21:12-13, Mk 11:15-17 & Lk 19:45-46 records a second Temple cleansing at the end of Jesus'

ministry, a day after His Triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. It should not surprise that the Jews would have gone back to their old merchandising habits and that Jesus would again cleanse the Temple for His zeal for His Father's house would not wane or abate.

**2:23-25 Many “believed” in Jesus’ Name but Jesus did not believe them**

*Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.*

Many at the Passover “believed” (Gk ἐπίστευσαν aorist active 3rd person plural from πιστεύω) in Jesus’ Name because they saw the miracles that He did – their “faith” however misplaced on the miracles rather than on the Person of Christ. There are qualities of faith: - true saving faith versus feigned faith (Ac 8:13, 1 Tim 1:5, 2Tim 1:5, Jas 2:17-26). Simon Magus “believed” (*episteusen*) but was unsaved. The “devils also believe, and tremble”. Faith without works is dead. Jesus on His part did not entrust Himself unto them (*episteuen hauton autois*) because He knew all men (*dia to auton ginôskein pantas*) and what was in man (*ti ên en tōi anthrôpōi*). His knowledge is experiential, continuous foreknowledge. Cf. 6:64 “*Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.*”

### 3:1-21 “Ye Must Be Born Again”

(Still on first Passover visit to Jerusalem)

#### 3:1-8 Nicodemus Visits Jesus at Night

*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews, came to Jesus by night, discreetly for fear of the Jews (cf. 7:13, 19:38 & 20:19), due to the position taken by his fellow rulers (9:22, 12:42 16:2). On later occasions, He would speak out bravely for Christ (7:50, 12:42 & 19:39). He had evaluated Jesus' miracles honestly and confessed, “*Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*”

Jesus went plainly to the point of the most important miracle and Nicodemus greatest need, “*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” Nicodemus appropriated this personally and so asked, “*How can a man be born when he is old?*”

Jesus reiterates and elaborates with a reference to Ezek 36:25-27 (which Nicodemus ought to know), “*Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*”

The water represents cleansing from all filthiness following genuine heart repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit coming into the heart of the new believer, transforming him and causing him to walk in God's statutes. When the Spirit of God comes, it will be like the wind that blows where it listeth – we would not know from where it comes or to where it after goes but will experience His change and transformation of our lives.

#### 3:9-15 Further Questions on the New Birth

*Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

When Nicodemus hesitates, Jesus points out that as a teacher of Israel, he should have understood these things. The new birth takes place here on earth and now. If we cannot believe this, how can we believe of heavenly things, which the Son of man, who had come down from heaven, is able to tell us? Jesus goes on to say that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (Nu 21:7-9); even so must He be lifted up on the cross. We all of Adam's race are smitten by the deadly serpent bite of Eden, and need to look at Jesus Christ crucified, looking in faith to Him - “*He who was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*” (2 Cor 5:21). As Isaiah prophesied, “*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*” (Isa 45:22)

**NB:** “Son of man” is a Messianic title of Christ, founded in Dan 7:13-14 and used 88 times in the NT including Jn 1:51, 3:13, 14, 5:27, 6:27, 53, 62, 8:28, 12:23, 34 and 13:31. By referring to Himself thus,

Jesus was proclaiming Himself as the Messiah, fully God as well as fully man.

### 3:16-21 Gospel Offer and Why Many Cannot Believe

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

3:16: The majestic verse beyond human comprehension! The “love” with which God so loved is the sacrificial Agape love for the object loved. The “world” (*ton kosmon*) is the whole cosmos of men, including Gentiles, the whole human race (2 Cor 5:19, Rom 5:8). His only begotten Son (*ton huion ton monogenē*) - “the Son only begotten”; “His only unique Son”. (Cf. 1:14, 18).

“To believe” is to entrust one’s entire personality and destiny unconditionally and completely unto Jesus’. It is not mere mental assent but heart commitment (Rom 10:10).

“Perish” is from *apollumi* (second aorist middle subjunctive, intransitive, of, “to destroy”). Used in Mk 2:22 (“marred”), Mt 10:6, 15:24, 18:11, Lk 15:4, 6 & 32 (“lost”). In no NT instance does it signify cessation of existence or of consciousness. It is the condition of every non-believer, contrasted with “Eternal Life”, the condition of every believer. (Cf. Jn 10:28, 17:12)

3:17-21: At His first Coming, the world being already in sin and darkness, Jesus did not come to judge and to condemn but to save the world. Despite the marvellous light of His presence, many did not believe and were condemned already; the condemnation being that light is come into the world but men loved darkness more than light. They loved and would not relinquish their evil deeds, and hence hated and would not come to the light. Those that do truth willingly come to the light that their deeds may be made clear as approved in God. This is why the Gospel always starts with a call to repentance for “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Lk 13:3, 5).

### 3:22-36 JESUS MINISTERS IN JUDAEA / JOHN THE BAPTIST AT AENON

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

3:22: “*After these things*” is a chronological marker used also in 5:1, 6:1 and 7:1. In between and before are others things done by Jesus not recorded in John but recorded in the Synoptics.

Jesus and His disciples stayed for a length of time in Judean countryside (Mk 1:5), outside of Jerusalem, and “was baptizing” (imperfect active of *baptizō*) via His disciples (4:2).

John was baptizing in Aenon near Salim where water was plentiful. Per Eusebius (236-339 AD) and Jerome (347–420 AD), Aenon was at the eighth milestone from Scythopolis towards the south, near Salim and the Jordan, i.e. on the West side. John was not yet cast into prison.

A dispute of conscience (Act 15:2) arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew regarding purification (cf. 2:6). The Jews had various kinds of washings or dipping and “baptisms of cups and pots and brazen vessels” (Heb 6:2, Mk 7:4, 8). They told John that the One who was with him beyond the Jordan to whom he bore witness (1:7) was baptizing and all are going to Him.

They deferentially addressed John as “Rabbi” (cf. 1:38, 49, 3:2, 26, 6:25). John answered them in no uncertain terms (3:27-36): -

- A person cannot receive even one thing unless given him from heaven (1 Cor 4:7, Heb 5:4).
- John was not the Christ but have been sent before Him (1:20, Mal 3:1, Mk 1:2, Lk 1:17, Act 19:4). The One who has the bride (baptizing more disciples) is the Bridegroom. John, as the Bridegroom's friend, greatly rejoices at His voice and his joy is now complete. (Cf. Mt 9:15)
- Christ must increase but he must decrease! Christ who comes from heaven is above all. 8:23.
- God gives to the Christ who was to come, the Spirit without measure.
- The Father loves the Son and has given all into his hand (cf. 5:20). Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God.

## 4:1-42 JESUS LEAVES JUDAEA FOR GALILEE; MINISTERS ENROUTE IN SAMARIA

### 4:1-30 The Samaritan Woman at the Well

*When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.*

When Jesus learnt that the Pharisees had heard that He was baptizing more disciples in Judea than John was baptizing at Aenon, Jesus left Judea for Galilee. John gives us Jesus' intimate reason for leaving Galilee, so as not to hurt John the Baptist's ministry or feelings. Shortly after this, John was also imprisoned, as given in the Synoptics (Mt 4:12, Mk 1:14, Lk 3:20).

From Judea, Jesus had to pass through Samaria, and He stopped at Sychar, or Shechem, an important city since OT times, which Jacob had given to Joseph (Gen 33:19, 48:22, Josh 24:32).

It was the sixth hour or high noon and Jesus was wearied and tired out from His labours and the journey. We see clearly Jesus' humanity depicted here (cf. 19:28) as He sits at Jacob's well, while His disciples went to buy food. Then a woman from Samaria came to draw water and He asks her for a drink.

She was surprised a rabbi would ask her for a drink, for Jews despised Samaritans, who in turn resented them (8:48, Lk 9:53, Ezra 4:3, 10). Jesus however told her that if she knew the gift of God and who it is that asked her for a drink, she would have asked him for "living water". She did not understand that Jesus meant the spiritual waters of life that would flood the souls of all who believe in Jesus when they receive the Holy Spirit (7:37-39, Isa 12:3, 55:1, Jer 2:13, 17:13, Rev 7:17), so answered that He has nothing to draw water with and asks if He was greater than Jacob, who drank from that well. Jesus then told her that the water He gives will become in her a *spring of water welling up to eternal life*. On hearing this, she asks for this water so she would not be thirsty or have to draw water again. Jesus told her to bring her husband to Him, exposing her sins, for she has had five husbands and now lived with one who is not married to her. The woman acknowledged Jesus as a prophet and diverted attention to the right place of worship. Jesus told her: - 1) "*the hour is coming*" (fulfilled in AD 70) when neither on mount Gerizim nor Jerusalem will people worship the Father, 2) salvation is of the Jews (Rom 3:2), 3) "*the hour is coming and is now here*" (i.e. at that very time), when true worshippers will "*worship the Father in spirit and in truth*"; and 4) God is Spirit and must be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth.

The woman, although a sinner, was hoping for Messiah. Jesus affirmed to her, "*I that speak unto thee am*

he.” At this point, His disciples returned and marvelled that He spoke with her, while she left her jar, went into town and told all the people of Jesus, so that many came out to Him.

#### 4:31-42 Jesus’ Meat is to do the will of Him that sent Him

*In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*

When His disciples asked Jesus to eat, He said that *His sustenance is to do the will of the Father* - to finish His work and do always the things that please Him (8:29).

4:35. “Say not ye, *There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?* The Jews’ barley and flax harvest is in March – April, (spring Passover); the wheat harvest is in May – June; the grape harvest in June – July; the olive harvest in July –August; and the citrus fruit harvest in February to March. Jesus refers to the wheat harvest (Ex 34:22, Deut 16:9 where “corn” = “standing grain”), *in four months*, placing this visit in January – February, about two months before the next Passover (5:1), and just after Purim in December (see 2:13).

*“Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.”* Jesus applies this to the harvest of souls that was *white*, i.e. fully ripe that it must be harvested right away. Others had sowed and Jesus’ disciples were about to reap. Many of the Samaritans from that city believed on Jesus due to the woman, and came to Jesus, asking Him to tarry longer. Jesus stayed two days and many more believed and declared that they knew that He is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

If we think of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and of how the Gospel reaches all races, tongues and nations: - In Christ, all, whether Gentiles and Jews are brought together in one unity or peace - “*unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*” (Eph 2:11-19)

## 4:43-54 RETURN TO GALILEE

### Second Miracle - Remote Healing of Boy at Capernaum from Cana

*Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.*

Jesus testified that “a prophet has no honour in his own country”. In Mt 13:57, Mk 6:4 and Lk 4:24, Jesus spoke these words in reference to Nazareth, where His family resided. Here, He referred to Jerusalem, where He did many miracles but was rejected by the rulers (cf. 1:11). In contrast, the Galileans who had also gone up to Jerusalem at the last Passover welcomed Him.

At Cana, a certain nobleman (related or connected to the king), when he heard that Jesus came into Galilee, came to Him and besought Him to come and heal his son, who was terminally ill. Jesus said to him, “Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.” In Greek, a strong double negative with aorist active subjunctive (*ou mê pisteusête*) picturing the stubborn refusal of people to believe in Christ without miracles. (Refer back to our study of 2:23-25.)

Note that unlike in Jerusalem, Jesus had done only one miracle in Galilee thus far. Cf. Mt 24:24, Mk 13:22, Act 2:19, 22, 43, 2 Thess 2:9, Heb 2:4 for true versus false “signs and wonders”.

4:49: The nobleman addressed Jesus as “Sir” or in Greek “Lord” (Κύριε) and implored Him in an imperative and urgent tense, to “come down” before his son dies.

4:50-51: Jesus said to him, “Go thy way; thy son liveth!” The man believed Jesus’ word and went his way, and as he was travelling down to Capernaum from Cana, his servants met him with the good news of the sudden recovery of his son. When he learnt that the recovery had taken place the day before at 1pm (7<sup>th</sup> hour), which was the same hour that Jesus had said to him, “Go thy way; thy son liveth!” the man believed in Jesus, as did his whole family.

This was the second miracle that Jesus did in Galilee – a most astonishing one, where He healed a boy from a remote distance, without even seeing him.

Jesus would later reside at Capernaum and do many miracles there (see note on 2:12). He would undertake one more intensive visit to Jerusalem, after which, He would undertake a long and extensive ministry throughout the Galilean region (see notes at 6:1-4).

## 5:1-47 SECOND PASSOVER VISIT TO JERUSALEM

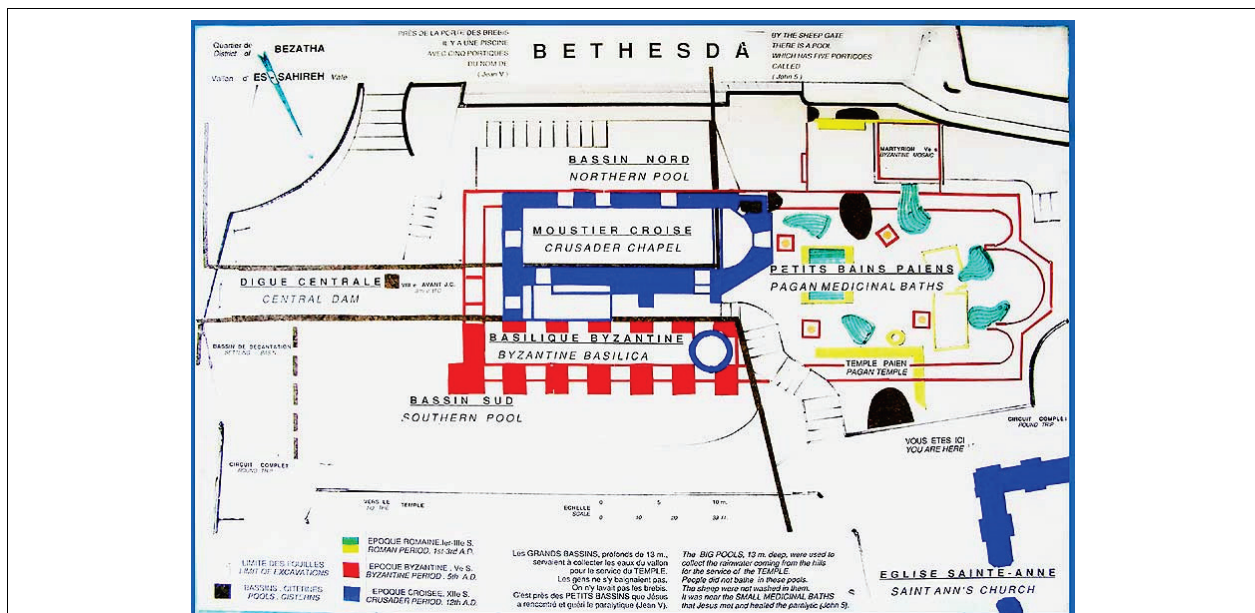
## 5:1-9 Third Miracle - Sabbath Healing of Man Paralysed 38 Years at Bethesda

*After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath.*

5:1: “*After this*” is a chronological marker (see notes on 3:22). This was Jesus’ second Passover ministry visit to Jerusalem; two months after His visit to Samaria (see notes on 2:13 and 4:35).

5:2: *there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool* - the present tense internally dates John’s Gospel to before AD 70. The pool in Aramaic is Bethesda or “house of mercy or grace”, which John distinguishes from the pool at Siloam (9:7-11).

## Bethesda Pool



Per Wikipedia: In 19<sup>th</sup> Century archaeological expeditions, Schick discovered a large tank situated about 100 feet north-west of St. Anne’s Church, which he identified as the Pool of Bethesda. Further excavations in 1964 discovered the remains of the Byzantine and Crusader churches, Hadrian’s Temple of Asclepius and Serapis, small healing pools of the Asclepieion, two other large pools and the dam between them. The Byzantine construction was built in the heart of Hadrian’s construction and contained the healing pools (drawing above), linked to the upper pool in the highway of the fuller’s field (Isa 7:3, 36:2, 2 Ki 18:17). The discovery shows that John’s Gospel reflects an accurate, detailed knowledge of the site, giving the name of the pool as Bethesda, its location near the Sheep Gate and its five porticos with rushing water - corroborated through literary-archaeological evidence.

5:3-4: A great multitude of impotent folk lay in the porches, testifying to the healing powers present. John attributes this to an angel (cf. 20:12). Modern versions omit the angel account. Although there were many in need, Jesus sought out just one lame man for physical healing.

5:5-9: The man was not born lame but had been so for 38 years. Jesus in compassion asked if he wished to be whole and then said, “*Rise, take up thy bed, and walk*”. The man was restored immediately, took up his bed and walked. This healing is reminiscent of another lame man lowered through the roof (Mt

9:2-6, Mk 2:3-12), who was also forgiven his sins. This is the third great miracle recorded in John.

### 5:10-16 Jews Hatred of Jesus for Healing on a Sabbath

*The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.*

5:10-16: This was the start of the Jews desire to kill Jesus; their hatred and persecution of Jesus stemming from His having healed on the Sabbath. (Jesus healed on any day of the week, wherever the multitude had needs). This hatred intensified in 5:16, 18, 7:19-23 and 9:14-16, so that Jesus skipped the following year's Passover visit to Jerusalem in 6:4, but went on the fourth Passover to meet His hour of death.

In the Jews' legalistic understanding, Jesus deserved to die for breaking the Sabbath law per Ex 20:8-11, 31:12-17, 35:2-3, Nu 15:32-36 and Dt 5:12-15. They however failed to understand the spiritual nature and context of the law. In Ex 20:8-11, the Lord blessed and hallowed the seventh day as a commemoration that God made the heaven and earth and the sea and all in it in six days, and ceased on the seventh day. In Deut 5:12-15, the Sabbath is further sanctified as a memorial to Israel of God's mighty deliverance from Egypt's bondage. In Ex 31:13, 17 and Ez 20:12-13, the Sabbath is a sign between God and the children of Israel throughout their generations. Not walking in God's statutes, Israel polluted God's Sabbaths by ironically rejecting their promised Hope and Messiah on account of it!

*"Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."* (Ex 31:13-17)

*"Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them. But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them."* (Ez 20:12-13)

Jesus on His part did not reiterate the Sabbath Commandment but stressed rather that: -

1. The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath Day (Mt 12:5-8. Mk 2:28, Lk 6:5);
2. It was lawful to do good on Sabbath days (and hypocritical to judge others who do so), (Mt 12:11-13, Lk 13:15, 14:5, Jn 7:22-23); and
3. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mk 2:23-28). Cf. Ps 92:1 *"(A Song for the Sabbath day)*. Cessation from one's labour, business and pleasure facilitates worship and rest, comes with a promise of spiritual feeding and blessing (Isa 58:13-14).

The Church is distinct from Israel (one day to be raptured away, leaving God to deal with the Jews during the final 70<sup>th</sup> week of Dan 9:24-27). We live not under the law but under grace and have the liberty to regard one day above another or all days alike (Rom 14:5). The early Christians worshipped on the first day of the week, the day of Jesus' resurrection (Mt 28:1, Mk 16:2, 9, Lk 24:1-10, Jn 20:1-2, 19-21). During Paul's seven-day visit to Troas, the disciples gathered to break bread on the first day of the week rather than on the preceding Sabbath (Act 20:6-7). The church in Corinth received collections on the first day of the week. This day is also called the Lord's Day (1 Cor 16:1-2, Rev 1:10). It is right and worthy to sanctify the Lord's Day for worship and rest, but free from all the Jews' legalistic burdens.

### 5:17-18 Jews sought to kill Jesus for claiming Equality with God

*But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.*

Jesus gives His defence for healing the lame on the Sabbath, based on His unity and equality in nature and operation with his Father, “*As the Father worketh, so I work.*” He is the Father’s fellow-worker in all the works of God – Creation, Providence and Preservation – up to that very point of time. God ceased from the work of Creation but has never ceased from His work of saving souls and being gracious and merciful to man. The Son of God is joined with and undivided from the Father, in all of God’s workings.

Because of this statement of defence, the Jews sought the more to kill Jesus, not only for “breaking the Sabbath” but now for also claiming equality with God.

### 5:19-23 Honour and Authority of the Son of God

*Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*

Jesus refers to Himself as “The Son”, in an absolute sense in relation to the Father, not denying but defending His equality with the Father (5:18). As Son, Jesus “*can do nothing by himself*” due to His intimate relation to the Father (5:30, 7:28, 8:28 & 14:10) “*unless He sees the Father doing something*” (Gk negative condition of “But what he seeth the Father doing”). In His work on earth, Jesus sees continually what the Father is doing and copies and follows the spirit and work of the Father. In healing this lame man, Jesus was doing what the Father was doing.

“The Father loveth” (φιλεῖ): the intimate friendship, fellowship with, and affection for the Son.

“Greater works (ἔργα miracles) than these will the Father show Him, that ye may marvel” (cf. 5:36; 7:3, 21; 10:25, 32 and 38). It is the Father who does these works (14:10).

“As the Father raises the dead, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.” Up to then, Jesus had not yet raised the dead. He would soon after raise the son of the widow of Nain, Jairus’ daughter and others (Lk 7:11-17, 22, 8:41-56, Mt 9:18-26, 11:5), including Lazarus (11:43-44). Jesus exercises this power on those “whom he wills”, quickening both body and soul.

“The Father hath given all judgement unto the Son” (cf. 3:35, 6:27, 29, 10:29, etc.) See the picture of Christ as Judge of men in Mt 25:31-46. “That all may keep on honouring the Son” - Jesus claims the same right to worship from men that the Father has. Dishonouring Jesus is dishonouring the Father who sent Him (cf. 8:49, 12:26, 15:23, 1 Jn 2:23, Lk 10:16).

### 5:24-30 He that hears the Son passes from death to everlasting life. Judgement is Jesus’

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

5:24: Very assuredly, he that hears Jesus words and believes on the Father that sent Him, “hath everlasting life” – has presently spiritual endless life. (cf. 3:36). He has passed from the state of spiritual

death into the state of spiritual life, and shall not come into judgement.

5:25: Very assuredly, the hour is coming, and now is (i.e. at that very time, in Jesus' presence, cf. 4:23) when the (spiritually) dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live spiritually, i.e. be born again, regenerated unto spiritual life.

5:26-27: The Father has this power of spiritual life in Himself and has given the same power of spiritual life to the Son (cf. 1:4), together with the power (authority) to execute judgement also.

5:28: Marvel not at this (fact that the Son has the power to grant spiritual salvation) for the hour is coming, in the which all that are (physically) dead, shall hear His voice and shall come forth (for judgement) – “they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” (Cf. Da 12:2 and Rev 20:4-6, 14)

5:29-30: Jesus reiterates that He could on His own self do nothing. His judgement is righteous (*dikaia*) because He judges plainly according to the voice of His Father that He always hears; for He does not seek His own will but always seek the will of the Father which has sent Him.

#### 5:31-40 Five Witnesses to Jesus

*If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*

5:31: In Greek, “If I alone and no other bear witness about myself, my witness is not deemed true.” Jesus is the first witness about Himself, but He is not alone, the only one bearing witness.

5:32: “There is another (*allos* i.e. another of the same rank and nature as Jesus, i.e. the Father), who bears witness about Jesus, and Jesus knows that the testimony that He bears is true. God the Father Himself bore witness of Jesus and is the second witness (5:37, 8:18).

5:33-35: John the Baptist also bore witness of Jesus, the third witness. Jesus did not need man's testimony but He acknowledged John for the sake of His hearers, that they may be saved. “John was” (indicating at this time that his ministry had already ended) a burning and shining lamp (cf. 2 Pet 1:19) and the Jews were willing to rejoice for a while in his light (cf. Mt 13:5, 20-21).

5:36: The testimony that Jesus has is greater than that of John the Baptist. The works (miracles) that the Father has given Jesus to accomplish; the very works that Jesus was then doing, that no one else can do, bear witness (the fourth witness) about Jesus that the Father had sent Him.

5:38-40: The Word of God, the Holy Scriptures bear witness of Jesus (fifth witness). The Jews did not have the Word abiding in them, as manifested in their unbelief toward Jesus. Jesus told them to search the Scriptures, for they think that in the Scriptures they have eternal life, and it is these very Scriptures which bear witness of Jesus, (cf. Gen 3:15, 12:3, 22:18, Nu 21:9, 24:17, 2 Sam 7:12-16, Isa 7:14, 9:6, 50:6, 52:13-53:12, 61:1, Jer 23:5, Dan 7:13, 14, 9:24-27, Mic 5:2, Zech 6:12, 9:9, 12:10, 13:7, Ps 22). Yet they had refused to come to Him to receive life.

Recap: The five witnesses for Jesus' Divine sending and authority are: - 1) Jesus Himself, 2) God the Father witnessing, 3) John the Baptist's witness, 4) The works and miracles that Jesus did, and 5) the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. All these bore witness of Jesus.

**5:41-47 Receive Glory from God only and seek not the Honour of Men**

*I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?*

5:41-43: Jesus does not seek men's vain glory and honour (cf. Mt 6:1-2, 1 Thess 2:6) for He loves the Father and seeks only His approval. Jesus knows the Jews experientially, that they did not have the love of God in them. He has come in His "Father's Name" – a term used in 5:43, 10:25, 12:28, 17:6, 11, 12 and 26 – and they rejected Him. If another had come in his own name (and pomp and glory), "that one" – false Messiahs and antichrist, the Jews will receive.

5:44: Jesus asked them, "*How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?*" True faith is prospered and engendered when we seek only the honour that comes from God alone.

5:45-47: In the final analysis, it would not be Jesus who will accuse them to the Father. The one that accuses the Jews is Moses, in whom they set their hope. They held on to Moses versus Jesus, hoping that Moses was still greater than Jesus, as their basis for rejecting Jesus. If they had really believe Moses, they would have believed Jesus for Moses wrote of Jesus (Deut 18:18). But if they do not believe Moses' writings, how shall they believe Jesus' words?

## 6:1-7:9 GALILEE MINISTRY

### 6:1-15 Fourth Miracle - Jesus Feeds Five Thousand Men

*After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.*

6:1: “*After these things*” is another chronological marker (see 3:22, 5:1).

At 4:3, Jesus had left Judea for Galilee, stopping enroute at Samaria for two days, which was about two months before His second Passover Jerusalem visit in 5:1, where the Jews sought to kill Him for healing on the Sabbath and for claiming equality with God (5:16-47). On His return, Jesus resumed an extensive Galilean ministry started in 4:43-54 (cf. Mt 4:12-20:17, Mk 1:14-10:32, Lk 4:14-9:31) and “*went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people*”. He is now ten or eleven months into this Galilean ministry, for a year had passed since the last Passover and a new Passover was nigh (6:4). Jesus would give Jerusalem, where they sought to kill Him, a miss this Passover, for His hour had not yet come (7:6, 30). He remains to minister in Galilee for another six months before visiting Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2). At the end of this extensive ministry, the Galileans too would reject Jesus (6:60-71).

At this time, John the Baptist had just been beheaded (he was imprisoned a year earlier ending his public ministry at 5:35). Jesus' disciples had just returned and reported to Him all that they had done. He takes them aside to a quiet place to rest for a while, setting the way for the miraculous feeding of five thousand, recorded also in Mt 14:12-21, Mk 6:29-44, Lk 9:9-17.

John's personal insights: - 1) it was to Philip that Jesus asked, “*Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?*” in order to test him; 2) it was Andrew who brought the lad with five loaves and two small fishes to Jesus, an indicator of faith in Jesus; 3) the five loaves were of barley, reminiscent of Elisha who fed one hundred sons of prophets with twenty loaves of barley during a famine and they had some left (2 Ki 4:42, 43). After five thousand men, not counting women and children, ate till they were full, twelve full baskets of leftover fragments of the five barley loaves were gathered! The people thus proclaimed Jesus as the prophet who was to come like unto Moses who had fed Israel with manna from heaven (Deut 18:15). (Jesus later repeated this miraculous feeding of four thousand (Mt 15:29-39, Mk 8:1-9.)

John also gives us Jesus' inner reason for departing into a mountain himself alone was because He “*perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king.*”

### 6:16-21 Fifth Miracle - Jesus Walks on the Sea of Galilee and Calms a Storm

*And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.*

Jesus made His disciples go first to the other side in a small boat (πλοῖαριον) while He sent the multitudes away (cf. Mt 14:22-34, Mk 6:45-53). Due to a great wind, the disciples made very slow headway; 25 or 30 furlongs (Gk *stadion* = 185 meters) i.e., 4.7 to 5.6 km, despite rowing until the fourth watch of the night (3-6am). In the dark, they were spooked by the shape of Jesus walking towards them, until He called to them whereupon, per Matthew, Peter then walked awhile on the water to Jesus until his faith failed. As they entered the boat, the wind ceased, amazing the disciples who then worshipped Jesus. Thereafter, they immediately at once (εὐθέως) landed at Gennesaret in the direction the boat was heading.

The Sea of Galilee is susceptible to sudden furious storms. One earlier occasion, the disciples caught in a storm, awoke Jesus, who rebuked the wind and calmed the sea, making them wonder what sort of man He was (Mk 4:35-41, Lk 8:22-25). The sea is small and lie 680 feet below sea level, surrounded by mountain cliffs that reach 2,000 feet high. The climate is warm and moist sub-tropical around the sea, and cold in the hills. These large temperature and pressure differences result in strong winds dropping to the sea, funnelling through the hills.

### 6:22-24 Place Where They Did Eat Bread

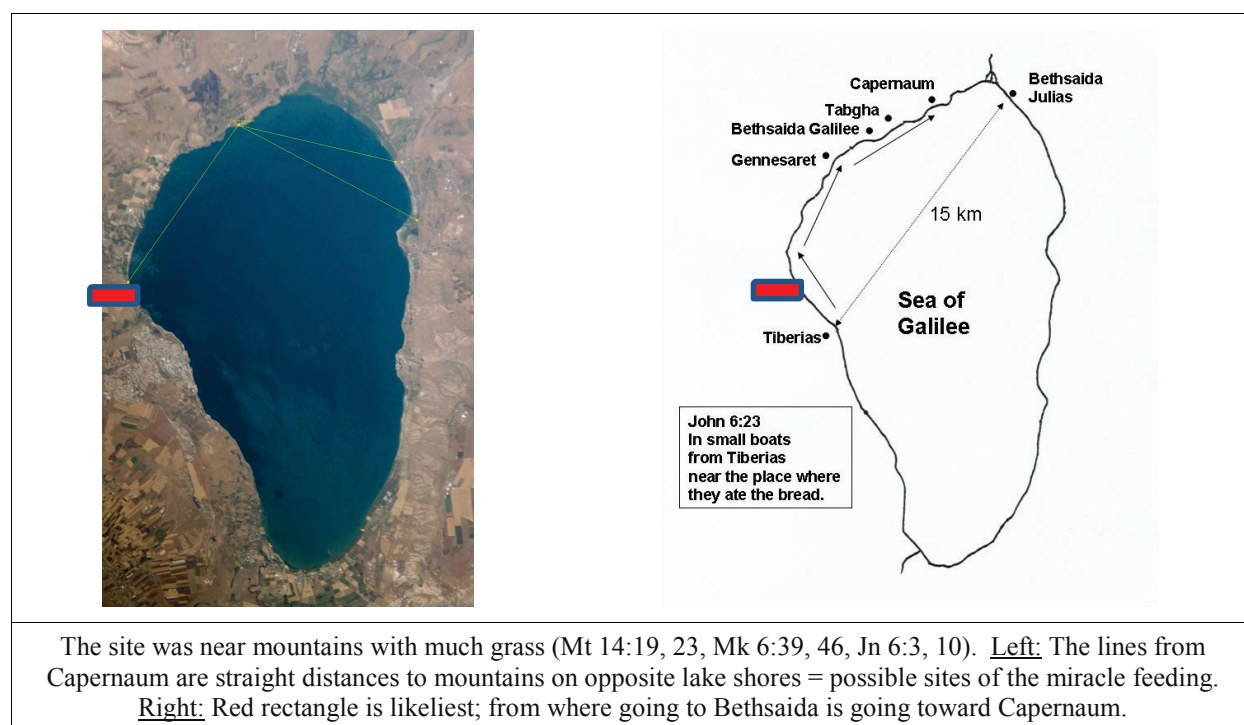
*The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone; (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks;) When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.*

The next day, the people did not find Jesus, whom they saw had not entered the disciples' boat. Others from Tiberias also returned in small boats, seeking Jesus, for the feeding was at a desert place belonging to Bethsaida, near Tiberias as the Sea of Galilee there was named.

*"Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias."* (Jn 6:1)

*"...went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida."* (Lk 9:10b)

On leaving there, his disciples "...get into the ship and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida." Mk 6:45. "...entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum." (Jn 6:17)



Bethsaida is city of Philip, Andrew and Peter (1:44, Mt 11:21, Mk 8:22, Lk 10:13). Two cities had this name: – 1) Bethsaida Julias on the east side of the lake two miles up the Jordan in the Gaulonitis region,

enlarged and re-named by Philip the Tetrarch, after the Emperor's daughter. From here however, news of the miracle was unlikely to reach Tiberias overnight by land or by the 15 km sea journey on a dark, windy night, and 2) Bethsaida Galilee (12:21), also known as Tabgha.

From a mountainous site (red rectangle in maps) between Tiberius and Gennesaret, the direction to Bethsaida Galilee is the same as that towards Capernaum. After rowing 4.7 - 5.6 km, the boat would be only halfway to Capernaum but near Gennesaret, where it landed (Mt 14:35, Mk 6:53).

### Sea of Galilee Boat Discovery

In 1986 on a low tide day, a boat was discovered buried in the shores of Gennesaret (Ginosar). This was carefully extricated and preserved. When independent carbon-dating results dated this 100BC to AD70, amazement went through the whole Jewish community there.



Left: The “Sea of Galilee Boat” in the Beit Yigal Allon Museum. Right: Full scale model outside the museum.

## 6:25-59 Teaching in the Synagogue at Capernaum

### 6:25-35 Eternal Bread of Life which the Son of Man Will Give

*And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*

6:25-27: Capernaum is where Jesus with His family settled for a time (see 2:12 notes). The people from the side of the sea where the miracle feeding took place finally found Jesus in the Capernaum synagogue, and asked Him when and how He came there. Jesus solemnly told them that the reason they sought Him is because of the filling (ἐχορτάσθητε aorist passive 2nd person plural) i.e. full satisfying of their hunger in the desert place, which is more real and personal than the miracles they had witnessed; and that physical satisfaction of hunger is temporal, so they should labour rather for the spiritual food that endures unto eternal life, which the Son of Man (a Messianic title; 3:13-14 note, 1:51, 5:27) will give unto them, for He alone had God the Father sealed (set His approval on) in order to give this gift eternal life.

6:28-29: These Galileans asked Jesus how to labour the works of God to gain this Eternal Bread. He told them that the work of God is simply to believe on the One Whom God had sent. Salvation is a free gift, not by the works of the law, but by grace alone, through faith!

6:30-33: They were unbelieving and preferred to labour for salvation by works. These Galileans, like their Judean brethren (2:28), *demand* for a sign revealing an adulterous heart per Mt 12:39, 16:4. Jesus had fed five thousand men with women and children but Moses had fed the entire population with manna from heaven. Jesus told them solemnly that it was not Moses who gave them the manna (Ex 16:15, Ps 78:24, Neh 9:15) but His Father, who presently gives them the true Bread from Heaven: He which comes down from heaven and gives life unto the world.

6:34-35: The people asked Jesus to evermore give them this bread, at which Jesus told them that He was that Bread of Life (cf. 41, 48, 51 and 58). Those that come to Him shall never hunger and those that believe on Him shall never thirst. Jesus satisfies all hunger and thirst! Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are blessed and shall be filled (Mt 5:6). The Psalmist wrote, “*As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*” (Ps 42:1)

### 6:36-46 Jesus knew they did not believe in Him

*But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.*

6:36-40: Jesus tells them that they had seen Him but did not believe in Him, and in the present tense, “*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*” The

foreknowledge and Sovereignty of Almighty God in salvation and the need to preach the Gospel are balanced. The Father is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9). Yet, we are to pray earnestly to the Lord of Harvest to send out labourers into His harvest (Mt 9:37-38, Lk 10:2). It is also the Father's will, who had sent Jesus (1:6, 5:19-23 notes), that of all which the Father had given to Him, He should lose not one but shall raise them again at the *last day* (also 40, 44 & 54). This *last day* is in the end of times when the dead in Christ are resurrected (1 Thess 4:16). It is the Father's will that everyone who sees and believes on the Son may have everlasting life.

6:41-45: They murmured at Jesus for saying He was the Bread from heaven for they were familiar with Jesus and with His parents, Joseph and Mary. Jesus reiterated, "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*" This was because "*It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*" Jesus cites Isa 54:13 and Jer 31:33-34. If they had hearts of flesh with the law of God in their hearts, they would have believed on Jesus and came to Him.

6:46: Jesus clarifies that no man has seen the Father except the Son, which is of God and has seen the Father (cf. 1:18, 3:32, 7:29 and 8:38).

#### **6:47-59 Jesus offers Himself again to them as the Bread of Life**

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.*

6:47-51: Jesus invites them again to believe in Him and offers Himself to them as the Bread of Life. He highlights to them that their fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and are dead. God had given the manna to humble and teach His people that "*man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD*" (Deut 8:2-3). In contrast, Jesus is the Living Bread which came down from heaven, which if any eats, he shall live forever! The Bread that Jesus gives is His own body, crucified on Calvary's cross, for the life of the world.

6:52-53: The Jews again disputed among themselves, saying, "*How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*" Jesus answered solemnly, "*Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*" "Eat" and "drink" are in aorist active second person plural – except they eat at least once, they have no life! This is the Gospel call to repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Mk 1:15, Act 20:21). To eat His flesh is to appropriate and internalise by faith Jesus' body crucified on Calvary as ours personally, and reckon ourselves thus dead with Him on the cross to sin and alive unto God. To drink His blood is to appropriate eternal redemption in the blood of our Passover Lamb (Heb 9:12. Cf. Ex 12:21-23, Eph 1:7, Col 1:14, Heb 9: 22).

6:54-56: Jesus now says, "*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*" "Eat" and "drink" here are in the present active, which speaks of a continual eating and drinking. The believer feeds on Jesus, our Source of eternal life, to be sustained, nourished and kept by His dying love. As Paul wrote, "*The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*" (Gal 2:20). This is because Jesus flesh is true food, and His blood is true drink. The one that continues to eat His flesh and drink His blood dwells or abideth in Jesus, and Jesus in him. This speaks of a continual mystical and intimate fellowship between Christ and the believer (see Jn 15:4-7).

6:57-58: Jesus was sent by the Father who hath life in Himself, and who had given the Son also to have life in Himself (5:26). In Jesus earthly body, He draws daily sustenance and life from the Father. Jesus thus says, *“As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”* Jesus again differentiates the true Bread – Himself, from the manna in the wilderness. This is the sign Jesus gives to the Jews who ask for proof of His superiority over Moses (Mt 12:39-40).

6:59: All these things, Jesus taught in the synagogue at Capernaum.

### 6:60-71 Many Disciples Turn Back, Leaving only the Twelve

*Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.*

6:60-63: Jesus divinely knew His followers murmured and found this a hard saying and He asked, *“What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not.”* Some of His disciples would later see Jesus ascend back to heaven (Act 1:9-11). Jesus speaks of spiritual things, which must be spiritually discerned (1 Cor 2:13-14).

6:64-69: Jesus knew from the beginning who believed not and who should betray him and He said, *“Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”* From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. When Jesus asked the twelve if they would also leave Him, Peter confessed, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

Cf. Mt 16:16-20, where Peter said, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”* and Jesus replied, *“Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* The disciples had confessed Jesus as the Son of God after He saved them in the boat on that stormy night following the feeding of the five thousand (Mt 14:33). Simon however was the first to receive this revelation that Jesus was the Promised Messiah to come, whereupon the Lord underscored the name He had given to him, “Peter”, a solid stone (1:42).

Per Mt 16, Jesus and His disciples had by this time withdrawn to Caesarea, Philippi, about 40 km north of Capernaum. The conversation ended with Jesus charging His disciples to “tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ” for “His hour” of public revelation as the Christ and King of the Jews as well as of His death on the cross, had not yet come. (cf. 12:12-23)

6:70-71: Jesus told them that one of them will betray Him, referring to Judas Iscariot.

### 7:1-9 The Feast of Booths At Hand / Jews Seek to Kill Jesus

*After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time*

*is not yet full come. When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.*

7:1: “*After these things*” is another chronological marker (see 3:22, 5:1, 6:1). After spending some time in the northern regions of Caesarea, Philippi, Jesus again walked in Galilee but would not walk in the land of the Jews (Judaea) where the Jews sought to kill Him, which has been the Jews progressive attitude since Jesus’ visit to Jerusalem in 5:18, some eighteen months before.

7:2: The Jews Feast of Tabernacle (Booths) was approaching. This lasts for eight days from the fifteenth day of the seventh month, six months after the Feast of the Passover. (Lev 23:5, 33-39)

7:3-9: “brethren” ἀδελφοί which can include and sisters, used in 2:12, 7:5, 10. Mt 12:46-47, 13:55, Lk 8:19. Jesus’ brothers are James, Joses, Simon and Judas. His sisters are not named.

Jesus’ own half-siblings then did not believe in Him. They had a difficult time when Jesus started His intensive Galilean ministry. Once, the people crowded Jesus till He and His disciples could not even eat, and the family tried to seize Him, fearing He had lost His mind. The scribes and Pharisees had also blasphemously said that He casts out demons by Beelzebub (Mt 9:34, 12:24, Mk 3:20-22, Lk 11:15) and Jesus was also rejected in His own towns, Nazareth and Capernaum, where the people knew His family (Mt 13:54-58, Mk 6:1-6, Lk 4:16-29). His siblings thus challenged Jesus to leave the Galilean countryside and go to Judaea, the seat of religious influence, to publicly manifest His works there. Jesus told them that His “*time had not come*” (cf. 2:4, 7:8, 30, 8:20) - the prophetic hour when He shall in fulfilment of the Scriptures (Dan 9:26, Zech 9:9) manifest Himself publicly as Messiah. (See 12:23, 27, 13:1, 16:32 & 17:1). Jesus told them to go on their own and at any time (2:13 notes) for the world cannot hate them, but it hates Jesus because He testifies about it that its works are evil. Jesus would not go up (publicly) for His time has not yet come, and He stayed on some days in Galilee.

## 7:10-10:21 JESUS VISITS JERUSALEM AT THE FEAST OF BOOTHES

### 7:10-23 Jesus Visits Jerusalem Incognito and appears in midst of the Feast

*But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews. Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?*

7:13-15: After His siblings had left, Jesus also went up despite knowing that the rulers in Jerusalem sought His life. He went discreetly and without public fanfare. At Jerusalem, the Jewish rulers were looking out for Jesus, while the people were divided; some saying He was a good man, others that He was a deceiver. None however dared speak openly of Jesus for fear of the rulers. In the midst of the Feast (the fourth day), Jesus went up publicly to the Temple and taught. The Jews were amazed that He did and were also amazed at His teaching (cf. 7:46). Despite “having never learned” i.e. from the rabbinical theological schools in Jerusalem, Jesus yet far surpassed all the rabbis in the literary, didactic teaching of the Word of God.

7:16-18: Jesus tells them that His teaching was not his own but the Father’s that sent Him. “*If any man’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether Jesus is speaking from His own self.*” One that speaks of his own self is seeking his own glory, while he that seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and is without falsehood.

7:19-20: The Jews “relied on” Moses Law to accuse Jesus. Jesus points out to them that Moses had given them the Law and yet not one of them keeps the Law, and thus asks, “*Why do you seek to kill me?*” (7:11-13). The crowd, including many pilgrims who may not know the rulers’ intent, accused Jesus of being demon-possessed and asked who was seeking to kill Him.

7:21-23: Jesus did one work, healing a man lame 38 years at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem 18 months earlier (5:2-18). Circumcision was not part of the Ten Commandments, and Moses had made it a law based on God’s covenant with Abraham (Lev 12:3, Gen 17:10-12). The Jews did not regard it a breach of the Sabbath to circumcise a male child of eight days in order to present the child whole, but yet were mad and full of bitter spleen *χολᾶτε* (from bile, gall) against Jesus for making a man every whit (with all his members) whole on the Sabbath.

### 7:24 “Judge Righteous Judgement”

*Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*

Jesus tells the Jews to *judge not by appearances* but to judge with *righteous judgement*. Jesus was not telling the people not to judge at all, but to judge in a right way.

“Judge” κρίνετε imperative present active from κρίνω:- 1. Separate, distinguish, select, prefer in esteem (Rom 14:5); 2. Think, consider, look upon (Lk 7:43, Ac 4:19, 13:46, 16:15, 26:8, 1 Cor 11:13, 2 Cor 5:14; 3. Reach a decision, propose, intend (Act 3:13, 16:4, 20:16, 21:25, 27:1, 1 Cor 2:2, 5:3, 7:37, Rom 14:13; 4. As a legal term of human or divine courts, to decide, condemn, sentence (Mt 5:40, 7:1, Lk 19:22, Jn 5:30, 7:51, 18:31, Act 13:27, 17:31, 23:3, 25:9, 26:6, Rom 2:16-27, 1 Cor 5:12, 6:2, 6, 2 Ti 4:1, Jas 2:12, 1 Pet 1:17, Rev 6:10, 20:12. Condemn, punish (Jn 3:17, 12:47, 16:11, Rom 2:12, 1 Cor 11:31,

Heb 10:30, Rev 18:8); 5. Pass judgment on, express an opinion about (Mt 7:1-2, Lk 6:37, Jn 7:24, 8:15); Find fault with, condemn (Rom 2:1, 3, 14:3, 10, 13, 22, 1 Cor 4:5, 10:29, Col 2:16, Jas 4:11).

“*Appearance*” ὁφρως means by outward appearance or on the face of things, i.e. superficially.

“*Righteous*” δικαίαν; of model citizens in the Graeco-Roman world; Upright, just, right (Mt 10:41, 13:43, Mk 6:20, Rom 1:17, 5:7, Heb 12:23, 1 Jn 3:7). Law-abiding (1 Ti 1:9). Honest, good, just (Mt 1:19). Of God and Christ just, righteous, upright, fair (Jn 17:25, Act 7:52, 2 Tim 4:8). The rule of law is the basis of right judgement. There are two aspects of law, substantive and procedural.

Substantive law deals with the substance of truth and comprises the body of statutory and written rules that determine the rights and obligations of individuals and collective bodies. The Ten Commandments is an example of substantive law (Ex 24:12, Mal 4:4).

Procedural Law governs the process by which courts hear and conduct proceedings (that determines and applies substantive law) in fairness and without fear or partiality. These rules, collectively the rules of natural justice, includes: - 1) at least two witnesses for a conviction, 2) having the accusers present to state their accusations and provide their evidence, and allowing the accused the full opportunity to defend himself, 3) diligent inquisition by the judges and the indictment of false witnesses, and 4) appeal to a higher authority. (Deut 1:16-17, 17:6, 19:15-19, Lev 19:15, Zech 7:9, Jn 7:51, Act 23:30, 24:19, 25:16.)

Jesus Christ is the Sceptre of Righteousness and Law, Who shall bring in everlasting righteousness and make the (rule of) law honourable (Ps 119:142, Is 42:1-3, 21).

#### 7:25-31 The People wonder, “Can this be the Christ?”

*Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?*

7:25-27: Some Jerusalem Jews who knew their rulers’ intent but were not familiar with Jesus’ appearance, spoke scornfully of their rulers and of Jesus, “*This is not the man whom the rulers seek to kill, is it? The rulers say nothing unto him. It cannot be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ, could they?*” They disdained Nazareth and reasoned that “this man” could not be Christ for they were confident they knew where He was from. Perhaps they speculated that Messiah would drop from nowhere upon the Temple, as Satan had proposed that Jesus did from its pinnacle (Mt 4:5-6).

7:28-29: In the Temple as He taught, Jesus proclaimed in a louder, solemn, witnessing tone, “*You know Me and you know where I come from? But I have not come of my own accord (5:43, 8:42). He who sent me is true (8:26) and Him you do not know (4:22, 8:19, 55, 15:21). I know Him (8:55, Mt 11:27), for I come from Him (1:14 6:46, 9:16, 33) and He sent me (3:17).*”

7:30-31: They were seeking to arrest Jesus but no man laid hands on Him because His hour was not yet come (7:6, 8:20). Yet many of the people believed on Him (2:23, 8:30, 10:42, 11:45, 12:11, 42, Mt 21:11). And they said, “When the Christ shall come, will He do more miracles than those which this man hath done?” “Hath done” = first aorist active indicative of *poieô*, a timeless constative aorist summing up all the miracles of Jesus so far (cf. Mt 12:23).

#### 7:32-36 Chief Priests and Pharisees send Officers to Arrest Jesus

*The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves,*

*Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?*

7:32: At the beginning of the Feast, the crowds were whispering about Jesus. They progressively became more vocal, and now were muttering their views, with an increasing number positive about Jesus. This caused the Pharisees, who were most critical of Jesus, to enlist the chief priests, who were mostly Sadducees, and together, send the temple officers to arrest Jesus.

7:33-34: Jesus then said, *“I will be with you a little longer”*, for six months later would be the final Passover of His ministry (cf. 12:35, 13:33, 14:19 & 16:16-19). *“And then I am going to Him who sent me”* (16:5). *“You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.”* (Cf. 8:14, 21, 13:3, 33, 36, 14:4-5, 28, 15:16, 16:4, 7, 10 & 17).

These words were enigmatic to the Jews. In addition, earlier, Jesus had taught, *“Seek and ye shall find”* (Mt 7:7). Now they were seeking to kill Jesus, then they will seek Him for deliverance, but it will be too late and they would not find Him. He was going back to His eternal spiritual home, in absolute, eternal being and fellowship with the Father, and there, the Jews cannot go. This fellowship was beyond the comprehension of these hostile Jews.

7:35-36: The Jews speculated among themselves where Jesus intended to go that they will not find him, wondering if this was to the Jewish Diaspora (cf. Jas 1:1, 1 Pet 1:1, Isa 11:12, Zeph 3:10) who became Hellenists, and teach them (cf. 12:20, Act 6:1). But if so, what did Jesus mean by, *“You will seek me and you will not find me”* and *“Where I am you cannot come.”*?

### 7:37-39 Rivers of Living Water

*In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*

7:37: The eighth day of Sukkoth, the Last Great Day, is a holy convocation and a Sabbath (Lev 23:36, 39). It is the last feast day of the Jewish year, and distinguished by very remarkable ceremonies. Per Hermann Olshausen (1796-1839) *“The generally joyous character of this feast broke out on this day into loud jubilation, particularly at the solemn moment when the priest, as was done on every day of this festival, brought forth, in golden vessels, water from the stream of Siloah, which flowed under the temple-mountain, and solemnly poured it upon the altar, singing Isa 12:3, With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation, and thus the symbolical reference of this act, intimated in Jn 7:39, was expressed.”*

Zech 14:16-19 prophesied that every one left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem (during Armageddon) shall go up every year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and keep the Feast of Booths. Upon all the families of the earth that fail to do so, there shall be no rain.

In the context, Jesus having stood up (picture all eyes upon Him who had wrought miracles and spoke like no other), cried out, *“If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink!”*

What an offer! The deepest cravings of the human spirit are, as in the Old Testament, expressed by the figure of *“thirst,”* and the eternal satisfaction of them by *“drinking.”* (cf. 4:13-14). In Galilee, Jesus had invited all the weary and heavy laden to come to Him that they should find rest (Mt 11:28). At Capernaum, Jesus had offered Himself as the Bread of Life. Now publicly in the streets of the great religious capital, and in language of surpassing majesty and grace, Jesus offers Himself as living waters, echoing Isa 55:1, *“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”*

7:38: Jesus went on, *“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart will flow rivers*

*of living water.*” This was an open invitation to all, whosoever would believe on Him. The Scripture references here may include Is 12:3, 55:1, 58:11, Ez 47:1, Zech 13:1, 14:8, Joel 3:18. The waters flow out of his belly i.e. heart or innermost being (Pro 18:4, 20:27).

7:39: This fountain of living waters is the Holy Spirit (Isa 44:3, 1Cor 12:13, Gal 3:14), whom those that believe on Jesus should receive (Joel 2:28, Lk 24:49, Jn 1:33, 20:22, Act 2:16-18). The Holy Ghost was not yet given then (Act 2:4, 33. cf. Lk 11:13, Jn 3:34) for Jesus was not yet glorified (cf. 14:16-17, 16:7).

#### 7:40-53 Division among the People / Nicodemus Speaks Out for Jesus

*Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him. And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him. Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.*

7:40-42: Many who heard Jesus were convinced that He was the Prophet (Deut 18:5). Others, more convinced, said He was the Messiah of God. Yet others, sceptical, said, “Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scriptures said that Christ comes of the seed of David, and from the village of Bethlehem where David was from?” These did not judge righteously by first finding out whether Jesus had been in Bethlehem and was of David’s seed (1 Sam 16:1, Ps 89:3, 4, Mic 5:2, Mt 1:1, 2:1, 5, Lk 2:4).

7:43-44: The result was a clear split among the people. Some were wishing to seize Jesus but no man actually laid hands on Him.

7:45-49: The officers returned to the chief priests and Pharisees empty handed, who said to them, “*Why have you not brought Him?*” The officers could only haplessly answer, “*Never man spake like this man*” to which the Pharisees retorted contemptuously.

7:50-52: Nicodemus (3:1-9) stood up for Jesus and said, “*Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?*” referring to the procedural law (Deut 1:16, 17:6, 19:15). The Pharisees ignored Nicodemus and his plea for the just requirements of the Law, and also answered him contemptuously, as like one from Galilee.

#### 8:1-11 The Woman Caught in Adultery

*And every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.*

[This Pericope de Adultera is omitted in modern versions but clearly authentic, taking place on the morning after the Last Great Day of Succoth.]

7:53-8:1: Every man went unto his own house. Jesus had nowhere to lay His head (Mt 8:20, Lk 9:58) and went to the Mount of Olives, where the “place” Gethsemane (Mt 26:36, Mk 14:26-32, Lk 22:39-40) and Bethany on its eastern slope, the town of Lazarus, Martha and Mary (Mt 21:17, Mk 11:1-12, Lk

19:24-50/Act 1:12), were situated. He could not lodge in Jerusalem, where the rulers sought His life, yet He continued ministering to the people there for more days.

8:2-8: Jesus came to the Temple early in the morning (the people also came early, Lk 21:37-38). As He sat down, taking His place and begun to teach them, the scribes and the Pharisees vividly led to Jesus a woman seized and overtaken (perfect passive participle of *katalambanō*, cf. Mk 9:18, Jn 1:5, 12:35) in adultery, and set her *in the midst* where all could see, and declared to Jesus that she had been caught in the very act of adultery and that Moses in the Law commanded that such be stoned (Lev 20:10, Deut 22:22-24, Ez 16:38, 40), “*but what sayest thou?*”

8:9-11: As they have special courts for such cases, their clear motive was to entrap Jesus to have a basis to continue accusing Him (Mt 12:10, 16:1, 19:3, 22:18, 35, Mk 8:11, 10:2, 12:15, Lk 10:25, 11:16, 54). But Jesus stooped down (Gk, to bow the head / bend forward cf. 8:8, Mk 1:7) and with His finger started to write on the ground, as though not hearing them. Inwardly, He must have been grieved. They continued asking. Jesus lifted Himself up and citing Deut 17:7, said, “*Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her*” (Rom 2:1, 22). He then stooped down again and resumed writing on the ground. When they heard this, their consciences were pricked, and one by one starting with the eldest, they left, till finally Jesus alone was left, with the woman still standing *in the midst*.

Once again, Jesus’ detractors were confounded by the Wisdom of Jesus’ replies to their trap questions (cf. Mt 22:15-46 where He answered the Herodians, Sadducees and Pharisees by turn).

Jesus stood up and addressing the woman, asked where her accusers had gone, “*Hath no man condemned thee?*” She replied, “*No man, Lord*”, addressing Jesus, “*Lord*” (cf. 4:49). At this, Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go and from now, sin no more!” This is typical of Jesus (3:17, 5:14 & 8:15). He said the same to the lame man healed at Bethesda, “**sin no more!**”

*When I survey the wondrous cross, On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God!  
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.*

*See from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet, Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

### 8:12-20 Jesus is The Light of the World

*Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.*

8:12: Jesus addressed the people, again, on another time, “*I am the Light of the world!*” (1:4, 9, Ps 36:9, Isa 42:6, 49:6, Mal 4:2). “*Whoever follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life.*” (12:26, 35, 21:19). This is the second “I AM” claim in John (see 6:35).

8:13-14: The Pharisees again decried Jesus’ claims as being based on His own witness. In 5:31-47, Jesus had answered this charge, demonstrating that He had five witnesses of Himself. Now He says that even if He alone bore record of Himself, His record is true because He knew absolutely (οἶδα) where He came from and where He was going, whereas they in contrast, had no similar assured knowledge of the same.

8:15-18: Jesus told them that they judged according to the flesh (σάρκα) but He judged no one in that manner (Isa 11:3-5). And yet, if He judged, His judgment is true for He was not alone but He and the Father that sent Him are judging in unison (5:30, 8:29 & 16:32). It is written in their Law that the testimony of two are true (Deut 17:6, 19:15, Nu 35:30, Mt 18:16). Jesus bears witness of Himself and the Father that sent Him also bears witness of Jesus.

8:19-20: They therefore asked, “Where is your Father?” to which Jesus answered, “You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” (8:55, 14:7, 16:3)

8:20: Jesus spoke these words in the treasury (Mt 27:6) as He taught in the temple, but no one arrested him, because His hour had not yet come (7:7, 30).

### 8:21-30 The Jews’ Dark Incomprehension

*Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. As he spake these words, many believed on him.*

8:21-24: Jesus again said to them (cf. 8:12) i.e. on another time, “I am going away,” (14:2-3, 28, 16:7), “and you will seek me and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.” (8:24, Ez 3:18, 33:8). So the Jews said, “Will he kill himself, since He says, “Where I am going, you cannot come?” (7:34-36 notes). Jesus told them that they are from below, of this world, while He is from heaven above, not from this world (3:31, 17:14, 16, 1 Jn 4:5). They would die in their sins, unless they believe that Jesus Am He (Deut 32:39, Isa 43:10).

8:25-26: On hearing Jesus’ astonishing claim to deity, they asked Him, “Who are you?” Jesus replied that He was who He had been telling them that He was from the beginning. He had much to say about them and much to judge, but He who sent Him is true and Jesus declared to the world what He has heard from Him” (3:32-33, 7:28, 8:40, 15:15, 18:20).

8:27-30: They did not understand that Jesus had been speaking to them about the Father so Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I Am He, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me” (3:14, 5:30, 7:16, 12:32, 34, 16:8-11). Jesus spoke of His cross to come, after which many of the Jews at Jerusalem would understand that He is the Son of Glory (Act 2:37-41). Jesus furthermore told them that the One who sent Him is with Him. He has not left Jesus alone for He always does the things that are pleasing to Him (4:34, 5:30, 6:38 & 16:32).

8:30: As Jesus spoke these words, many of the Jews believed Him. (cf. 7:31).

### **8:31-36 True Discipleship - The Truth Shall Make You Free**

*Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

8:31-36: To those who believed in Him, Jesus told them that continuance in His Word is the proof of genuine discipleship, and as they do this, they will know γινώσθε the truth experientially, and the truth shall set them truly free, especially from the bondage of sin.

The unbelieving Jews that heard these words reacted strongly, protesting that they are Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to sin, like the Gentile heathen and thus did not need to be “*made free*”. Jesus replied solemnly that everyone who practices sin is a slave δοῦλός of sin, i.e. is in reality actually in bondage to sin. Such a person does not remain in Abraham's house forever. The Son in contrast remains forever and if the Son therefore shall make them free, they shall be truly free and set at liberty!

### **8:37-40 Following Abraham's Example**

*I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.*

8:37-40: Jesus said He knows that they were descendants of Abraham but they sought to kill Him because His word found no place in them. Jesus spoke the truth to them faithfully from His Father, while they do what they learnt with their “spiritual father”, seeking to kill Him. They were not walking in the steps of Abraham as His true spiritual heirs (Rom 4:12, Gal 3:7).

### **8:41-45 The Deeds of their father, the Devil**

*Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.*

8:41-45: When Jesus points out that they do the deeds of their father, they protested that they were not illegitimate, inadvertently admitting their sin in seeking to kill Jesus. They also lied when claiming God as their Father. Jesus told them that if God were their Father, they would love Him for He proceeded and came from God; not from His own accord but the Father had sent Him. The reason they could not understand His words was because their real spiritual father was the Devil, whose lusts, hatred and lies (of which Satan is the father), they followed. Jesus told them the truth and they did not believe Him.

### **8:46-51 He that Honours the Father Honours the Son**

*Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's*

*words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.*

8:46-51: None of them could convict Jesus of any sin ἁμαρτίας (Heb 4:15). Seeing that He says the truth, why could they not believe Him? He that is of God hears God's words, and since they hear not God's words, they are clearly not of God. The Jews try to turn the tables on Jesus by accusing Him of being a Samaritan and demon-possessed. Jesus calmly tells them that He has no demon. He honours the Father but they dishonour Him. Jesus does not seek His own glory but the Father Himself seeks Jesus' glory and judges (5:23, 41, 7:18). Jesus solemnly tells them that if any person keeps His saying, he shall never see death (5:24, 11:26, Lk 2:26).

#### **8:52-59 Jesus is Greater than Abraham / He is the Great "I AM"**

*Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*

8:52-53: The Jews now more strongly accuse Jesus of having a devil. They challenge Him since Abraham and the prophets were dead (Zech 1:5), while Jesus says if a person keeps His saying, he shall never taste of death, "Are you greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?"

8:54: Jesus told them that if He glorifies Himself (by telling them who He is really was) this glory is nothing. It is His Father who glorifies Him, of whom they say that "He is our God".

8:55: They have not known Him experientially οὐκ ἐγνώκατε but in contrast, Jesus knows οἶδα Him fully and intimately. If He should tell them that He did not know the Father fully, He would be a liar like them, but He knows the Father and keeps His saying.

8:56-57: Jesus then told them, "Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad" (Mt 13:17, Heb 11:13). On hearing this, the Jews said that Jesus was not yet fifty years old and asked, "Has thou seen Abraham?"

8:58-59: Jesus replied solemnly to them that before Abraham came into existence, "I AM" ἐγώ εἰμι – the exact phrase and Name by which God revealed Himself to Moses in Ex 3:14.

The Jews fully understanding Jesus' statement took up stones to stone Him. Jesus hid Himself and went out of the Temple through their midst and so passed by out of their hands. His time had not yet come and three months later, He would make another similar escape (10:39).

## 9:1-41 Sixth Miracle - Sabbath Healing of a Man born Blind in Jerusalem

### 9:1-7 “Go Wash in the Pool of Siloam!”

*And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.*

9:1: *As Jesus passed by*; after He escaped, passing through the midst of the Temple crowd; He saw this man blind from birth. This is a Divine pre-ordained event for the glory of God.

9:2: His disciples asked, “Rabbi, *who sinned, this man or his parents* that he was born blind?” A similar sentiment is expressed of the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with the sacrifices, and the eighteen killed by the falling tower of Siloam (Lk 13:2, 4). This sentiment of the Jews (9:34) is perhaps a misplaced reading of Ex 20:5 that God shall “*visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me*”; which has spiritual rather than physical implications, for if a man worships idols, his descendants down to his great grandchildren would follow likewise.

9:3: While disease can result from personal acts of sin (cf. Jn 5:14, Rom 1:27), Jesus declared that in this case, it was neither but rather for God’s purpose that the works of God may be made evident in this man born blind (cf. the death of Lazarus in 11:4).

9:4-5: Jesus had just escaped the Jews’ attempt to stone Him but was willing to stop to help the blind man. He says that He must work the works of His Father that sent Him while it is day: night is coming when no man can work (cf. 4:34, 7:33, 11:9-10, 12:35). There is urgency for He has only six months left. As long as Jesus was in the world, He was the Light of the World (1:4, 5, 9, 3:19, 8:12. Cf. Rom 13:12)

9:6-7: Healing of the blind is Messianic (Ps 146:8, Isa 29:18, 35:4-5, 42:7, 16, 18). There is no account of such healing in the OT. Only Messiah, when He comes, can restore sight. Yet this healing of the blind is among Jesus most frequent miracles (Mt 9:27-30, 12:22, 15:30-31, 20:30-34, 21:14, Mk 8:22-25, 10:46-52, Lk 7:21-22, 18:35)! Truly Jesus is the Light of the World!

This is the first healing of a man born blind, who had never from birth known physical light! In this instance, Jesus did not simply touch his eyes or command them to be opened, but spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle with which He then anoint his eyes (likened to a creative act of making eyes out of the clay per Gen 2:7.) The Divine design is for the man to testify to the Jews and their rulers for the glory of God. Jesus simply then told him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (Heb. Shiloah, which means “Sent”), a double impregnation of meaning. Jesus sent out this blind man as the Father hath sent Him!



No promise of healing was made but the blind man obeyed anyway, walking to the Pool of Siloam. Picture each step he took in his blindness, as hope welled in his breast, with the excitement of faith rising with each step that he took, on Jesus’ instructions. When he got there, he washed and came back seeing.

### Pool of Siloam Excavation

(בריכת השילוח *Breikhat Hashiloah*) is a rock-cut pool on the southern slope of the City of David, the original site of Jerusalem, located outside the walls of the Old City to the southeast. The pool was fed by the waters of the Gihon Spring, carried there by two aqueducts.

Isa 8:6, 22:9 mentions the waters of the pool and the construction of Hezekiah’s tunnel. A 5<sup>th</sup> Century Byzantine re-modelling of a nearby pool by the Empress Aelia Eudocia partly survives, surrounded by a high wall of stones on all sides, except for an arched entrance to Hezekiah’s tunnel, re-discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Ancient records report of a *lower pool* there during the Second Temple period. In autumn

2004, Ir David Foundation workers excavating for a sewer nearby, uncovered stone steps. Excavations in 2005 by archaeologists Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron confirmed these to be part of the Second Temple period pool. The pool is less than 70 yards from the edge of the small Byzantine reconstructed pool, which collected some of the water as it emptied at the southern end of Hezekiah's tunnel. The water continued on through a channel into the recently re-discovered Pool of Siloam; its source the Gihon Spring at the northern end of Hezekiah's tunnel on the eastern side of the City of David. The lower pool is a soft trapezoid-rectangle. There are three sets of five steps, two leading to a platform, before the bottom is reached, designed to accommodate various water levels. The pool is stone lined, but underneath is evidence of an earlier version which was merely plastered to help it retain water. Coins found within this plaster date from Alexander Jannaeus (104-6 BC) and the time of the Great Revolt (AD 66-70).

	
Jerusalem with the Temple Mount and the City of David, with excavations (B) on its west side and the edge of the Pool of Siloam (A).	City of David Shiloach Pool, 2007 picture by Daniel Ventura

### 9:8-12 Commotion Following the Healing

*The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.*

The blind man's neighbours and those who had seen him before were astonished. Some did not believe it was really him until he said that he was. They thus asked how his eyes were opened and he narrated to them what had happened. They asked where Jesus was but he did not know.

### 9:13-23 Consternation of the Pharisees and Confirmation of the Healing Miracle

*They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.*

9:13-17: They brought him to the Pharisees. It was the Sabbath when Jesus opened his eyes, dismaying

and consternating the Pharisees. Some were angry that Jesus had healed on a Sabbath (5:10-16 notes) but all knew that a sinner could not do such a miracle! It was going to be very difficult to account for this and thus the Jews were split among themselves! (7:43, 10:19). They transferred the onus to the blind man to declare his view, to which he replied, "He is a prophet."

9:18-23: The Jews stubbornly disbelieved he had been blind and calling for his parents, shrewdly put 3-in-1 questions to them, "Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How doth he now see?" The parents answered the first two, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind", undercutting their grounds of unbelief. Of the third, they transferred the onus to their son "He is of age, ask him." They were not witnesses of the cure and were afraid of the Jews' compact that whoever confesses ὁμολογήσῃ Jesus to be Christ would be put out of the synagogue (12:42).

Confession of Jesus as Lord before men is the test of discipleship and denial of the same, the disproof of it. (Mt 10:32-33, Lk 12:8-9, Jn 16:2, cf. Rom 10:9)

### 9:24-34 Final Testimony before the Pharisees

*Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.*

9:24: The Pharisees called the blind man again and said unto him, "Give glory to God" - not a call of gratitude as in Lk 17:18 but an adjuration to speak the truth as if he had not been doing so (Jos 7:19, 1 Sam 6:5 & Jer 13:16), "*We know that this man is a sinner.*"

9:25: The man answered plainly - of their allegation that Jesus was a sinner, he had no absolute knowledge οὐκ οἶδα but only one thing he absolutely knows ἐν οἶδᾶ, "*being blind, I now see*".

9:26-29: The Jews asked him a second time how Jesus healed his blindness, leading to a ridiculous situation. He maintained what he had already told them and they reviled him as Jesus' disciple whereas they claimed they were Moses' disciples, pitting Moses against Jesus (5:45-47 notes), whom they spoke disdainfully of, "*As for this fellow, we know even not where he comes from.*" cf. 7:27, 8:14.

9:30-33: The man was grieved by their hardness of heart (cf. Jn 12:37-41 citing Isa 6:10, 53:1) and put their premise entirely back to them, "*Now we know that God heareth not sinners*" (Job 27:9, Ps 66:18, Isa 1:15, 59:2, etc.), "*Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.*"

9:34: The man had scored with terrific power in use of Scripture and logic, leaving the Pharisees hapless without answer. They thus resorted to the ad hominem argument by attacking the man personally, "*Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?*" and then cast him out.

### 9:35-41 The Healed Man's Conversion

*Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.*

9:35-38: The crowd would have talked about this amazing blind man and how he was cast out. When this came to Jesus' ears, He sought for and found the man and tenderly comforted him, "*Do you believe in the Son of God?*" (1:34, 49, 3:18, 5:25, 6:69, 10:36, 11:4, 27, 19:7, 20:31). The man was fully ready and answered, "*Who is he Lord κύριε that I might believe on Him?*"

Jesus told him that he had seen him – amazing for one hitherto blind all his life - and it is He that presently talks with him (cf. 4:26). At this, he said, "*Lord, I believe*" and he worshipped Jesus.

9:39-40: Jesus said for judgement, He came into the world (5:22) that they which see not might see (Mt 11:25, Lk 4:18, 10:21) and they which see might be made blind (Mt 9:13, 13:13, Mk 4:12). Some of the Pharisees heard these words and said to Jesus, "*Are we also blind?*" In their conscience they knew Jesus referred to them, as He had in the past also referred to them as blind guides (Mt 15:14, 23:16) for they were morally blind.

9:41: Jesus replied, "*If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.*" Had they been blind, they would not have guilt. But in their case, they arrogantly sin against the light of truth and the Holy Spirit (cf. 15:22-25, Mt 12:31, Mk 3:29). They witness against themselves of their culpability and thus their guilt remains (cf. Mt 23:31).

## 10:1-21 The Good Shepherd

### 10:1-6 Proverb of the Door and the Shepherd

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.*

10:1-2: “*Verily, verily*” signals a continuation of 9:41. Jesus was replying to the Pharisees, “...*but now ye say, ‘We see’, therefore your sin remaineth. Verily, verily, I say unto you...*”

The Pharisees regarded themselves as those who “see”; the guides and shepherds of the people. Jesus tells them solemnly that a real shepherd enters by the Door. Jesus is that Door (cf. 14:6), which the Pharisees however refuse to enter by; and are thus not genuine shepherds with hearts for the sheep, but thieves and robbers, spiritually harming the sheep. They “*climbeth up some other way*”, trying to earn their own righteousness rather than submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God (Rom 10:3-4).

10:3-4a: The one that enters in by the Door is a true shepherd. The porter opens to him and the sheep hear his voice. He calls each sheep by name, and after he leads *all* of them out without missing a single one, he goes in front and before them. This is the heart of a true shepherd who cares for each of his flock, so that if one out of a hundred goes missing, he would leave the 99 and seek for that lost one sheep (cf. Mt 9:36, 18:12-14, Lk 15:4-6, Jn 21:15-17).

10:4b-5: The sheep on their part follow him for they know his voice. They will not follow the voice of strangers but will flee from them. Leon Morris cites H V Morton, “In the steps of the Master, London 1935, p155, “Early one morning I saw an extraordinary sight not far from Bethlehem. Two shepherds had spent the night with their flocks in a cave. The sheep were all mixed together and the time had come for the shepherds to go in different directions. One of the shepherds stood some distance from the sheep and began to call. First one, then another, then four or five animals ran towards him; and so on until he had counted his whole flock.”

10:6: Jesus spoke to the Pharisees in this allegorical parable form, but they did not understand experientially the meaning. Certainly they did not know what it was to have a shepherd’s heart, otherwise they would have rejoiced with the man born blind who now could see. Instead, they treated him harshly when they could not win an argument and cast him out of the synagogue.

### 10:7-10 Jesus is the Door of the Sheep

*Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

10:7: Since the Pharisees did not understand, Jesus told them solemnly that He verily is the Door of the sheep - the only legitimate door by which the sheep, and also the shepherds must enter.

[Per Leon Morris, Morgan cites a story told him by Sir George Adam Smith to illustrate this point. He was one day travelling with a guide and came across an Arab shepherd and his sheep and fell into conversation with him. The man showed him the fold into which the sheep were led at night. It consisted of four walls with a way in. Sir George said to him, ‘That is where they go at night?’ ‘Yes,’ said the shepherd, ‘and when they are in there, they are perfectly safe.’ ‘But there is no door,’ said Sir George. ‘I am the door,’ said the shepherd. ‘When the light has gone, and all the sheep are inside, I lie in the open space, and no sheep ever goes out but across my body, and no wolf comes in unless he crosses my body; I am the door.’”]

10:8: “All that came before Jesus” – those purporting to be shepherds of Israel; the Pharisees, Sadducees and chief priests, “are thieves and robbers”. Their interests were for themselves and they robbed the people with their religious merchandise, while putting them in spiritual peril. The sheep however did not hear them (for they recognise not their voices).

10:9-10: Jesus is the Door. By Jesus alone if anyone enters, he shall be saved (σωθήσεται future passive of σώζω rescue, liberate, keep from harm, heal, preserve. The sheep that comes into the fold through Jesus will be safe and shall go in and out and find pasture; be nourished and fed.

In contrast to the thief who comes into the sheepfold to steal, kill and destroy, Jesus came that the sheep *may have life and may have it abundantly*. His sheep going in and out through Him, shall find abundant treasures of goodness in this earthly life, and thereafter, life evermore.

### 10:11-16 Jesus is the Good Shepherd

*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

10:11: Jesus is the Good Shepherd - the fulfilment of Ps 23, 80:1, Eccl 12:11, Isa 40:10-11, 63:11, Jer 31:10, 49:19, 50:44, Ez 34:12-17 & 23-24. He stands in sharp contrast with the false shepherds, who have failed their duty, as those in Isa 56:9-12, Jer 23:1-4, 25:32-38, Ez 34:1-10.

The Good Shepherd ποιμήν ὁ καλός. Per Vine's Expository Dictionary of Greek NT Words, *kalos* denotes that which is *intrinsically good* and so, “goodly, fair, beautiful,” as of (a) that which is well adapted to its circumstances or ends, e.g., fruit, Mt 3:10; a tree, Mt 12:33; ground, Mt 13:8, 23; fish, Mt 13:48; the Law, Rom 7:16, 1 Tim 1:8; every creature of God, 1 Tim 4:4; a faithful minister of Christ and the doctrine he teaches, 1 Tim 4:6; (b) that which is ethically good, right, noble, honourable, e.g., Gal 4:18, 1 Tim 5:10, 25, 6:18, Tit 2:7, 14, 3:8, 14.

The beautiful shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (Mt 20:28, Mk 10:45, 1 Jn 3:16).

10:12-13: In contrast, the hireling who works only for wages, and has not a true shepherd's heart of ownership and care towards the sheep, flees when he sees the wolf coming, and abandons the sheep, which are consequently scattered (cf. Zech 11:17). He flees because he is a hireling.

10:14-15: Jesus on the other hand is the intrinsically good shepherd, who knows γινώσκω His sheep and His own sheep in turn experientially knows Him. This is the same way the Father knows Jesus and He knows the Father (Mt 11:27). Jesus thus lays down His life for the sheep.

10:16-18: Jesus has “other sheep not of this fold”. He came to bring salvation to the whole world, not only to the Jews, and here looks to the Gospel spread unto the ends of the earth and the salvation of the Gentiles, starting from Jerusalem, all Judaea, Samaria unto the uttermost part of the earth (Isa 56:8, Mt 28:18-20, Act 1:8). He also must bring them (Ez 34:11-13, Mt 8:11, Eph 2:11-18). They shall hear His voice (Jn 5:25, 18:37, Act 28:28), and there shall be one fold (11:52, 12:32, 17:11, 21:22) and one Great Shepherd of the sheep (Ez 34:23, 37:24, Heb 13:20).

### 10:17-18 The Reason the Father loves Jesus

*Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

Jesus thrice repeats, “I lay down His life”, which is the reason the Father loves Him. This is the only means for our reconciliation to God and to one another (1 Tim 2:5, 1 Jn 3:16).

Two important aspects of Jesus' death are clarified by His authority. Firstly, His death was wholly voluntary on His part. No human hand could have touched Him unless He permitted it. He had at will avoided capture when His hour had not yet come (7:44, 8:20, 59, 10:39, cf. Mt 26:53). Secondly, He had authority to lay down His life and also to take it up again! He voluntarily participated in the Divine plan of the Triune God for Him to submit to death and then emerge from it victoriously alive – a supreme sacrifice and a manifestation of divine power – all purely motivated by His love for the Father and His readiness to carry out His Father's purpose.

#### 10:19-21 Reaction of the Jews

*There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?*

After Jesus spoke those words, the Jews were again split (7:43, 9:16). The stubbornly disbelieving Jews could not make sense of His words and they derided Jesus as demon-possessed and insane. The others said that these are not the words of a demon-possessed man. Moreover, after the attempt to stone Jesus in the Temple, He had done a most astounding miracle, and these Jews asked, "*Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?*"

This split allowed Jesus to continue ministering at Jerusalem for two more months, teaching in the Temple in the day and abiding at night in the Mount of Olives (8:1 notes, Lk 21:37).

## 10:22-39 JESUS WALKS IN SOLOMON'S PORCH AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION

### 10:22-27 The Jews Question Jesus Again

*And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*

10:22: The Feast of Dedication, Hanukkah חנוכה, is celebrated for eight days from the twenty fifth day of the ninth month (Kislev), i.e. about 70 days after Succoth (7:2). It is the festival of lights, commemorating Judas Maccabaeus rededication of the Second Temple in 164 BC after its desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 BC. The time corresponds with late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar, and it was winter.

10:23: On this first day of the festival of lights, Jesus may have been in contemplative mood, as He walked in His Father's House (2:16) in Solomon's Colonnade. This was a covered portico where people could be in all weather (Act 3:11, 5:12), which apparently survived the Babylonian invasion and remained until the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 (Josephus, *Ant*).

10:24: The Jews encircled around Him and asked, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." At Succoth earlier, they had discussed this question among themselves and then asked Jesus this pointedly, and He had answered them (7:13, 26, 8:25).

10:25-26: Jesus answered them that He had told them already but they did not believe (cf. Mt 26:63, Lk 22:67). The works He does in His Father's Name bear unanswerable witness of Him (5:36). They nevertheless remain unbelieving because they were not His sheep (cf. 8:43-47).

10:27: Jesus' sheep hears His voice and Jesus knows γινώσκω them (cf. Mt 7:23) and they follow ἀκολουθέω Him (cf. Mt 21:9, Mk 1:18, 2:14, Jn 6:2). This would be their characteristic also had they been Jesus' sheep, in which case, their question would have been superfluous.

### 10:28-31 Threefold Guarantee of the Gift of Eternal Life

*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.*

10:28-30: Moreover, Jesus gives to His sheep eternal life and they shall "never perish" (Gk: emphatic double negative aorist). *No one shall snatch them out of Jesus' hand.* This guarantee of preservation is further doubled because the Father, who has given them to Jesus, is greater than all, and *no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand* (6:37, 14:28, 17:2, Dt 32:39). On top of two invincible assurances - the inability of any to snatch out of Jesus' hand and the inability of any to snatch out of the Father's hand as well, a third, final bond inviolably seals this gift of eternal life to the very end: the fact that Jesus and the Father are One! They are always in complete agreement and completely acting in unison as one!

10:31: Jesus' statement of truth however sets forth doctrinally the separate individuality of the two Persons in the Godhead; the neuter pronoun "one" (*hen*) asserts unity of nature or equality (cf. 1 Cor 3:8). The Jews apprehended this statement and reacted by preparing to stone Jesus for blasphemy, because he, in their sight a man, had asserted that he was one and equal with God.

### 10:32-38 Jesus' Defence against their Charge of Blasphemy

*Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods,*

*unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.*

10:32-33: Jesus' response to their stones was to point out that he had shown them many good works from the Father, and asks which of these works form the basis for which they were proposing to stone Him. The Jews replied that it was not for a good work – they concede that His works were good καλοῦς – but for blasphemy, because He being a man, makes himself God.

10:34-36: Jesus affirmed rather than denied, their understanding of His claims to Deity via an *a fortiori* argument from their own law, “*Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?*” If in Ps 82:6, God calls ordinary mortals and even angels “gods” (Heb. *elohim*) and “sons of the Most High”, how could Jesus be accused of blasphemy when He applied this term to himself, whom the Father had set apart and sent into the world on a special mission, as authenticated by His works of miracles? Jesus was not making a false claim but merely asserting a truth.

The parenthetic statement, “*and the Scripture cannot be broken*” illustrates the high regard Jesus consistently placed on the Old Testament as to its inspiration and infallibility.

10:37-38: Jesus makes a final appeal based on the attestation of His works, “*If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.*”

In His Divine meekness and humility, Jesus does not assert His personal authority or position. Since they acknowledged that His works are good, He asks them to reason out whether these works are of His Father. If no, they need not believe in Him. But if yes, then though they do not believe on Him, they ought to start with believing the works, wherein in doing so, they will come to the realization followed by belief that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father.

## 10:39-42 JESUS ESCAPES AWAY BEYOND THE JORDAN

*Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand, And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.*

10:39: This appeal failed and the Jews sought again to seize him (Gk: “*kept on seeking to seize*”) as they also did in the past (7:1, 30, 44, 8:20). Jesus escaped out of their hand.

10:40-42: Jesus went away beyond Jordan to the place where John at first baptized; identified in 1:28 as the North Eastern Jordan region of Batanaea (Bethany), a safe four-day (150-150km) distance from Jerusalem in the tetrarchy of Philip (Gaulanitis, Basanitis and Trachonitis), a tolerant ruler.

The stamp of John the Baptist’s ministry and influence there remained strong, so that there, many believed on Jesus. They reasoned that while the Baptist did no miracle, everything he had said about Jesus was true (1:7, 29-34 & 3:27-30). Jesus would remain there until He had to visit Bethany near Jerusalem, to raise Lazarus from the dead.

## 11:1-54 JESUS VISITS BETHANY, VERY NEAR JERUSALEM

### Seventh Miracle - Raising Lazarus back from the Dead

#### 11:1-16 News of Lazarus' Sickness Reaches Jesus

*Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.*

11:1-4: When Lazarus fell critically ill, Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus. The sisters made no specific request, for they knew the danger to Jesus should He come to Bethany, but simply said, "Lord (Κύριε) behold, he whom thou lovest (phileo) is sick." Mary was she who anointed Jesus with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair in 12:3, Mt 26:6-13, Mk 14:3-9 (not the same as the similar act that took place in Lk 7:37-39 in the house of a Pharisee in Capernaum).

The messengers would have taken the four days to reach Batanaea. On hearing the news, Jesus indicates that Lazarus was still alive, "*This sickness is not unto death*" and declared that it was "*for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.*" Through this astounding event, many would come to believe in Jesus, resulting also in His death (9:3, 11:40-53, 13:31).

11:5-8: Jesus loved (agape) Martha and Mary and Lazarus. When He heard the news, He stayed two more days and then told disciples, "*Let us go into Judaea again.*" The disciples were shocked and reminded Him that the Jews had just sought to stone Him there.

11:9-10: Jesus contrasts the twelve day hours with the night, and illustrated that if any man walks in the day, he will not stumble because he sees the light of his world. In 8:12, He declared that He is that Light of the World, and in 9:4 He said He must work the works of Him that sent Him, while it is day! Jesus, knowing that His hour had not come, faced the prospect of returning to Judaea courageously. Later might be too late when night falls, making it hard to journey.

11:11-15: Jesus declared, "Lazarus, our friend (ὁ φίλος 'the friend', kindly disposed, committed') has fallen asleep." He supernaturally experienced inwardly the moment His friend died, and said, "*But I go to awaken him.*" His disciples thought of literal sleep, which was good for he would then recover and they would not need to re-visit Judaea. Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus was dead and for their sakes, He was glad that He was not there, for the purpose that they might come to believe. "*Nevertheless,*" He adjures, "*Let us go to him.*"

11:16: Thomas Didymus, or "Twin", (20:24, 21:2), was the pessimistic spokesman, telling his fellow disciples, "*Let us go with also, that we may die with Him.*"

#### 11:17-32 Jesus Arrives at Bethany

*Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know*

*that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.*

11:17: When Jesus arrived outside Bethany, He found that Lazarus had been laid in the grave four days. It was a common Jewish custom to bury one on the day that he died and his family did not think to delay the burial and wait to see if Jesus would arrive.

11:18-19: Bethany was only 15 stadion (185 meters) or 2.8km from Jerusalem. Many Jews there came to comfort Martha and Mary, which indicates the prominence of Lazarus' family.

11:20-22: Martha, the more active, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, while Mary, the reflective, remained sitting in the house (cf. Lk 10:38-42). On meeting Jesus, Martha said, "*Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died*" – exact words Mary was later to utter in 11:32. The sisters believed in Jesus' healing abilities, and shared the same wistful regret that Jesus had not been there. Martha however went on in courageous faith to say, "*But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.*" This echoes beforehand the practical words of Jesus in 11:41.

11:23-24: Jesus says to Martha, "*Thy brother shall rise again*" – a hidden double promise, granting Martha her immediate request. Martha replied that she knows that her brother will rise again on the resurrection at the last day, affirming the request she was making to Jesus, for it was not necessary to make a request for the general resurrection that shall take place. (That the Jews including the Pharisees believe in the general resurrection, see Lk 20:37-38, Act 23:6.)

11:25-26: Jesus first supports her faith, with a declaration, "*I AM the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.* Resurrection and Life are intertwined. In Jesus is Life and the Life was the Light of men (1:4, 3:15, 16, 36, 4:14, 36, etc.) Thus Lazarus was even then alive for believers in Jesus, even if they were died, yet shall live. Then Jesus confirms her full faith by asking her, "*Believest thou this?*"

11:27: She answers, "Yes, Lord, I believe" (αἶ, κύριε· ἐγὼ πεπίστευκα – a perfect active indicative of *pisteuō*; I have come to believe, i.e., a settled and firm faith, "That you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." Mary thus confesses Jesus as both Messiah and Son of God.

11:28-31: After this, Martha hurried to tell Mary privately that Jesus had come and was calling for her. Mary, as soon as she heard this, arose quickly on an impulse of hope, and met Jesus, still outside of Bethany after His arduous journey, where Martha had met Him. The Jews in the house followed Mary, supposing she was going to weep at the grave.

11:32: Mary, in tears, repeated Martha's words to Jesus in 11:21.

### 11:33-37 "Behold, How He loved him!"

*When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?*

11:33: When Jesus saw Mary weeping, and the Jews with her also weeping, He groaned (ἐνεβριμήσατο) deeply moved in the spirit (τῷ πνεύματι) and was troubled (ἐτάραξεν). His groaning must chiefly be anger at sin, running its course bringing death, pain and sorrows, which had now also overcome His dear

friend Lazarus, and brought grief to many. For these sorrows Jesus had come, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, to rescue us via His own shed blood. The prospect of drinking the cup of God's wrath for our sins, and being forsaken by the Father at Calvary's cross must also trouble Him. (Isa 53:3, Mt 26:39 & 42 and 1 Cor 15:55-57)

11:34: Jesus politely asked where they had laid Lazarus. They told him, "*Lord, come and see.*"

11:35: Jesus wept (Ἐδάκρυσεν) - the shortest, most poignant verse of the Bible. As High Priest touched with the feelings of our infirmities, He was in all points tempted like *we are*, yet without sin (Heb 4:15).

11:36: Then said the Jews, "*Behold how he loved him!*" There was no longer any doubt in their minds of the love of Jesus for Lazarus.

11:37: Some of them said, "*Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?*" They remember the healing of the man born blind just the past Succoth, and echo the sentiments of Martha and Mary in 11:21 & 32.

### 11:38-44 Jesus Raises Lazarus

*Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

11:38-40: Jesus again groaned in Himself, as He came to the grave. It was a cave, common for Jewish burial (Gen 23:19), and a stone lay against it. He then said, "*Take away the stone*" - a further test of the sisters' faith. This includes a Divine principle that God does not do for man what man can do for himself but does only that, in answer to our prayers and cries that we cannot ourselves do.

Martha good naturedly protested, "*Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.*" Jesus said to her, "*Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?*" A final time, He strengthens Martha's faith. Lazarus' illness and death was for the glory of God.

11:41-42: After they took away the stone, Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "*Father, I thank* (εὐχαριστέω, to render or return thanks cf. Mt 26:27, Mk 8:6, Lk 17:16, 18:11, Act 27:35, 28:15, Ro 1:21, 1Cor 14:17, Col 1:3, 12, 1Th 1:2, 2:13) "*Thee that thou hast heard me*" - the past tense shows that Jesus had already prayed and had the Father's answer before He now acts to raise Lazarus. The Son does nothing of himself but what he sees the Father do, these also He does likewise (5:19, 20). Jesus continues, "*I knew*" (ᾔδουν from *oida* or absolute knowledge) "*that Thou always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that Thou sent me.*" (cf. 5:36, 10:25 and 38)

11:43-44: When Jesus had spoken, He cried loudly, "*Lazarus, come forth!*" And the dead Lazarus immediately came forth despite the linen wrapped around his hands and feet and the napkin wrapped around his face (cf. 20:6-7), hopping out of the cave. Jesus saith to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

### 11:45-54 Many Believed in Jesus while Rulers Determined to Put Him to Death

*Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high*

*priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.*

11:45-46: Many of the Jews which came to Mary responded by believing on Jesus. Others, stubbornly disbelieving, reported to the Pharisees what Jesus had done.

11:47-48: This resulted in the calling of a council (possibly a Sanhedrin) by the Pharisees and chief priests. The council expressed deep frustration and used the excuse of the Romans coming and taking away their place and nation, as the reason for putting Jesus to death, whereas Jesus had already refused to be king, and had taught the Jews to render to Caesar what belongs to him.

11:49-50: Caiaphas, (high priest from AD 18-36. His father-in-law Annas was high priest from AD 7-14, and was succeeded by three of his sons before Caiaphas) being the high priest that year, took the lead at the council, and saying that they knew nothing at all, proclaimed that it was expedient that one man should die for the people that the whole nation should not perish.

11:51-52: Unknown to Caiaphas, he spoke not of himself but in the office of God's high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

This "children scattered abroad" would apply to the Jewish Diaspora but also would apply later to the Gentiles who became the children of God through faith in Jesus (1:12, 10:16).

11:53-54: From the day forth, they determined and planned to put Jesus to death. Jesus thus no longer walked openly among the Jews but went to a region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there stayed with His disciples, until the next and final Passover of His ministry.

This is the Ephraim (Ephron or Ephraim) of 2 Chr 13:19, and the regions near Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpeh of 1 Sam 7:16. It would be about 30 km north of Jerusalem, near the wilderness. Jesus would stay here for another final month before visiting Jerusalem for His final time.

## NOTES ON THE SECOND HALF OF JOHN

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The first half of John (1:1-11:54) highlights events during the major part of Jesus' ministry starting from His return to John the Baptist after His 40 days wilderness fasting, and covering three Passovers until near the fourth and final Passover of Jesus' ministry. The second half (11:55-21:25) narrows in on Christ's Passion Week and includes His Crucifixion and glorious Resurrection! A large portion of the Synoptics is similarly devoted to events of this period (Mt 20:17-27:66, Mk 10:32-15:47, Lk 18:31-23:56) making for a wonderful comparison.

### Wisdom of Four Gospels and the Passion Week Chronology

Almighty God in His Sovereign Wisdom provided four Divinely Inspired Gospel Accounts, penned by godly men yielded to the control and aid of His Holy Spirit. This yields enormous advantages and richness of perspective. Each Gospel is written independently from four individual vantages and circumstances and yet all four are strikingly in overall agreement on all essential matters and facts of weight, particularly in all that pertain to faith and salvation.

The differences in style, perspective and purpose of the four writers should be noted. Mark, Peter's amanuensis, gives a first-hand personal and intimate eyewitness account (1 Pet 5:13, 2 Pet 1:16). In this respect, only John is more quintessentially intimate and personal, as we shall appreciate as we get into the study. Matthew and Luke wrote from broader public perspectives.

Matthew Levi, called about a year into Jesus' ministry, wrote for the Jewish masses from whom he once collected taxes. He presents Jesus as Messiah and King and traces His Genealogy from Abraham and David, and Jesus' birth in Herod's final year (Mt 1:1-17, 2:1, 9:9). Matthew gives fuller records of Jesus' public discourses and the broad sweep of events, within which, the minutiae of intimate details supplied by John may be placed. Luke, the historian-physician, Paul's missionary companion to the Graeco-Roman world from Act 16:10 onwards, obtained perfect understanding from first-hand eye witnesses – he had opportunity to do this during Paul's two-year Caesarea imprisonment (Lk 1:1-4, Act 1:1-3, 21-22, 24:27, 2 Tim 4:11) – and he supplies Jesus' genealogy via Mary's parentage and key Roman dates surrounding Jesus' birth and surrounding the start of Jesus' public ministry (Lk 2:1-4, 3:1-2, 23-38).

The four Gospels exhibit some variations, reflecting the writers' circumstantial perspectives, for each account only provides a small sampling of all that Jesus did (Jn 21:25). The variations however are easily observable, slight and spontaneous; arising from the peculiar attention or focus each inspired writer gives to specific events or persons. Matthew and Mark report of two blind men; Luke focusses on the one. Mark tells of two cock crows spacing Peter's three denials; others simply report the three denials before the cock crows. At times, similar events are mistaken as one. Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer publicly on the Mount (Mt 6:9-13); and also privately to disciples who had waited for Him while He prayed (Lk 11:1-4). He cleansed the Temple on his first visit to Jerusalem (Jn 2:13-17); and again on His final visit (Mt 21:12-13 & Mk 11:15-17). If we overlook this, we may think the Synoptics and John to be in contradiction, particularly with respect to the Passion Week chronology, when in fact John supplies additional light and intimate first-person perspective that dovetail in with the Synoptics.

The kaleidoscopic variety of four Gospels, given in the Wisdom of God's Spirit, demonstrates spontaneity, independence and veracity. The New Testament is so much richer and deeper for the four inspired soul-stirring narratives, rather than just one long mechanical Gospel covering everything together. The four complement and supplement each other, but more importantly, also fulfil an important Biblical function: - corroborating and confirming each other – so that we are absolutely sure that the Word of God in its entirety is inspired, literal, errs not and shall not fail. (Deut 19:5, 2 Cor 13:1).

The variety and tiny additional details provided here and there also have a deeper usefulness. Reading the Gospels carefully together, the Passion Week chronology and setting, far from being found at hopeless odds, can in fact be derived: John uniquely supplying the opening days; Mark, the days from

Palm Sunday; Luke the Julian year; and Matthew, Jesus' approximate age.

### **Background / Old Testament References for Understanding the Events of Passion Week**

Apparent misunderstandings of the Passion Week chronology often stem from failing to carefully read the Old Testament references, and failing to properly distinguish the terms used.

The *Passover meal* is killed and eaten with unleavened bread on 14<sup>th</sup> Nisan at night; thus the evening also called "the first day of the feast of unleavened bread" although the feast proper has not begun. The *Feast of Unleavened Bread* is from 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Nisan, and entirely is also called Passover (Lk 22:1). "The preparation" or "day of preparation" does not mean a day when the Passover meal is prepared but simply means a/the day before Sabbath as explained in Mk 15:42 and Lk 23:54.

Per the Talmud, various festive offerings or "Chagigah" based on Lev 1-4 were eaten between 3 to 6pm during the week of the three great feasts - Passover, Feast of Weeks (Shavuot) and Feast of Booths (Sukkot). These Chagigah meals would be affected by the rules of ceremonial uncleanness, but the Passover meal, which is eaten after sundown would not be affected.

*"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it."* (Ex 12:2-6, 8)

*"And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even." (Ex 12:17-18)*

*"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein." (Lev 23:5-7)*

*"And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten." (Nu 28:16-17)*

*"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover" (Lk 22:1)*

*"..., because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath..." (Mk 15:42)*

*"The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food." (Lev 22:6-7)*

## 11:55-20:31 PART II: FINAL PASSION WEEK ENDING IN JESUS' CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION!

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### 11:55-12:50 JESUS' FINAL HOUR NEARING

#### 11:55-57 Passover Nearing

*And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.*

As the final Passover drew near, the people from the countryside went to Jerusalem to purify themselves. They sought for Jesus but wondered if He would come to the feast, since the chief priests and Pharisees had ordered that His whereabouts be reported so that they may arrest Him (11:45-54). Jesus, knowing this, remained undeterred in purpose to fulfil His Father's will. The Synoptics record that as they journeyed to Jerusalem, the apostles were in great fear and incomprehension. Mark records that they were amazed that Jesus walked in front of them!

*"And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." (Mt 20:17-19)*

*"And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." (Lk 18:34)*

*"And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him," (Mk 10:32)*

#### 12:1-11 Six Days before Passover

*Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always. Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.*

12:1: *Six days before Passover*, i.e. 8 Nisan, Jesus arrives at Bethany. Since Passover fell that year on a Thursday night (Maundy Thursday), six days before starts on a Friday evening, the eve of Sabbath ("preparation"). They would thus have rested that evening after a Sabbath meal.

12:2: *"There they made Him a supper"* *“δειπνόν dinner, supper* the main meal of the day, eaten toward evening (Lk 14:12, Jn 21:20, 1 Cor 11:20); *(formal) dinner, banquet* (Mt 23:6, Lk 14:17, 24, Jn 12:2, 13:2, Rev 19:9, 17)." A banquet would not be held on the preparation night, but the next evening, after the Sabbath had ended, they made Jesus this feast where Martha served, and Lazarus sat at table. This is the same dinner of Mt 26:6 and Mk 14:3, held in the home of Simon the leper. Bethany being a small and close-knit community, for Martha to serve there is not unusual. Some commentators suggest that Simon was the father of Lazarus, Martha and Mary.

12:3-6: During this supper, Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, took a pound of ointment of very costly spikenard and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped them with her hair: and the house was filled with perfume. Upon this, some disciples, but most notably, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who should betray Jesus, was incensed, for he asked, "*Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?*" Judas said this not out of concern for the poor but because he was the treasurer and was pilfering the donations.

Mt 26:2 and Mk 14:1 are apt to be misread as referring to a supper at Simon's house held *two days before Passover*, which would make it a different supper from that of Jn 12:2, when their real import is *the date on which Judas compacted with the high priests to betray Jesus* even while Jesus was occupied in His final day of public ministry at Jerusalem. Clearly in context, Mt 26:6-13 and Mt 14:3-9 parenthetically flash back to the supper at Bethany where Mary had poured out the costly spikenard; a final straw in so far as Judas was concerned that drove him finally to betray Jesus; this flashback expressed in the past tense, "Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper..." and "And being (while he was) in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper." (Mt 26:6, Mk 14:3).

Furthermore, by two days before Passover, with the chief priests scouring everywhere to arrest Jesus, it would no longer be safe to resort at Bethany at night, and Jesus probably resorted to secret locations in Mount Olives, such as Gethsemane, after His day labours in Jerusalem.

12:7-8: Jesus declares in defence of Mary, "*Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.*" The sobering fact is we will always have the poor in this world. The devotional lesson is we have not always opportunity to do good for Jesus. We see the Apostles, pre-occupied with self, duties and fears, failing to minister to Jesus! The irony is they were also arguing about who was the greatest among them, i.e. the most faithful, devoted and willing to die for Christ! Mary in contrast fully occupied herself on Jesus and His needs.

Per Matthew and Mark, who did not give Mary's name (perhaps lest she be worshipped), Jesus commended her deed, "*Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*" May we emulate Mary's devotion and also declare what she hath done wherever we preach the Gospel!

12:9-11: Many Jews, on hearing, came to Bethany to see Jesus and also Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. This caused the chief priests to determine to also kill Lazarus for because of him, many Jews went away and believed on Jesus. Thus Judas Iscariot determined to betray Jesus and the chief priests determined to kill Lazarus on account of this Supper.

### 12:12-15 Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

*On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.*

12:12: "*On the next day*", i.e. the day after the supper or 10 Nisan when each Jewish household selects out an unblemished lamb for their Passover sacrifice. This lamb stays with the family until the 14<sup>th</sup> night. Jesus, on this august Palm Sunday, made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem sitting on an ass's colt in fulfilment of Zech 9:9 while a very great multitude spread their garments and others cut down branches from the trees and strewed *them* in the way, and went before Him rejoicing loudly, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." (cf. Mt 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-11 & Lk 19:28-44).

Lk 19:29-44 contrasts the people's rejoicing with Jesus weeping when He saw Jerusalem, "*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.*" (v42). This was their prophetic day of Messiah foretold in Zech 9:9 and Dan 9:26, of which Jesus said, "*The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*" (Jn 12:23 cf. 7:30, 8:20).

Per Mark: On the day of Jesus Triumphant entry into Jerusalem, He entered into the Temple and after He had looked around, it was already evening and they went back to Bethany (11:1-9). On the morrow, i.e. Monday, when they came into Jerusalem from Bethany, they were hungry, and Jesus cursed the barren fig tree. This was the day that Jesus cleansed the Temple. He then ministered publicly in Jerusalem and in the evening, went out of the city again (11:12-19). The next morning, i.e. Tuesday, when they came into Jerusalem, the fig tree had withered from the roots. This would be Jesus final day of public ministry at Jerusalem (11:20-12:44), while Judas went off to make his treacherous compact with the chief priests.

As they left Jerusalem that evening of 12 Nisan, beholding the beauty of the Temple, Jesus prophetically told the Apostles of last-day events to come (Mk 13:1-37, cf. Mt 24:1-25:46; Lk 21:5-36). After this night discourse ended, Jesus reminded them that in two days was the Passover when the Son of man is to be betrayed to be crucified (Mt 26:2, cf., Mk 14:1).

The Gospels are reverently silent on what Jesus did on Wednesday, one day before the Passover, which perhaps was divinely reserved for the Son of Man to be secretly alone with His Father.

The narratives take up again on 14 Nisan, the “*first day of the feast of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover*” (Mk 14:12, Lk 22:7). Mt 26:17 in Greek = “*the first of the unleavened bread*”, for the Passover is eaten with unleavened bread. On that Maundy Thursday (so known for Jesus washed His’ disciples’ feet), they prepared for Jesus to partake of the Passover. When the evening hour came, Jesus joined the twelve for the Passover. Matthew and Mark give relatively short accounts of this Lord Supper. Luke includes the strife among the disciples and Jesus fore-telling that Simon will deny Him thrice that very night. John gives the fullest record of the final intimate lessons Jesus imparted to the twelve that final night. Judas was included in the partaking of the supper and Jesus’ washing of the disciples’ feet of 13:1-30, but not in the final discourses of 13:31-17:26. (Cf. Mt 26:17-30, Mk 14:14-26, Lk 22:7-39).

Later that night, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus agonised in prayer (Mt 26:31-46, Mk 14:27-42, Lk 22:40-46, Jn 18:1). There Judas led the soldiers to arrest Jesus, after which they brought Him to Caiaphas (Mt 26:47-57, Mk 14:43-53, Lk 22:47-54, Jn 18:2-14). There they gave Jesus an unfair and rushed trial by night, fully against their own laws.

## Summary of the Passion Week Chronology

With all four Gospels harmonized

Day	Events	References
Six days before Passover, Friday, 8 Nisan	<u>Jesus came to Bethany</u> . Being the Sabbath eve, they would have rested that evening.	Jn 12:1
Five days before Passover, Sabbath, 9 Nisan	The next evening after the Sabbath had ended, they made Him a supper at the home of Simon, where Mary anointed Jesus' hair with spikenard and wiped His feet with her hair.	Jn 12:2-11, Mt 26:6-13, Mk 14:3-9
Four days before Passover, Palm Sunday, 10 Nisan	<u>The next day</u> , Jesus entered Jerusalem in prophetic fulfilment of Zech 9:9 and Dan 9:26.	Jn 12:12, Mt 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-11 & Lk 19:28-44
Three days before Passover, Mon, 11 Nisan	Jesus cursed the fig tree on way in. Second Temple cleansing.	Mk 11:12-19; Mt 21:18-19
Two days before Passover, Tuesday, 12 Nisan	Fig tree died. Jesus final day of ministry in the Temple. Judas <u>made pact with high priests to betray Jesus</u> . In evening, Jesus ministered to the Twelve and revealed prophecies of end times	Mk 11:20-12:44; Mt 21:20-23:39 Mk 13:1-37; Mt 24:1-25:46 (cf. Lk 21:5-36)
Day before Passover, Wednesday, 13 Nisan	Silent	
Passover Day, Thursday, 14 Nisan	Disciples prepare for the Passover. When night came, they had the Lord's Supper after which, Jesus washed the disciples feet and gave them a new commandment of love (13:34) and prayed His High Priestly Prayer. Later that night: travel to Garden of Gethsemane, prayer of agony, betrayal, arrest and unfair night trial by high priests.	Jn 13:1-17:36; Mt 26:17-30, Mk14:14-26, Lk 22:7-39 Jn 18:1-27; Mt 26:31-75, Mk14:27-72, Lk 22:40-71
Good Friday, 15 Nisan; Feast of Unleavened Bread*	Judgement before Pontius Pilate and Herod. Crucifixion of Jesus; burial by Joseph of Arimathaea. This was a "Day of Preparation", before the Sabbath, and hence a Friday.	Jn 18:28-19:42; Mt 27:1-61, Mk15:1-47, Lk 23:1-56
Holy Sabbath, 16 Nisan	Sabbath coinciding with Passover, a high feast day. The Jews sealed the stone of Jesus' Tomb and set watch over it.	Mt 27:62-66
Resurrection Sunday, 17 Nisan**	The Lord's Resurrection and post-resurrection appearances!	Jn 20:1-23; Mt 28:1-10, Mk16:1-15, Lk 24:1-12

\* Anniversary of Israel's Exodus from Egypt, 430 years to the date from God's Promise to Abraham (Ex 12:41)

\*\* Anniversary of the day when Noah's ark rested on Ararat (Gen 8:8) and of Moses' crossing the Red Sea (Ex 14)

## “Apparent Contradictions” and Difficulties Examined

The above Passion Week chronology is accepted orthodoxy. Modern scholars today however question this and debate as to 1) whether John and the Synoptics are in contradiction, and 2) whether the Lord's Supper was really held on Passover night. We shall examine some of these as follows: -

### 1. Does Jn 13:1 indicate that the Last Supper was held before Passover?

The words, “*Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come ...*” may give an impression that the Lord's Supper took place before the Passover night of 14 Nisan. However, if we remember that the Feast (“of Unleavened Bread” and “of Passover” being used interchangeably) commences on 15 Nisan, the difficulty evaporates! The Passover night of 14 Nisan is a solemn occasion when the lamb is slaughtered and eaten in haste with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, while the festivity starts on 15 Nisan.

### 2. Does *Artos* mean that the Bread used in the Last Supper was not Unleavened?

As ἄρτον (Mt 26:26; cf. Act 2:42, 20:7, 1 Cor 10:16, 11:23) is used to describe the bread used at the Last Supper, some say that this Supper was not a Passover meal held on 14 Nisan. They assume that unleavened bread must be ἄζυμοι “free from yeast” or “unleavened”. However, *azumos* is not used at all in the New Testament for physical bread but twice used metaphorically “of a holy, spiritual condition,” and of “sincerity and truth” (1 Cor 5:7-8); and on all other occasions, with the definite article for “the Feast of Unleavened Bread” (Mt 26:17, Mk 14:1, 12, Lk 22:1, 22:7, Act 12:3, 20:6).

Gerhard Kittle's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament cites P. Fiebig: - “the term *artos* does not exclude *azumos* but in certain circumstances, e.g., in description of the Passover, may mean this.” Josephus and Philo use *artos* in their description of the matzos of the Passover meal (Ex 12:8, 18; Deut 16:3, 8). Mt 12:4 and Heb 9:2 use ἄρτων for the showbread in the Tabernacle, a reference to Ex 25:30 & Lev 24:5-6 (cf. Ex 29:2, 23).

*Artos* is a broad term for bread of any kind, whether of flour, rice, rye or barley; leavened or unleavened. In the Lord's Prayer, *artos* is our daily food (Mt 6:11, Lk 11:3; cf. 2 Cor 9:10). Jesus is metaphorically “the Artos of God and the Artos of Life” (Jn 6:33, 35). Since Jesus kept the Law perfectly, the *artos* bread used at the Last Supper must have been unleavened. Finally, the word “sop”, ψωμίον (Jn 13:26, 27, 30), simply means a morsel or fragment of the original loaf.

### 3. Does Mt 27:16 indicate that the Last Supper was held a day after Passover?

“*Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?*” at cursory reading could indicate the first Feast Day, 15 Nisan. However, the Greek πρώτη τῶν ἁζύμων “first of the unleavened”, although signifying the feast, rather indicates and emphasizes the first unleavened bread, which is eaten together with the Paschal lamb, on the night of 14 Nisan.

The parallel Mk 14:12, “*And the first day of unleavened bread when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?*” makes it unequivocal! This first day of unleavened (τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν ἁζύμων i.e. “*the first day, the unleavened*”) was the day when they killed the Passover! Jesus' great desire before He suffered was to eat this Passover with His disciples (Lk 22:15).

### 4. Does Jn 19:14 mean that Jesus was crucified on 14 Nisan?

“*And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!*” The term “preparation” simply means “the day before Sabbath” (Mk 15:42. cf. Mt 27:62, Lk 23:54, Jn 19:31, 42). Preparation of the Passover simply therefore mean the Friday before the Passover' Sabbath. All four Gospels clearly testify that Jesus died on Good Friday!

5. **Does Jn 18:28 mean that Jesus was crucified before the Passover Night?**

*“Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.”*

At a cursory reading, they had not yet eaten the Paschal meal. Perhaps the anxiety of arresting Jesus the night before delayed their eating but they could still rush back to eat if it was early but not yet morning, when eating had to cease and whatever remains of the paschal lamb burnt with fire (Ex 12:10). But Mt 27:1 and Mk 15:1 tell us it was already morning when they brought Jesus to Pilate!

If so, could Jesus have been crucified on 14 Nisan, before the Passover? No, for this does not fit with the picture of the women preparing the spices and ointments for Jesus' body at His grave, who then “rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment” (Lk 23:56). Secondly, defilement by touching a Gentile or any unclean thing would last only until sundown (Lev 22:7), *“And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.”* As the Paschal Lamb is eaten at night, going into the judgement hall would not prevent this meal!

This leaves only the Chagigah, the Talmudic festive meal based on Lev 1-4 eaten between 3 to 6pm i.e. before sundown, during the three Great Feasts of the Jews (introductory notes); the Chagigah of Passover Week naturally called a Passover meal. This explains why they could not go into the judgement hall, but they realised not the far greater defilement of their great sin against Jesus.

6. **Does Jn 19:31 mean that the Sabbath that year fell on 15 Nisan?**

*“The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) ...”* – may give an impression that that Sabbath fell on 15 Nisan, the first day of the Feast, when the Chagigah sacrifices are made. But, as the late Sir Robert Anderson had pointed out, all the great sacrifices to which the 15 Nisan largely owed its distinctive solemnity, were repeated daily throughout the festival per Nu 28:19-24, on which account alone, that Sabbath was “an high day”. “The Law furthermore enjoined that the sheaf of the first fruits should be waved before the Lord “on the morrow after the (paschal) Sabbath” (Lev 23:10, 11) and from that day, the seven weeks were reckoned which ended with the feast of Pentecost. But as ... the weeks should be counted from the first day of the harvest, (Dt 16:9; cf. Lev 23:15, 16), the ... true day for the ordinance, therefore, was the day of the resurrection, “the first day of the week” following the Passover, when, according to the intention of the law, the barley harvest should begin, and the first sheaf gathered should be carried to the Holy Place and solemnly waved before Jehovah. Thus synchronizing with the solemnities both of the Paschal festival and of the Sabbath, that day could not fail to be indeed “an high day”.”

7. **Do Mk 15:25 and Jn 19:14 contradict each other?**

Jn 19:14 appears to say that the crucifixion began at about 12noon *“And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!”* while Mk 15:25 appear to say it began at 9am. *“And it was the third hour, and they crucified him”*. [Add 6 hours to convert Jewish time to ours.]

Mk 15:25 in Greek: “ὁρᾶ τρίτῃ, καὶ ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτόν;” the conjunction καὶ, “and”, “not only”, “but also”, “even”, highlights not the time *when* they crucified Jesus but emphasises that *“It was 9am AND they crucified Him!”* Mark’s import is to highlight their unlawfulness and illegality! Their law requires that trials for capital offence be held in the day, with the Sanhedrin sitting from 9am, which they wantonly disregarded by starting very early in the morning at the fourth watch, i.e. between 3 to 6am at Pilate’s judgement hall; and by 9am, had secured Jesus’ crucifixion!

In contrast, Pilate struggled to free Jesus (Mt 27:17-24, Mk 15:4-14, Lk 23:4-20, Jn 18:29-40) until noon, when he is seen making his final attempt, *“And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King?”* (Jn 19:14-15)

When all of these actions of the chief priests and of Pilate are seen together in their unfolding context, there is no real contradiction between Mark and John.

**Note: Bishop Lightfoot Notes (Extracts) - the Talmud and Hebraica:**

Mk 15:1, "in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate"; at what time do the judges sit in judgment? The lesser Sanhedrim and the bench of three sit, after morning prayers are ended, until the end of the sixth hour. But the great Sanhedrim sits after the morning daily sacrifice to the afternoon daily sacrifice.. But now when the morning daily sacrifice was at the third hour, the Sanhedrim sat not before that hour. Pilate could not deliver Christ to be crucified about the third hour when the Sanhedrim sat not before the third hour and Christ was not yet delivered to Pilate.

The *day* itself and the *hour* itself: That day was "the preparation of the passover," a day of high solemnity, when it behoved the priests and the other fathers of the Sanhedrim to be present at the third hour in the Temple to offer their Chagigahs that were preparative to the whole seven days' festivity: but they employed themselves in another thing. You may observe that he saith not, "it was the third hour when"; but "it was the third hour, and they crucified him." That is, when the third hour now was, and was passed, yet they omitted not to prosecute his crucifixion, when indeed, according to the manner of the feast and the obligation of religion, they ought to have been employed otherwise.

There is another sense also not to be despised... which we fetch from a custom usual in the Sanhedrim, but from which they now swerved. They are treating concerning a guilty person condemned to hanging, with whom they deal in this process: *they tarry until sunset approach, and then they finish his judgment and put him to death.* Note that: 'They finish not his judgment until sunset draw near.' If you ask the reason, a more general one may be given which respected all persons condemned to die, and a more special one which respected him which was to be hanged.

... Resume the words of Mark, "*And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.*" The Sanhedrim used not to finish the judgment of hanging until they were now ready to rise up and depart from the council and bench after the Mincha, the day now inclining towards sunset: but these men finished the judgment of Jesus, and hastened him to the cross, when they first came into the court at the third hour, at the time of the daily sacrifice, which was very unusual, and different from the custom.

### Could the Last Supper have been on A Wednesday?

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Some question if there was sufficient time between Jesus' arrest on Thursday night and His Crucifixion on Friday for six trials given the procedural laws (see 7:24) stipulating fair and due process and requiring capital offences to be tried in the day (not night) before a Sanhedrin council and not before individuals.

For example, Colin Humphrey, Cambridge Professor of Material Science and author of "The Mysteries of the Last Supper and Jesus' Final Days", 2011, suggests that the Last Supper took place on Wednesday night, "...scholars have literally rushed around Jerusalem with a stop-watch to see how the large number of events recorded in the Gospels could have fit between the Last Supper on Thursday night and the Crucifixion on Friday morning ... most conclude that it is impossible..." Humphrey then offers a "very simple solution to these problems" - "move the Last Supper to Wednesday, instead of Thursday"; his basis being a suggestion in a 2007 Pope Benedict XVI's sermon that, "*Jesus might have used the solar calendar of the Qumran community, who were probably a Jewish sect called the Essenes*". Humphrey proposes a pre-exilic Jewish calendar, "*used by groups such as the Samaritans, Zealots, some Galileans and some Essenes*", under which "Passover always fell a few days earlier than in the official Jewish calendar, and the days were marked from sunrise to sunrise, not sunset to sunset", which he suggests Jesus followed in choosing the date to observe the Last Supper, as described in Matthew, Mark and Luke of the Last Supper as a Passover meal, whereas John uses the official calendar in which the Last Supper was before the Passover. Humphrey tried to apply "*science and historical reconstruction*" based on astronomical dates of the new moon and he arrives at 3 April AD 33 as the date of Jesus' Crucifixion.

Humphrey's stated intention to reconcile "*the inconsistencies in the Gospel accounts of the final days of Jesus*," misunderstands the "Apparent Difficulties" discussed above. His methods appear ingenious but are complex and overlook the facts as follows: -

1. The Scriptures depict Jesus as having been arrested and tried by the high priests at night, during which time Peter denied Jesus three times; and then brought to Pilate by early the next morning, with no indication of prolonged trials. Jerusalem also is a fortified city and distances within between high priests' palace, Pilate's hall and Herod's Palace are not far.
2. The chief priests had plotted beforehand to kill Jesus and never intended a fair trial. They started immediately at night under Annas and then Caiaphas, instead of waiting for a council to come together in the day time. Against the law and all norms, they spat upon, buffeted, struck and bound Jesus, and used false accusers, while ignoring the undeniable evidence of Jesus' Messianic miracles. By 9am, when trials should commence, they had already secured Jesus' condemnation under Pilate, before the 15 Nisan Feast, "*lest there be uproar among the people*" (Mt 26:5, Mk 14:2).
3. God is a God of order (1 Cor 14:33) and would not confuse with different calendars and left this unknown for two millennia until 2011. (Nothing is new in theology except the false).
4. Determining the Crucifixion year based on a full moon is not reliable for: - 1) the start of each month was determined on first sighting of a new moon, not 15 Nisan determined on sighting a full moon; else foresight is needed for preparations such as that on 10 Nisan; 2) weather conditions may impede a new moon sighting; and 3) the intercalation of months to synchronise the Lunisolar and the solar calendar, could blur this determination.

Sir Robert Anderson<sup>3</sup>: "*Numerous ... have discussed this question as though nothing more were needed in fixing the date of the Passion than to find a year, within certain limits in which the paschal moon was full upon a Friday. But this betrays strange forgetfulness of the intricacies of the problem. True it is that if the system by which today the Jewish year is settled had been in force eighteen centuries ago, the whole controversy might turn upon the week date of the Passover in a given year; but on account of our ignorance of the embolismal system then in use, no weight whatever can be attached to it... The month began at the phases of the moon...and this happens, according*

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<sup>3</sup> "The Coming Prince," Reprinted 1957 from 10<sup>th</sup> edition, Kregel Publications

to Newton, when the moon is eighteen hours old. Therefore the 14 Nisan might commence when the moon was 13d 18h old, and wanted 1d 0h 22m to the full. [The age of the moon at the full will be 14d 18h 22m.] But sometimes the phases was delayed till the moon was 1d 17h old; and then if 1 Nisan were deferred till the phases, the 14<sup>th</sup> would begin only 1h 22m before the full. This precision, however, in adjusting the month to the moon did not exist in practice. The Jews, like other nations who adopted a lunar year, and supplied the defect by an intercalary month, failed in obtaining complete accuracy. We know not what their method of calculation was at the time of the Christian era" (Fasti Rom., vol. 2., p. 240); AD 30 is the only year between 28 and 33 in which the phases of the full moon was on a Friday. In AD 29 the full moon was on Saturday, and the phases on Monday. (See Wurm's Table, in Wiesler's Chron. Syn., Venables's trans., p. 407)

For example, in AD 32, the date of the true new moon, by which the Passover was regulated, was the night (10h 57m) of the 29th March. The ostensible date of 1 Nisan, therefore, according to the phases, was the 31st March. It may have been delayed, however, till the 1st April; and in that case 15 Nisan should apparently have fallen on Tuesday the 15th April. But the calendar may have been further disturbed by intercalation. According to the scheme of the eight years' cycle, the embolismal month was inserted in the third, sixth, and eighth years, and an examination of the calendars from AD 22 to AD 45 will show that AD 32 was the third year of such a cycle. As, therefore, the difference between the solar year and the lunar is 11 days, it would amount in three years to 33¾ days; and the intercalation of a thirteenth month (Ve-adar) of thirty days would leave an epact still remaining of 3¾ days; and the "ecclesiastical moon" being that much before the real moon, the feast day would have fallen on the Friday (11th April), exactly as the narrative of the Gospels requires."

### Recap of the Clear Scriptural Account of the Trials

Jesus upon His arrest was first brought before Annas, who questioned and struck and sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas, his son-in-law and chief priest that year (Jn 18:13-14, 19-23). False witnesses then testified there against Jesus; and they spat on, buffeted and struck Him (Jn 18:24, Mk 14:53-65). As soon as morning came, the elders, chief priests and scribes came to form a council, which asked Jesus only one question; whether He was the Christ. On Jesus' affirmation, they condemned Him without any examination of evidence (Mt 27:1, Mk 15:1, Lk 22:66-71). It was still early morning, when Jesus was brought to the judgement hall (Mt 27:1-2, Mk 15:1-14, Lk 23:1-6, Jn 18:28-40). Pilate, examining, found no fault in Jesus, but learning that Jesus was from Galilee, sent Him to Herod who was then in Jerusalem. Herod was happy at last to see Jesus but Jesus answered not a word to he who had beheaded the Baptist. Herod's soldiers set Jesus at nought and sent Him back to Pilate, arrayed in a gorgeous robe (Lk 23:7-11). Pilate tried a final time to release Jesus, but the fierce Jews clamoured even more vehemently. Pilate then gave in and ordered the sentence that they demanded (Lk 23:13-24, Mt 27:19-26).

All of these events happened between Thursday night after the Last Supper and Friday by noon.

### The Julian Dates of Christ Jesus' Passion Week

Lk 3:1-22 state that John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip, tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilene and Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests. Tiberius succeeded his stepfather Octavius on 19 August AD 14, so his 15<sup>th</sup> year was the year beginning 19 August AD 28. The first Passover of Jesus' ministry would thus be in Nisan AD 29, and His last in Nisan AD 32, since he ministered over four Passovers or 3+ years (Jn 2:13, 5:1, 6:4 and 11:55).

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem in fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies of Zech 9:9 and Dan 9:26 occurred on Palm Sunday, 10 Nisan. The Julian date was 6 April AD 32. He was crucified on 15 Nisan or 11 April AD 32 and His Resurrection was on 13 April AD 32.

#### Fulfilment of Daniel's Prophecy of 70 Weeks (Dan 9:1-19, 24-27)

As the seventy *years* of exile in Babylon neared completion, in accordance with the prophecy of Jer 25:11-12, 29:10, in the first year of the reign of Darius, Daniel sought the face of God in fasting, ashes and sackcloth. Even before he started his supplications, Gabriel was sent to give Daniel the prophecy of 70 weeks שבעים [period of seven (days, years) heptad] of God's remaining covenantal dealings with the Jews, to finish their transgression, make an end of sins and embrace Messiah, *starting from a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*. In the context of Daniel's meditation, the 'weeks' are of *years*, and based on the Jewish lunar-solar year of 360 days<sup>4</sup>; the prophecy thus refers to a period 70 x 7 x 360 days.

Only *one decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem* is known in history – that of Artaxerxes in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, given in response to Nehemiah during the first day of Nisan (Ne 2:1, 5). Artaxerxes acceded to the throne in July BC 465 when his father, Xerxes, was murdered. His 20<sup>th</sup> year is 445 BC. Based on the Paschal moon, 1 Nisan that year, as computed by the Astronomer Royal, Sir George Airy, at Sir Robert Anderson's request, was on 14 March 445 BC. Between this date, and the prophetic Messianic date of 6 April AD 32; the only day when Jesus openly acknowledged the people's accolade as Messiah, is exactly 69 weeks x 7 years x 360 or 173,880 days!

476 Gregorian years x 365 days =	173,740 days
Add (14 March to 6 April, both inclusive):	24 days
Add for leap years:	<u>116 days</u>
Total:	<u>173,880 days</u>

AD starts with AD 1 and between 1 BC and AD 1 is one year. The Julian year is 11 minutes 10.46 seconds or about 1/129 day longer than the mean solar year, and would contain 3 leap years too many in 4 centuries. The adjustment for leap years would be to add back 476/4 minus 3 or 116 leap days. (Or in Gregorian calendar terms, 300 BC, 200 BC and 100 BC are not leap years).

<sup>4</sup> As was the Babylonian year, which also explains the ancient sextant (compass) being divided into 360 degrees.

### The Julian Year of Jesus' Birth and His Age at Crucifixion

Per Mt 2:1-15, Jesus was born in the days of King Herod the Great, and Joseph, being warned by God in a dream, brought the young child and His mother to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. Per Lk 2:41, Jesus' parents "went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover", which may indicate that Herod died within a year of Jesus' birth. Per Lk 2:1-4, Jesus' birth was in the days of the decree of Caesar Augustus that all of the world should be taxed, which was *first made* when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, for which Joseph and Mary travelled back to Bethlehem (thus fulfilling Mic 5:2).

Many modern scholars, following Emil Schürer (German theologian, 1844 - 1910)'s history of the Jews, date Herod's death at end March or early April 4 BC, based on Josephus' account that Herod died after a lunar eclipse. A partial eclipse took place on 13 March 4 BC, but full eclipses also occurred in 5, 2 and 1 BC. The eminent chronologist Henry Fynes Clinton (1781 - 1852) allowed the following latitude, "*The nativity was not more than about eighteen months before the death of Herod, nor less than five or six. The death of Herod was either in the spring of 4 BC, or the spring of 3 BC. The earliest possible date then for the nativity is the autumn of 6 BC, eighteen months before the death of Herod in 4 BC. The latest will be the autumn of 4 BC, about six months before his death, assumed to be in spring 3 BC.*"

Of Cyrenius (P. Sulpicius Quirinus in Latin), Justin Martyr, writing a hundred years after John, appealed to the lists of his census to prove that though Joseph and Mary lived at Nazareth, Jesus was born at Bethlehem, the royal city. His first taxing thus was made before the death of Herod, and that while it was proceeding, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Some have ridiculed this statement on the grounds that Quirinus was Governor from AD 6. It has since however been proved by Bergmann, Mommsen, and by Dr Augustus Zumpt in *Das Geburtsjahr Christi*, 1869, that Quirinus was *twice* governor of the province, and that his first term of office dated from the autumn of 4 BC, when he succeeded Quintilius Varus (BC 6 to BC 4) until 1 BC, and again from AD 6 to AD 11, and that there is a gap in the discovered list of governors of Syria. "*This double legation is based upon a passage in Tacitus, and confirmed by an old monumental inscription discovered between the Villa Hadriani and the Via Tiburtina. Hence Luke might very properly call the census about the time of Christ's birth "the first made" under Quirinius, to distinguish it from the second and better known, which he himself mentions in his second treatise on the history of the origin of Christianity (Acts 5:37).*" By the nature of the case, it would take several years to carry out the decree of Augustus for a universal census of the provinces. Zumpt assumes that Sentius Saturninus, Governor of Syria, 9-6 BC, began a census in Judaea to substitute a head tax in money for the former customary tribute in produce; Quintilius Varus, 6-4 BC, continued it; and Quirinius completed the census. This would explain the confident statement of Tertullian, which he must have derived from some good source, that enrolments were held under Augustus by Sentius Saturninus in Judaea.

Lk 1:24-26 tells us that Elizabeth had been with child for five months; and on the sixth month, Gabriel appeared to her cousin, Mary. John the Baptist was thus 5 months older than Jesus. Elizabeth's conception would be after Zacharias had finished his course of priestly temple service. In 1 Chr 24:1-19, the sons of Aaron were divided into 24 priestly courses, who took turns to serve in House of the Lord, starting from the first ecclesiastical month of Nisan. Zacharias was of Abia (Abijah), the eight course (Lk 1:5), and would serve in the second half of the fourth month, Tammuz, sometime in June-July. If Elizabeth conceived in July and delivered in April-May, Jesus' birth would be September-October. Given that Cyrenius took office from the autumn of 4 BC, this would be in 4 BC.

If Herod died later than 4 BC, perhaps in Spring 3 BC, with the last parts of his life filled with madness and a terrible disease for his many atrocities, all the facts would tie in. If so, Jesus was 34 years + at the time of His death, being about 30 years old when He started His ministry (Lk 3:23). Cf. the Levites, who serve in the tabernacle from between 30 to 50 years old (Nu 3:17, 4:3, 23, 30, 35, 39, 43, 47).

Almighty God in His Sovereign Wisdom withheld the exact date of Jesus birth lest perhaps we elevate the date above the Person and Lordship of Jesus Christ. However enough is given in the Scriptures to show that Jesus' birth took place as an historic fact.

### 12:16-22 Mixed Reactions from Different Groups

*These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him. The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.*

12:16: As they followed Jesus into Jerusalem, the disciples at first comprehended not the happenings. They had fearfully expected that the authorities would immediately arrest Jesus.

12:17-18: Instead big crowds greeted Jesus, in loud rejoicing and Messianic praise, for they had heard the witnesses who had seen first-hand Jesus calling Lazarus forth from the dead.

12:19: The Pharisees on the other hand were completely frustrated and dismayed.

12:20-22: Certain Greek speakers (Gentile proselytes or Hellenistic Jews) who came to worship at the Passover approached Philip, who was of Bethsaida, Galilee, and implored continuously (past imperfect tense), “Sir, we would see Jesus”. Philip informed Andrew and they both informed Jesus.

#### We Would See Jesus

*We would see Jesus; for the shadows lengthen  
Across this little landscape of our life;  
We would see Jesus, our weak faith to strengthen  
For the last weariness, the final strife.*

*We would see Jesus, the great rock Foundation  
Whereon our feet were set with sovereign grace;  
Nor life nor death, with all their agitation,  
Can thence remove us, if we see His face.*

*We would see Jesus; other lights are paling,  
Which for long years we have rejoiced to see;  
The blessings of our pilgrimage are failing;  
We would not mourn them, for we go to Thee.*

*We would see Jesus; yet the spirit lingers  
Round the dear objects it has loved so long,  
And earth from earth can scarce unclasp its fingers;  
Our love to Thee makes not this love less strong.*

*We would see Jesus: sense is all too binding,  
And heaven appears too dim, too far away;  
We would see Thee, Thyself our hearts reminding  
What Thou hast suffered, our great debt to pay.*

*We would see Jesus: this is all we're needing;  
Strength, joy, and willingness come with the sight;  
We would see Jesus, dying, risen, pleading;  
Then welcome day, and farewell mortal night.*

Anna B Warner

### 12:23-26 Jesus' Hour Is Come

*And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.*

The hour is come cf. Jn 2:4, 7:30, 8:20. Earlier no man arrested Jesus for His time had not come. Now, the time has come. Even the Greeks sought to see Jesus, while the Jews remained still hardened and blinded, indicative of the rejection that would soon seal Jesus' crucifixion, Jesus says, "*The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*"

Cf. also 13:31 and 17:1-5. Of Jesus' glorification through crucifixion, Isaiah had foretold,

*"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."* (Is 53:10-12)

Glorified is δοξασθῆναι (praise, honour, magnify). When Jesus is lifted up in our lives, as He was on the cross, He shall draw all men unto Himself. Paul was determined not to know anything except Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor 2:2; cf. Gal 6:14, cf. Heb 12:2). By His crucifixion, salvation is extended to all, including the Greeks (gentiles).

Jesus further explains that the corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die in order to bring forth much fruit. Similarly, He calls on us to hate our own lives in this world to keep it to life eternal; to serve Him and follow Him, which results in the Father's (not man's) honour.

### 12:27-33 Jesus' Soul Troubled

*Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.*

Jesus' soul ψυχή (psuche, the whole soul) was troubled. This is more than we can comprehend. Jesus in His humanity, looks to the cross before Him, when all of God's waves and billows will go over Him (Ps 42:7; cf. Mt 27:46, Mk 15:34, Ps 22 to come). He could not say to the Father "*save me from this hour*" for which He had come, but only, "*Father, glorify thy name!*"

At that point, a voice sounded from heaven, "*I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*" This is the second time such a voice from heaven sounded; the first being when Jesus submitted to John's baptism before the start of His ministry (Mt 3:17, Mk 1:11, Lk 3:22). Jesus said that this voice came not for His sake but for ours. This seals the hour that has come; the hour also of judgement for the world, and for its prince, which shall be cast out; for on the cross - the type of death signified beforehand by the words of Jesus - Jesus will secure victory, once and for all!

### 12:34-43 The Jews' Blindness and Hardness of Heart

*The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the*

*saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

The Jews, from their limited knowledge, cites the Scriptures that Christ abides forever (perhaps from Ps 89:4, 110:4, Isa 9:7, Ez 37:25 and Dan 7:14). Upon this, they challenged Jesus to explain why He said that the Son of man must be lifted up i.e. they did understand, on the cross, and they asked Jesus to elucidate who this Son of man was.

Jesus told them to walk while they have the light, for He was the light (see 1:4, 9, 8:12, 9:5, 12:46). After this, Jesus departed and hid Himself from them. Night had come on the last day of Jesus public ministry, now fully completed, two days before Passover.

Although He had done so many miracles before them, the Jews still believed not on Him – all according to Isaiah's prophecy, who saw His glory and spake of Him (Isa 53:1, 6:10, 6:1-5).

Nevertheless, some of the chief rulers, such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea (Jn 3:1.7:48-50, 19:38) believed on Jesus, but because of the Pharisees, did not confess Him, lest they be excommunicated from the synagogue (Jn 7:13, 9:22) for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God (cf. Jn 5:41, 44).

#### **12:44-50 A Final Gospel Cry – Jesus proclaims that He IS the Light of the World!**

*Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.*

Jesus cried out a last time, summarising what He had told them. Whoever believes in Him believes not just on Him but on the Father that sent Him. Whoever beholds Him beholds the Father. Jesus came as a light unto the world so whoever believes in Him shall not abide in darkness. He came to save and not to judge. Those who rejected His words would not be judged by Him but by the words that Jesus had spoken to them for Jesus had not spoken from Himself but had spoken all that the Father had commanded Him to say and speak (cf. Deut 18:19 “*And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him*” spoken of the Prophet to come). The Father's commandment is life everlasting, giving life to all who believes and obeys the words.

## 13:1 – 17:26 “THE LAST SUPPER”

### 13:1-38 Jesus Loved His Disciples to the Very End

#### 13:1-11 Jesus Washes the Apostles’ Feet

*Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.*

13:1: Jesus had fervently desired to eat the Passover with His disciples before He suffered, for He would not thereof eat of it until the day it is fulfilled in heaven (Lk 22:15-16). The night (14 Nissan) for the Passover to be killed and eaten had come, before the Feast of 15 Nissan, and Jesus, knowing fully (εἰδῶς) that His hour was come, having loved His disciples, loved them to the end in fullest extent.

13:2-5: When they had finished the supper (the Passover lamb is to eaten “*in haste*” with “*loins girded, shoes on feet and staff in hand*” per Ex 12:11), with the devil having prompted the heart of Judas Iscariot that it was the time to betray Jesus, Jesus knowing absolutely (οἶδα) that the Father had given all things into His hands and that He was come from and was going back to God, rose from supper, laid aside His garments, took a towel and tied it around His waist, and then poured water into a bason and began to wash His disciples’ feet and wipe them with the towel, showing to each of them the extent of His love.

13:6-8: When Jesus came to Peter, Peter was in incomprehension that his Lord (κύριος, master, owner) would wash his feet. Jesus told him to be patient and he will afterwards comprehend. Peter emphatically protested in a self-humility that was not subject fully to Christ’s leadership, “Thou shalt never wash my feet!” Jesus then replied that if He did not wash Peter, Peter would have no part or share in Him.

13:9-10: The impulsive Peter goes from one extreme to the other, “*Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!*” Jesus further explains, “*The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.*” The guest was supposed to bathe before coming to a feast and so only the feet had to be washed on removing the sandals, whereupon s/he would be externally, completely clean (cf. Mt 23:26, 27:59); hence there is no need to wash the hands and head as well.

13:11: Jesus knew who would betray Him (and He had known this since over a year earlier - see Jn 6:64, 70-71), which was why He said, “Not all of you are clean.” Perhaps this was a final appeal to Judas Iscariot to still turn while he still could.

#### 13:12-17 Jesus’ Example for us to do as He had done

*So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

13:12-15: After Jesus had put back on His garments and sat down again, He asked them if they realized the significance of what He had just done to them. The disciples rightly call him Lord and Master. If He then had washed their feet, we also ought to wash *one another’s* (ἀλλήλων reciprocal pronoun, genitive

plural, *each other, one another*) feet based on His example. (Compare the believing widow of 1 Tim 5:10 who washed the saints' feet).

13:16-17: It is absolute truth that "*The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than the One that sent him.*" If we can only understand and submit to do this, we would be in a happy (μακάριος) blessed state (cf. Mt 5:3-11 and Lk 6:20-22).

### 13:18-30 "One of you shall Betray Me!"

*I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.*

13:18: Jesus repeats foretelling them that one of them will betray Him, and He cites Ps 41:9, "*Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*" This is very painful for the One betrayed even as David was betrayed by his own son, Absalom and his own counsellor, Ahithophel (2 Sam 17:1-23).

13:19-20: Jesus tells them this before it comes to pass so that when it transpires, they may believe that Jesus is He, the "I AM" that was sent as Saviour and Redeemer! (Jn 8:24, 58). In absolute truth Jesus says that whoever receives one whom He sends is in fact receiving Him; and whoever receives Him is receiving the One that sent Him, i.e. the Father.

13:21: After saying this, Jesus was troubled in spirit (πνεῦμα) (cf. also Jn 11:33, 12:27) and He testified, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.*"

13:22-26: A year earlier when Jesus said this (6:64, 70-71), the disciples took little notice but now, they were jolted and looked on one another, wondering and doubting about whom Jesus meant. As John the beloved was reclining on Jesus' bosom, Peter motioned to him to find out from Jesus whom He meant, and when John had asked this question, Jesus answered, "*It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.*" Thereupon, Jesus dipped the sop and gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

13:27-29: Right after taking the morsel, Satan entered into Judas. Jesus then hastened Judas on to do quickly what he was going to do. His Divinely appointed hour has come and there is no need for delay or restraining. None of the disciples comprehended what had happened or that Judas was leaving to betray Jesus. Some thought that Jesus had asked Judas to go and purchase the things needed for the 15 Nissan Feast or to give something to the poor during the Feast.

13:30: Judas, upon eating the morsel, immediately went out, and it was night.

### 13:31-35 Jesus' New Commandment

*Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

13:31-32: After Judas had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in

Him.” Glorified ἐδοξάσθη (verb indicative aorist passive 3rd person singular from δοξάζω praise, honour, magnify) - the consummation of glory in death both for the Son and the Father. Cf. Jn 7:39, 12:16 and here four times. This will be straightway without postponement.

13:33: Jesus addresses the eleven as His “little children” (cf. 1 Jn 2:1), and says to them that He has only a very little while left with them. They shall seek Him but where He goes, they cannot physically go, and He says this to the eleven even as He had said to the Jews.

13:34: Jesus as special consolation, gives the disciples **a new commandment**, “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.*”

The Old Testament commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves (Lev 19:18, 34), which is a sum of the Sixth to Tenth Commandments (Ex 20:13-17, Deut 5:17-21). It has practical forms, behaviour norms and responsibilities, such as doing no unrighteousness in judgement, in meter-yard, in weight or in measure (Lev 19:35); and looking out for one’s neighbour’s ox, sheep or ass, if it goes astray into one’s property or if it falls down by the way (Deut 22:1-4).

The command is new [καινὴν adjective accusative feminine singular no degree; from καινός (*kainos*), which denotes new, of that which is unaccustomed or unused, not new in time or recent, (Gk *neos*) but *new as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old*. Cf., Mt 13:52, 27:60, Mk 2:21, Lk 22:20, 2 Cor 3:6, 5:17, Heb 9:15, Rev 2:17, 5:9, 21:1, 5].

### In What Way is this Commandment New?

1. **The Subject is Different:** The Old Commandment was given to Israel, which represents everyone under the law of God. The new commandment was given to the eleven, representing true Christian disciples, who truly believe in, love and follow Jesus. The motivation thus is also different. We are to love one another, predicated on Christ’s example consistently set before us, rather than predicated upon the laws of Moses, with its legal consequences. In this sense, the commandment is also *new as a new dawn* where “the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth” (1Jn 2:7-8).”
2. **The Object is Different:** In the Old Commandment, the neighbours loved include strangers in the proximity, as illustrated beautifully in Jesus’ Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37). In the New Commandment, the object of love is one another (ἀλλήλων) – as in the washing of feet in 13:12-15 - i.e. love for and among the Christian brethren.
3. **The Extent is Vaster:** In the Old Commandment, the extent of love required is only that of love of oneself. We need not love our neighbour more than we love ourselves. In the New Commandment, we are to love our neighbour more than we love ourselves. The extent is limitless, for it is to the same extent in which Jesus Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us, as elaborated in Jn 15:12-17, where Jesus said, “*Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.*”
4. **The Purpose and Application is Mutual:** This commandment to love one another is consolation for the disciples who would soon lose the physical and earthly fellowship, companionship and guidance of their Lord. At the same time, the world would hate and persecute the true believers (Jn 15:17-21), even as Jesus said, “*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*” This is why Christians need this mutual love and encouragement, as they risk all to follow Christ.

NB: This new commandment is to be distinguished from the command to husbands to love their wives (Eph 5:25), predicated on the love of Christ for His Bride, the Church, whom He gave Himself for.

### The Evangelical Result of Obeying the New Commandment

“*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*” The love and self-sacrifice of Christians will do more to extend the name of Christ than any preaching or argument. In the

early ages, heathen were wont to say: “See how these Christians love one another.” Can we say that this is still true today? Jesus said prophetically in Mt 24:12 of the end days, “*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*”

### 13:36-38 **Peter will Deny Jesus Thrice**

*Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.*

Peter, absorbed with the earlier words, “*Where I go, ye cannot come*”, asked, “*Lord, where are you going?*” His main concern was self-interest based on his fear of what would become of him and his fellow disciples on their separation from Jesus, rather than an interest in Jesus’ welfare and where He was really going. Jesus answered that Peter cannot now follow where He goes, but will follow later. The Divine is not to take all believers out of the earth but for believers to remain as witnesses of the Gospel. Peter said, “*Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.*” This gives rise to Jesus answering and foretelling to Peter and to the rest of the eleven that Peter will deny Him three times that very night before the cock crows (cf. Mt 26:34, Mk 14:30, Lk 22:34).

## 14:1-31 Jesus Comforts the Eleven

### 14:1-3 Let Not Your Heart be Troubled

*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

14:1: By this time, the disciples were very troubled with confusion and sorrow, as well as afraid for themselves. Jesus had earlier foretold of His impending betrayal and condemnation (Mt 20:17-19, Mk 10:32-34, Lk 18:31; cf. Jn 14:27, 16:22-23); and had just done so again (Jn 13:21). Judas Iscariot had left the Upper Room, while Simon Peter was grappling with Jesus' prediction that he shall betray Him three times that very night before the cock crows.

Jesus, facing crucifixion shortly, sought not comfort for Himself but instead, starts to comfort and assure the eleven (14:1-16:33) and starts by telling them: - 1) *not to allow their hearts to be troubled*; and 2) *that as they continue to believe in God* (indicative present active verb), *they should also keep on believing and placing their faith in Him* (imperative present active verb)!

14:2: Jesus tells them that in His Father's house are many mansions (μοναὶ dwelling, resting or abiding places or rooms) - a precious picture of heaven. If this was not so, He would have told them but it is clearly so, hence He goes to prepare a place for His followers (cf., "the ark of the covenant of the LORD going before Israel in the three days' journey to search out a resting place for them" (Nu 10:33).)

14:3: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again" (ἐρχομαι futuristic present middle, definite promise of the second coming of Christ (cf. literal sense in Mt 8:9; Mk 7:1, 31; Lk 19:5; Jn 10:10; Ac 16:37, 39; Rom 9:9; 2 Cor 13:1; Heb 6:7; Rev 18:10.) "And will receive you unto myself" (καὶ παραλήψομαι future middle of παραλαμβάνω i.e. take (to oneself), take with or along Mt 1:20, 24, 2:13, 20, 12:45, 24:40, Mk 4:36, Lk 9:28, 11:26; Act 15:39, 21:24, 26, 32). Literally, "And I shall take you along to my own home" (cf. Jn 13:36).

This blessed promise is fulfilled for all believers who die before the Second Coming, for Jesus comes for them also, "that" (ὅνα in order that, denoting purpose, aim, or goal as in Mt 1:22, Mk 4:21, Lk 20:10, Jn 5:20, Act 5:15, Rom 14:9, Gal 2:4, Eph 6:22, Rev 3:9) "where I am there ye may be also." This is the purpose of the departure and the return of Christ. And this is heaven for the believer to be where Jesus is and to be with Him forever. (cf. Jn 12:26).

### 14:4-6 Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life

*And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

14:4: "Where I go you know, and the way, you know" – a definite allusion to Peter's cry of puzzle, "Lord, where are you going?" in Jn 13:36. The path to the Father's house is clear.

14:5: Thomas now says, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Thomas' focus is on what he can see and touch materially or physically.

14:6: In answer to Thomas, Jesus said, "I am the Way" (cf. Heb 9:8, 10:20; Eph 2:18), "and the Truth" (the Eternal Logos; cf. Jn 1:1, 14, 17, 1 Jn 5:20), "and the Life" (cf. Jn 1:4, 5:26, 40, 6:33, 47, 8:12, 10:28, 11:25, etc.). "No one comes to the Father except through me." In Jn 10:7-9, Jesus said He is the Door to the sheepfold, through whom the sheep may enter in. In Jn 10:10-11, Jesus came to give life: He is the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep.

### 14:7-14 Jesus and the Father Are ONE

*If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*

14:7: “If ye had known” (ἐγνώκειτέ past perfect indicative of γινώσκω, to know, come to know by personal experience). Much as they loved Jesus, Thomas and the rest had not really come to know Jesus; for if they had really known Him, they should have known the Father also.

Per Lightfoot: “And from henceforth ye know him” – may be rendered “Henceforward therefore know him: and acknowledge the Father in all that I have done, brought in, and am to introduce still, and set your hearts to rest in it: believing that you see the Father in me, and in the things that I do.” Per Robertson: Probably inchoative present active indicative, “ye are beginning to know the Father from now on... And have seen Him - For they had seen Jesus, the Son of God; the Image of God; and like God (Jn 1:18).” Almighty God is like Jesus - a bold statement of Deity – perfectly represented in and by Christ, the ordained perfect manifestation of the Father.

14:8: Philip now speaks up: “Lord”, “Show us the Father” “And it shall suffice for us”. Was he asking for a theophany like Moses in Ex 33:18 prayed? And when the law was given to Moses, the Israelites saw God in his glory - was Philip here asking Jesus to show them the Father and His glory, so that they will have no more doubt about the new law and economy that Jesus was bringing in? Jesus’ answer shows that Philip did not grasp what Jesus just expressed.

14:9-11: Jesus patiently repeats to Philip, “Have I been with you for so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.” (cf. Jn 5:19, 20, 10:30, 38, 12:45 and 15:24, Col 1:15, Heb 1:3)

### Greater Works Than These Accompany Those that Believe

14:12: It is a statement of absolute verity that “that one also” that believes in Jesus will also do the works that He do; and greater works than these will he do, because Jesus was going to the Father. Greater works is not necessarily greater miracles or greater spiritual works in quality but greater in quantity. Cf. those saved on the day of Pentecost at the preaching of Peter, or those saved during Paul’s missionary journeys, versus the lesser numbers converted in Israel during Jesus’ ministry that had to be restricted and centred on the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The reason for this is because Jesus was going to the Father, whereupon, He and the Father would send forth the Holy Spirit as Paraclete (Jn 16:7).

14:13-14: For “that one also” that believes in Jesus, whatever s/he ask in Jesus name, this will Jesus do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son (cf. Jn 13:31, 15:16; 16:23, 24.) If such a one, who truly believes, shall ask anything in Jesus’ name, He will do it. Christian prayer is to be in the Name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

### 14:15-26 The Holy Spirit Comforter

*If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye*

*shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

14:15: “If you love (ἀγαπάτε, verb subjunctive present active 2nd person plural) – “if you keep on loving me ...” “You will keep” (τηρήσατε verb imperative aorist active 2nd person plural) – continued love prevents disobedience. (cf. also Jn 14: 21, 23, 15:10, 1 Jn 2:3, 5:3, 2 Jn 6).

14:16: “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter to be with you forever.” Another (ἄλλον) = another of like kind, not another of a heterogeneous variety or kind; i.e. One of the same kind and likeness as Jesus. Comforter (παράκλητον) Paraclete, Helper, Advocate who advocates, pleads or intercedes on our behalf (c.f. Rom 8:26, 1 Jn 2:1).

14:17: “Even the Spirit of Truth” (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας cf. Jn 15:27, 16:13, 1 Jn 4:6), “whom the world cannot receive”. Sinful men cannot receive the Spirit of Truth (cf., Rom 8:7, 1 Cor 2:14) “because it neither sees him nor knows him” (cf. Jn 1:10).

“You know (γινώσκετε) him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” The Holy Spirit has been dwelling with the disciples via the acts, words and presence of Jesus – “He dwells with you” – but the day comes when the Spirit of Truth “shall be in you”, dwelling inside their hearts and souls; when their experiential knowledge of the Spirit will then become even more real.

14:18: “I will not leave you comfortless” (ὀρφανούς i.e. orphans; disconsolate, hapless, parentless children) “I will come for you” (Jn 14:3). No stronger words of comfort and assurance can be given than what Jesus now gave to the eleven and to all that shall believe after them in the same manner of faith.

14:19: “Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.” By the next day, Jesus would have been crucified and buried and the world would no more see Him. The disciples, in contrast (to the blind unseeing world), will however continue to behold Jesus (ὕμεις δὲ θεωρεῖτέ με). Because He lives, we also will live!

14:20: “In that day” (the NT dispensation of the Holy Spirit Coming at Pentecost – cf. Acts 1 to 3) “you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.”

14:21: “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.” (Jn 7:17, 8:31, 32, 14:15, 1 Jn 2:5). “And he who loves me will be loved by my Father” (cf. Jn 12:26, 16:27). “And I will love him and manifest myself to him.” A glorious double assurance! Both the Father Himself as well as the Son will love the obedient believer, and the Son will manifest Himself to him. To manifest is ἐμφανίσω, to reveal (Jn 14:21), become visible, appear (Mt 27:53, Heb 9:24), make known, explain (Act 23:15, 22, 25:15, Heb 11:14). At that day, Jesus and His presence will be very real to the true believer.

14:22: Judas, not Iscariot (who left at 13:30), also called Thaddaeus or Lebbaeus (Mt 10:3, Mk 3:17), the brother of James (Act 1:13), asked Jesus how it was possible that He would manifest Himself to them but not to the world. This is the fourth interruptive question following Peter's (13:36), Thomas' (14:5) and Philip's (14:8). Judas, was still not grasping the spiritual truth but thinking in terms of a visible, physical manifestation – how was it possible that Jesus could be physically visible to them but not to the world.

14:23: In answer to Judas, Jesus patiently repeats what He had said in 14:15 & 21, “If anyone keeps on loving me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” Both the Father and the Son will come and make their dwelling place in the obedient believer, even as the Holy Spirit would (14:17, 1 Cor 3:16)

14:24: On the other hand, Jesus also gives a warning: “The one, who continues not to love me, does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s, who sent me.” This includes not only all the words of Jesus recorded in John but also in the Synoptics as well.

14:25-26: Jesus had spoken all these words while He was still with the eleven. He tells them, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name” – here the Paraclete is identified as the Holy Spirit, His full title given as τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, which stresses that the Spirit of God is Holy.

The Holy Spirit is sent both by the Father (Lk 24:49, Jn 14:16, Act 2:33) as well as by the Son (Jn 15:26, 16:7, 20:22). This doctrine of the Proceeding Holy Spirit both from the Father and the Son is stated in the Nicene Creed of the Latin Church. This does not contradict the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity being Co-Equal and Co-Eternal in Essence, for this is a matter of different positional roles within the Trinity. Hence Jesus in 14:28 said, “My Father is greater than I.”

“He will teach you all things” - the Spirit is the Church’s Teacher and Guide. “All things” is comprehensive, as applied to the Apostles. For us, it suffices if it means all that we need to know of cardinal truths. “And bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” – the Holy Spirit teaching the Apostles and bringing to remembrance all that Jesus taught, enabling them to pen the New Testament Scriptures. Thus Pentecost was a transforming event for the once dull-of-hearing Apostles, giving them sharp understanding and opening them to new revelations from God (cf. Peter at Joppa and Caesarea).

#### 14:27 “My Peace I Give Unto You”

*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

“Peace I leave with you”, “My own peace (εἰρήνην τὴν ἐμὴν the peace that I possess, which is mine own, the secret of Jesus’ own equanimity) “I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you” – Jesus’ bequest before He goes is not given stingily with human limits as the world gives, but liberally without measure. This shalom of Christ is used in His post-Resurrection appearances to His disciples (Jn 20:19, 21, 26) and in the Apostolic greetings (Rom 1:7, 1 Cor 1:3, 2 Cor 1:2, Gal 1:3, Eph 1:2, Phil 1:2, Col 1:2, 1 Thess 1:1, 2 Thess 1:2, 3:16, 1 Tim 1:2, 2 Tim 1:2, Tit 1:4, Phm 1:3, 2 Jn 1:3; 3 Jn 1:14, etc.).

“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” Jesus, having given them so abundantly of His own Peace (cf. Phil 4:7); the eleven no longer needed to remain troubled or afraid.

#### 14:28-31 “My Father is Greater than I”

*Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.*

14:28: “You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you’ – Jesus is going away and will come to them; both futuristic present. “If you loved me” - imperfect active tense referring to present time, implying that the disciples are not loving Jesus as they should. For if they did, they “would have been rejoicing for Him already.”

This is because “Jesus was going (home) to His Father”, “for the Father is greater than I (μείζων μου).” The filial relation makes this necessary. Not a distinction in nature or essence (cf. Jn 10:30) but in rank in the Trinity. The very explanation here is proof of the Deity of the Son.

14:29: “And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.” (cf. 13:19; 16:4).

14:30: “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world (ὁ τοῦ κόσμου ἄρχων) – a reference to Satan as in Jn 12:31 where Jesus refers to his being judged. Satan is in possession of the evil world, as seen in the temptations of Jesus (Mt 4:8-10, Lk 4:5-8), where he claimed power over the world and offered to share it with Jesus. Jesus did not deny then Satan’s power but later in 12:31, had proclaimed final victory over him, who shall be cast out.

“Cometh and hath nothing in me” – Satan has no hold on Jesus, for it is sin that gives Satan a hold on man, whereas Jesus is sinless. Satan also has no part or share in that which is Christ, for any part that he might have had before the fall, was forfeited by his disobedience then.

14:31: “But I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father” – the purpose of Jesus completed submission to the Father, even unto death, is so that the world may know experientially that He loves the Father with a complete, perfect agape love.

“*Arise, let us go from here*” – may give an impression that the Upper Room discourse ended at this point and Jesus said the words in Jn 15-17 as they walked to Gethsemane. Leon Morris however observes: “It is more likely, as R. H. Lightfoot thinks, that we should take the words about departing as referring to a stage in the teaching... This paragraph will then represent the close of one such stage, on the internal side; and it is noteworthy that, whereas at its close, in His devotion and obedience to the Father, He invites the disciples to arise and act along with Him, *the first person in the plural being used*. At the close of the next instruction, He is the only Agent in the conquest of the world; the first person singular alone is used. Hoskyns and Dodd are others who see in the words a pause in the discourse rather than a change of scene. Most of our trouble is caused by our natural inclination to expect the writer to arrange his material in accordance with our modern standards of logic and coherence. But John has his own standards, and arranges his work to produce effects in his own way. All theories of dislocation and rearrangement come up against the difficulty that the final redactor must have seen the meaning of the words at the end of this chapter just as clearly as we do. Yet he retained (or created!) the present order. By far the simplest proceeding appears to be to take the narrative as it stands, and recognize a major division in the discourse at the end of this chapter.”

## 15:1-27: Abiding in Jesus

### 15:1-11: Jesus is the True Vine

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

15:1: Jesus is the true, dependable and genuine Vine (ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή). Picture this with the fruit of the vine that they had just drunk earlier (Mt 26:29, Mk 14:24), of which Jesus said He will no longer drink until the day He drinks it new with His disciples in His Father's kingdom. His Father is the husbandman (γεωργός); farmer, vinedresser (cf. Mk 12:1, 1 Cor 3:9, Jas 5:7, 2 Tim 2:6); who waits patiently for the fruit and tenderly cares for and labour over the vineyard.

15:2-3: Every branch "in Christ" that bears not fruit, the Father-Husbandman takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes or cleanses (καθαίρει) that it may bear forth more fruit. The disciples were already clean through the Word Jesus had spoken to them (Jn 13:10, 17:19).

15:4: "Abide in Me" (Μείνατε ἐν ἐμοί) - imperative aorist active 2nd person plural verb of μένω (remain, stay, live, dwell, continue, abide). The only way to continue "clean" (pruned) and to bear fruit is to maintain vital spiritual connexion with Christ (the Vine). Judas is gone and Satan will sift the rest of them like wheat as he would Peter (Lk 22:31).

15:5-6: Christ is the Vine and we are the branches. The one, who abides in Christ and in whom Christ abides, is the one that bears much fruit; for apart from Christ, we can do nothing. On the other hand, the one that does not abide in Christ is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

15:7-8: If a person abides in Christ and His word abides in him, that one shall ask whatever he wishes and it shall be done for him (γενήσεται) i.e. "come to pass". This is an astounding command and promise, but not without conditions and limitations for it involves such intimate union and harmony with Christ that nothing will be asked out of accord with the mind of Christ and so of the Father. For it is herein through this, that the Father is glorified that the disciples bear much fruit and so prove that they are Jesus' disciples.

15:9-11: Jesus tells the disciples that in the same manner in which the Father had loved Him, He also had loved them; thus they are to continue abiding in His love. And the way to abide in Jesus' love is to do Jesus' commandments, just as Jesus abided and continued in the Father's love by doing the Father's commandments. These things Jesus had spoken to the disciples that His permanent, absolute joy may be in them and thereby, their joy may be full and complete.

### 15:12-17: The Commandment to Love One Another Elaborated

*This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another.*

15:12-13: Jesus repeats His new commandment of 13:34 – This is His command that we love one another to the same extent and quality of love with which He had loved us; for greater love has no one than this that one lays down his life for his friends. (cf. Rom 5:7, 1 Jn 3:16). This is the extent of the love of the new commandment. “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.”

15:14-15: Jesus now introduces a new element, calling His disciples His friends (rather than servants cf. Jn 13:13, 16), if they do whatsoever He commands them to do. For henceforth, He no longer calls them servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; He now has called them “friends” for He had made known to them all that He had heard from the Father.

15:16: The disciples had not chosen Jesus but Jesus had selected them (ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς,) – the same word in Mk 13:20, Lk 6:44, 9:35, 10:42, Jn 15:16, Act 15:22, 25, Eph 1:4, Jas 2:5. And He had ordained or appointed them to go and keep bearing fruit; fruit that lasts; in order that whatsoever they may ask of the Father in Jesus’ Name, the Father will give to them.

15:17: These things Jesus commanded them so that they may love one another – this being the third repetition of Jn 13:34, 15:12. During supper earlier, the disciples had been guilty of strife and envy. After that supper had ended, Jesus had washed their feet as an example to them (Lk 22:24, Jn 13:5 & 15). Thus this third repetition of the new commandment should sink in.

#### 15:18-25: The World Will Hate You

*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.*

15:18-19: As a further contrast to verse 17 if they lack love, Jesus told them that if the world hates (μισεῖ *detest, abhor* cf., Mt 5:43, 24:10, Mk 13:13, Lk 1:71, 14:26, Jn 3:20, 15:18, 23 & 25, Rom 7:15, 9:13, Eph 5:29, Heb 1:9, Jude 23, Rev 2:6, 18:2) them, they actively know experientially that it has hated and still hates Jesus. As far as the world is concerned, if they were of the world, the world would love them as its own. However, “because they were then no longer of the world” – the definitive, specific reason for the world’s hatred of real Christians whose very existence is a reproach to the sinful world (Cf., Jn 7:7, 17:4, 1 Jn 3:13) - for Jesus had chosen them out of the world; therefore the world hates them.

Thought: Does the world hate us? If not, why not? (A T Robertson)

15:20-21: “Remember” (Μνημονεύετε imperative present active of μνημονεύω *keep in mind, think of, mention*; (Mt 16:9, Lk 17:32, Jn 15:20, Act 20:31, 35, Gal 2:10, 1 Thess 1:3, 2 Tim 2:8, Heb 13:7, Rev 2:5). “The word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master’” (13:16.) “If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.” They certainly did persecute Jesus (ἐδίωξαν aorist active, to chase like a wild beast like the Latin *persequor*, 5:16). Thus they will persecute His disciples (16:33, Mk 10:30, Lk 21:12, 1 Cor 4:12, 2 Cor 4:9, Gal 4:29, 2 Tim 3:12). On the other hand, if they had kept Jesus word, they would also keep the Disciples’ words.

“But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake” (Mt 10:22, 24:9, Mk 13:13, Lk 21:17); “Because they know not him that sent me” (Jn 16:3, Lk 23:34, Act 3:17 of the world’s ignorance of the Father). Loyalty to Jesus’ Name will bring persecution to the believers (Act 5:41, Phil 1:29, 1 Pe 4:14).

15:22-24: “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for

their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.*”

Jesus only spoke what the Father commanded Him to say. The words that Jesus had spoken to them shall be the first condemnation-basis of their judgement, leaving them no cloke for their sin; for their response to the words was to hate Jesus because they intrinsically hated the Father also. Jesus is the perfect representation of the Father; to dishonour Jesus was to dishonour the Father (Jn 14:9, 5:23). The second condemnation-basis is the miracles that Jesus had done among them, which, none but God could do! Despite these powerful miracles having been done among them, the Jews rejected Jesus.

They have seen both Jesus and the Father! (Cf., 14:9 when Jesus told Philip that he that hath seen the Father in Him, and 1:18, “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him.” The Jews sadly both saw and also hated both Jesus and the Father.

15:25: “But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, ‘They hated me without a cause.’” This is an allusion to Ps 69:4 or 35:19. The hatred of the Jews toward the promised Messiah (1:11) is in God’s mysterious Sovereign purpose” as shown by ἵνα πληρωθῇ (first aorist passive subjunctive of “to fulfil”).

#### 15:26-27 When the Paraclete-Comforter Comes

*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.*

15:26-27: “But whenever the Paraclete is come” (Οταν whenever, when, as often as, every time) “Whom I will send unto you from the Father” (see notes in Jn 14:16 & 26; cf., also 16:7, Lk 24:49, Act 2:33). “Even the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father” - this is the Procession of the Holy Spirit of Truth from the Father and from the Son.

“He shall testify of me” (μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἐμοῦ) – future active of “to bear witness; to testify”; from the same Greek root that we get the word “martyr”. “And ye also shall bear witness and testify” (present active of same word) “Because ye have been with me from the beginning” - this is one of the marks or qualifying requirements of the Apostles: that they were chosen to be with Jesus from the beginning (Mk 3:14, Acts 1:21-24).

## 16:1-33 Final Words of Assurance, Comfort and Consolation

### 16:1-7 Expedient that Jesus goes away / The Promise of the Comforter

*These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

16:1-3: “*These things have I spoken unto you*” echoes 14:25, when Jesus had introduced the coming of the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in His Name, and told them, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you...” Jesus will continue His teaching regarding the Comforter, but first tells them that He had spoken these things to them beforehand for the purpose “*that ye should not be offended*” (ὅνα μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε), i.e. scandalised or made stumbling blocks (cf., Mt 13:21, Jn 6:61, 1Jn 2:10).

Jesus would soon be delivered up to be crucified, and thereafter, the Jews would turn the attention of their hatred on the disciples, put them out of the synagogues and kill some of them, thinking that they are doing God service thereby. (The persecution and martyrdom of the Apostles and early disciples are well recorded in Acts and in Church History. King Herod also vexed the church, killed James and arrested Peter (Acts 12:1-3). When Archbishop Cranmer was burnt at the stake in 1556, Henry Cole preached a pious sermon “*why a repentant sinner should still be burnt at the stake for heresy*”.) Jesus forewarns them to forearm them, and explains that they will do all these because they have not known the Father or Jesus (cf. 15:21).

16:4: While Jesus was with them, He was their protection. After His departure, they will become the focal target of the Jews’ attacks. Thus Jesus forewarns them so that “*when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them*” and not be dismayed then (cf. 13:19).

16:5: “*But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?*” “*But now*” indicates a changed circumstance, which leads to Jesus telling them these things. Of the question, Peter had asked this in 13:36 but not in a manner of serious enquiry as to Jesus’ destination or with what was to become of Jesus, for he diverted then to “*Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?*” His concern was self-interest based on the thought of parting with Jesus and its consequences for himself and his fellow disciples rather than with Jesus’ welfare. (Thus though he had said he would die with Jesus, Jesus said he would deny Him thrice).

16:6-7: Their hearts were full of grief because Jesus had announced His soon parting from them. However, Jesus tells them that His departure was in absolute truth to their advantage, “*for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you*” – a strong double negative – “the Holy Spirit would certainly not come to you if I do not depart.” The Holy Spirit was already then at work in the hearts of men, but not in the sense of witnessing, ministering and advocating/convicting as Paraclete in place of Jesus, Who Himself is our Paraclete with the Father (1Jn 2:1). “*But if I depart, I will send him unto you*” πέμψω αὐτὸν πρὸς ὑμᾶς (first person future).

### 16:8-16 Holy Spirit-Paraclete Ministry

*And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.*

16:8: The Holy Spirit-Paraclete when He comes will convict (ἐλέγξει - indicative future active 3rd person singular from ἐλέγχω 1. *Bring to light, expose, set forth* (Jn 3:20, Eph 5:11, 13, Tit 2:15); 2. *Convict, convince, point out* (Jn 8:46, Jas 2:9, Tit 1:9, 13, Jude 15); 3. *Reprove, correct* (Mt 18:15, Lk 3:19, 1 Ti 5:20), *discipline, punish* (Heb 12:5, Rev 3:19) the world. In the jurisprudential sense, “to convict” is to prove in court and declare guilty of an offence.

As Paraclete-Advocate, He is the Defender of believers but here, He has primarily a role as Prosecutor against the unbelieving world, which He will convict concerning 1) “sin” (ἁμαρτίας) – its reality as “missing the mark” and as wronging God and man; and 2) concerning “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνης) – the necessity of the God-kind of righteousness in Rom 1:19-3:21 and the Sermon on the Mount for Christ’s idea of righteousness; and 3) concerning “judgement” (κρίσεως) – the certainty of condemnation because of sin and the lack of righteousness.

16:9: Concerning sin because they believe not on Jesus - without this conviction by the Paraclete, men actually have a pride of intellectual superiority in refusing to believe on Jesus.

16:10: Concerning righteousness because Jesus goes to His Father – the proof of the Father’s complete acceptance of Jesus’ atoning sacrifice at Calvary as payment for the sins of the redeemed, in display of Almighty God’s eternal righteousness! And they behold Him no more.

16:11: Concerning judgement because the prince of this world hath been judged (κρίνεται verb indicative perfect passive 3rd person singular from κρίνω). Cf. Jn 12:31 – the prince-ruler of this world has been judged and stands condemned. The sinful world is in his grip, but he will be cast out. In the same way in which Satan is already judged, so are all unrepentant sinners.

16:12-13: Jesus has many other things to say to them but they could not bear them now, given their human frailty and distress, in their natural man. When the Spirit of Truth (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας) comes, He will guide them into all the truth for He will not speak on his own but whatever He hears He will speak and will declare to them “the things that are to come”. Some commentators see in this a reference to Rev 1:1, “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel...*”

16:14: The Holy Spirit will glorify (i.e. give praise to, magnify and honour) Jesus; and He will receive what is Jesus’ and shall show it to the disciples.

16:15: *All things that the Father hath are mine.* As God, all that self-existent light and self-sufficient happiness which *the Father has*, Jesus has as His own. As Mediator, *all things are delivered to him of the Father* (Mt 11:27). All that *grace and truth* which God designed to show us, He lodged in the hands of the Lord Jesus (Col 1:19). Spiritual blessings in heavenly things are given by the Father to the Son for us, and the Son entrusts the Spirit to convey them to us.

16:16: “A little while and you will see me no longer (Μικρὸν καὶ οὐκέτι θεωρεῖτέ με). “A little while” is *micron* - the brief little remaining period till Christ’s death (7:33, 13:33 & 14:19). “Again a little while you shall see me” (καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με) - the period between Jesus’ death and Resurrection, from Friday afternoon till Sunday morning! Ye shall see me (cf. Jn 1:51, 16:22 of spiritual realities).

### 16:17-28 The Disciples’ Remaining Perplexity

*Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man*

*taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.*

16:17-22: The disciples were still perplexed and discussed among themselves what Jesus meant by “*A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me.*” Jesus, perceiving that they were anxious to ask Him this, explained to them, “*Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.*” This indicates to them that for a short time, they will lament, mourn, grieve and weep while the world rejoices; they will be sorrowful but their sorrow will turn into joy. It is not sorrow being replaced by joy but sorrow metamorphosing into joy! This is much like what happens at childbirth, when the woman bears pain and anguish, but when the baby is delivered, the result is the greatest of joy so delightful that the anguish is forgotten. In this same way, the disciples will sorrow for now, but when Jesus sees them again, no one will be able to take their joy away.

16:23-24: Jesus further comforts them, “*In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*”

These are most blessed words of assurance - the manner of love that the Father hath bestowed on those who believe in His Son! (1 Jn 3:1). After Jesus’ Resurrection, when He sees them again, all becomes clear and plain. They would not need to ask Him what He meant by “*A little while*”, and “*again, a little while*”. Moreover, Jesus now tells them again (He had told them this already in Jn 14:13, 14 and 15:16) that “*whatever they ask of the Father in His Name, the Father will give to them.*” Now He tells them that up to then, they had asked nothing in His Name. “*Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full!*”

16:25-27: Jesus tells them, “*I have said these things to you in figures of speech*” (παροιμίας, a wayside saying, byword, maxim or proverb (2 Pet 2:22); “parable” in Jn 10:6).

He now assures them that the hour comes when He will no longer speak to them in proverbs but will tell them plainly concerning the Father. At that time, they will ask in Jesus Name - fullness of knowledge would lead them to pray readily to the Father upon the merit and worth of Jesus’ Name! And such praying would be sufficient and effectual - Jesus would not need to add to our prayers by further mediating and asking the Father on our behalf, for direct prayer suffices, because the Father Himself loves those who have loved Jesus and who have believed that He came from God. Religions that teach that we need further mediators in the form of saints or angels or a Mediatrix (Mary), do not know the power of the Scriptures.

16:28: Finally Jesus reminds them once again, “*I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.*”

### 16:29-33 “Be of Good Cheer, I have overcome the World!”

*His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

16:29-30: The disciples now profess to understand plainly Jesus’ words and what He had meant by “*A*

*little while*”, and “*again, a little while*”. They profess that they are now sure that Jesus knows all things and did not need anyone to question Him, and that by this, they believe that He came forth from God.

16:31: Jesus asked them, “Do ye now believe (ἄρτι πιστεύετε)?” ἄρτι = just now (cf. Jn 9:19, 13:33, 37). Their belief in Christ was genuine *as far as it went*, but perils await them of which they are ignorant. They were too self-confident as their despair at Christ’s death shows.

16:32: “Behold, the hour is coming (ἔρχεται futuristic present middle indicative of *erchomai*), indeed it has come (καὶ νῦν ἐλήλυθεν “yea, is now come”)” cf. 12:23. The long-looked-for hour (ὥρα) is so close that it has virtually begun. The time for the arrest of Jesus is near (17:1).

Very soon they will be scattered, and be like sheep scampering from the wolf (cf. 10:12) each to his own home, and will leave Jesus alone. “Yet”, Jesus emphasized, “I am not alone, for the Father is with me” – for the Father and the Son are One, and the Father never leaves the Son Whom He hath sent, and Who always pleases Him, alone (8:16, 29).

16:33: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace (ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ εἰρήνην ἔχητε – “that ye may keep on having peace in me.” (Cf. 14:27).

“In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer” (θαρσεῖτε, imperative active from *tharsos*, courage, Ac 28:15; Courage in the face of danger, cf. Mt 9:2, 22, Mk 10:49).

“I have overcome the world” (ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον.) Perfect active indicative of *nikaō*, to be victorious, to conquer. Always of spiritual victory in the NT (see 1 Jn 5:4). This majestic proclamation of victory over death may be compared with “It is finished!” in Jn 19:30 as Christ died, and with Paul’s “We are more than conquerors!” in Rom 8:37.

More comfort than this that Jesus had given to the eleven, can no one give. So at the end of the Last Supper with His disciples, Jesus had fully ministered to their hearts with their grief, fears and anguish. It only remained for Him now to pray His High Priestly prayer for them.

## 17:1 - 26 Jesus' High Priestly Prayer

The Lord's High Priestly prayer must be approached with deep reverence and acknowledgement of our weak inabilities in understanding the heart emotions and infinite purposefulness of the Son of God, in this, His prayer to His Father, culminating His mission of redemption. His hour had finally come; and He had completed both His public ministry at Jerusalem, and now also His final private ministry to the eleven at the Upper Room, whom He comforted-strengthened, foretelling of future events, so that when they later happen, they would remember that He had told them these beforehand. Now He looked up to heaven and prayed His High Priestly prayer in three parts; 1) first, pertaining to His soon glorification and return to the Father (17:1-5); 2) second, for the eleven disciples and those who already believed (17:6-19); and 3) finally for all those who shall in future believe on Jesus through their word (17:20-26).

### 17:1-5 Prayer for Glorification in the Cross

*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

17:1: Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, "Father!" - His manner of prayer and simple speaking and address to His Father (11:41, 17:5 & 11). "The hour is come" refers to the hour for which He came to die on Calvary (2:4, 7:30, 8:20, 12:23, 27, 13:1, 16:32).

"Glorify thy Son" (σου τὸν υἱόν) – the same idea expressed of what will happen to Jesus at the moment Judas left the Upper Room (13:31). Glorifying the Son of God; magnifying and pointing sinners to Jesus as their only hope of salvation, will be the mission of the Holy Spirit (16:14).

"That thy Son also may glorify Thee" (ἵνα καὶ ὁ υἱός σου δοξάσῃ σε). cf. Jesus' prayer "Father, glorify Thy Name" when His soul was troubled at the approach of His impending hour (12:27-28). Glory is inextricably associated with deep suffering-humiliation, which forms part of it, and precedes it. This is the Kenosis (κένωσις) "self-emptying of one's own will and becoming entirely receptive to God's Divine will, beautifully described by Paul in Phil 2:6-11. Thus Paul could say, "We glory in tribulations also" and "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us"; and "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Rom 5:3, 8:18, Gal 6:14)

17:2: Jesus has "authority over all flesh" (ἐξουσίαν πάσης σαρκός). Cf. Mt 11:27, 28:18, Lk 10:22. "...that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" – cf. 6:37 & 18:9. In John, predestination unto eternal life is associated with Jesus' foreknowledge of "what was in the heart of man" and "who they were who believed not" (2:23-25, 6:64-65). This perhaps is echoed in Rom 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, He also did predestinate..."

17:3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The purpose of eternal life is that they should keep on knowing (ἵνα γινώσκωσιν - present active subjunctive) – an experiential knowledge of both the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom the Father hath sent. Knowledge of the Father is through the Son (14:6-9). Cf. also 1 Jn 5:20.

17:4-5: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Jesus had fully finished-accomplished (from τελειόω; complete, finish, accomplish, bring to its goal, perfect) the work that the Father gave Him to do on earth. By this, Jesus has glorified the Father on the earth. Death on the cross is no defeat but rather the fullness and triumph of accomplishment!

17:5: Jesus prays that the Father would Glorify Him "together with thyself" (παρὰ σεαυτῷ) = by the side of thyself. With the glory "which I had" (ἣ ἔιχον) = imperfect active, i.e. "I used to have". With Thee "before the world was" (πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι) = "before the world came into being" (cf. 17:24).

This is a prayer to the full restoration to His Pre-Incarnate glory and fellowship with the Father, and clearly also underlines the Deity of Jesus Christ. (1:1, 2, 14, 13:32).

### 17:6-19 Prayer for the Eleven and all who believed in Jesus

*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

In this second part of His High Priestly Prayer, Jesus prays for the men who had believed in Him during His ministry, and who have kept God's Word, and in particular for the eleven at the Upper Room.

17:6: Jesus has "manifested," revealed and made clear the Father's Name to the men whom God gavest to Him *out of the world* (taken out to be no longer of the world); "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me" (cf. 17:2). "And they have kept Thy Word" (τὸν λόγον σου τετηρήκασιν); perfect active, indicative – these men are loyal and faithful to keep the message of the Father in spite of their weaknesses, and thereby, "shall not see death" (6:67-71, 8:51, Mt 16:15-20).

17:7-8: "Now they have known" (Νῦν ἔγνωκαν) perfect, active indicative, i.e. "have come to know". "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me and they have received (ἔλαβον,) and have known (ἔγνωσαν "come to know") surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed (ἐπίστευσαν) that thou didst send (ἀπέστειλας – occurs also in 17:18, 21, 23 & 25) me." They had a real and experiential knowledge of the truth, which was a comfort to Jesus (cf. 6:69, 16:27 & 30).

17:9-10: Jesus makes request "for them" who have come to know and believe in Him. He here is not praying for the world (οὐ περὶ τοῦ κόσμου) but "for them which thou hast given me" (cf. His prayer for Peter in Lk 22:32). His High Priestly Prayer is not directed for the world. At other times, Jesus prays for sinners for whom He died, who may come to know Jesus through the word and testimony of the eleven and their fellow believers (3:16, 17:20, Rom 5:8, Lk 23:34, 1 Jn 2:1, Rom 8:34, Heb 7:25).

Jesus says to the Father of them, "For they are thine. And all mine are thine and thine are mine" - all that Jesus has is (ἐστίν present active 3<sup>rd</sup> person *singular*) the Father's; and all the Father's is the Son's; the singular in Greek emphasizing the unity of the whole as in 16:15.

"And I am glorified in them" - only Deity can this in reference to God that He stands "glorified" (δοξάζω perfect passive indicative of *doxazō*); "in them", the Disciples" (ἐν αὐτοῖς).

17:11 "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world and I am coming to Thee." Jesus is departing from them (13:3, 14:12) but they will remain on in the world (ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ) "Holy Father" (Πάτερ ἅγιε) – used only in this High Priestly Prayer, with also the title "Righteous Father" (Πάτερ δίκαιε) to underscore the Father's holiness and righteousness, who required a just Redemption and thus offered the atoning blood sacrifice of His Own, only begotten Son.

"Keep them" (τήρησον αὐτοὺς) first aorist active imperative; "through thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me." With Jesus gone, the disciples specially need the Father's care. "That they may be one and keep on being one." The disciples had union, but lacked unity or oneness of spirit even during that

very Upper Room Last Supper (Lk 22:24, Jn 13:4-15). “*As we are*” – the oneness of believers is to be set and modelled after the Oneness between the Father and of the Son. Jesus would later also pray for unity for all believers in 17:21, 22 & 23.

17:12: While Jesus was with them in the world, He kept watch over (ἐτήρουν) them; in His Father’s Name. None of them whom the Father had given to Him was lost except the son of perdition, Judas Iscariot (cf. 13:18, 18:9, 2 Thess 2:3, Ps 109:7, 8).

17:13-14: And now as Jesus returns to the Father, He refers to “these things I speak *in the world* (where His disciples will remain); that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves” – that they may keep on having Christ’s joy (15:11, 16:24). Jesus had given them the Father’s word and the world had hated them because they are “*not of the world*” (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου) even as Christ is not of the world; for He did not come out of the world and He does not have the mind-set of the world.

17:15-16: Jesus prays not for the Father to take them *out of the world*, but rather to keep them from the evil.” Evil can mean evil in general, evil deeds or the evil one, Satan (Mt 6:13, 13:19, 1 Jn 5:18). Verse 16 repeats and emphasizes 17:14 that they are not of the world, even as Jesus is not of the world.

17:17-19: “Sanctify” (Ἀγιάσον first aorist active imperative) - to make holy, consecrate, dedicate or set apart (cf. Ex 28:41, 29:1, 40:13). Jesus prays for the eleven and the present disciples to be sanctified “through Thy truth,” and adds, “Thy Word is Truth.” (Cf. 15:3, 1 Pet 1:22).

“As Thou hast sent (ἀπέστειλας aorist active) Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world”; - the word used of the commissioning of the Apostles (Mk 3:14, Lk 9:2 and later Jn 20:21).

“And for their sakes, *I sanctify myself* (ἐγὼ ἀγιάζω ἑμαυτόν) that they also may be sanctified in truth (ἡγιασμένοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ) i.e. remain truly sanctified (cf. 10:36 of the sanctified Son of God).

### 17:20-26 Prayer for all who shall believe in Jesus through their word

*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*

17:20: Jesus does not pray for the eleven alone, but also for them which shall believe on Him through their word (διὰ τοῦ λόγου) - through the agency of conversation and preaching.

17:21: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee” - The Father is in Christ; and Christ is in the Father – “that they also may be one in us (ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ἐν ὧσιν·) cf., 17:11, Rom 12:5, Gal 3:28, 1 Jn 1:3). The way to have unity among believers is to first find unity with God in Christ. “That the world may believe that thou hast sent me” – so that the world may be won over and believe in Jesus. Strife and division are stumbling blocks to the world of lost sinners.

17:22: “And the glory (Καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν δόξαν) - “And **I** the glory,” - the glory of the Person of the Incarnate Word (1:14, 2:11). “Which Thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one” – a repeat of the prayer in 17:21 for Christian unity.

17:23: “I in them, and thou in Me” – with the Father in the Son, “I in them” = Father and Son indwelling the believers and the Church. The purpose clause (ἵνα) – used 19 times in this prayer, is “*that they may be perfected in one*” (ἵνα ὧσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἓν,) (cf. 1 Jn 2:5, 4:12, 17)

“That the world may know that thou hast sent me, *and hast loved them*” (καὶ ἠγάπησας αὐτούς) – a timeless aorist love, shown by sending Christ (3:16); “as thou hast loved me.” This is illustrated and proven by the way Christians love one another, even as Christ loved us (13:35).

17:24: “Father, I will” (θέλω) – the desire of Jesus, in His humanity, yet in perfect identity with that of the Father. “That they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am that they may behold (ἵνα θεωρῶσιν – “keep on beholding) “My glory which thou hast given me”. There will be endless joy in seeing Jesus as He is in heaven with all His glory (1 Jn 3:2).

“For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου); (cf. Eph 1:4, 1 Pet 1:20; Mt 25:34, Lk 11:50, Heb 4:3, 9:26, Rev 13:8, 17:8; cf. 17:5).

17:25-26: “O righteous Father” (Πάτερ δίκαιε)– see 17:11. *Even though* “the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

“And I have declared unto them thy name” (17:6), and will declare *it* (αὐτὸ γνωρίσω) – future active first person singular. This Jesus shall do again at the Cross of Calvary. This will also be the perpetual mission of Christ through the Holy Spirit (16:12, 25) and through His disciples (Mt 28:20). For the purpose “that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

## 18:1-19:15 ARREST AND TRIALS OF JESUS

## 18:1-14 Crossing the Brook Cedron / Arrest at Gethsemane

*When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him. And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.*

18:1: After finishing all these words and His High Priestly Prayer, Jesus went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron or Kidron; literally “of the Cedars”. Being the Passover, the crossing was under the light of the full moon, and the company did not need any lanterns. King David also crossed over this same brook, weeping with his people, toward the way of the wilderness, fleeing from Absalom (2 Sam 15:23). This brook had unhallowed associations (1 Ki 2:37, 15:13, 2Ki 23:4, 2 Chr 29:16 and Jer 31:40).

Across the brook was a garden into which Jesus entered. Mt 26:36 and Mk 14:32 tell us its name, “Gethsemane”; while Lk 22:39 locates this at the Mount Olives, at a place Jesus frequently went to.

18:2-3: John, who had provided the account of Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer, skips Jesus’ prayer of agony at Gethsemane, recorded in Mt 26:36-46, Mk 14:32-42, Lk 22:39-46; and goes straight to Judas’ betrayal. Judas knew the place because Jesus often resorted there. Truly, foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath nowhere to lay His head (Mt 8:20, Lk 9:58).

Judas, having received a band (τὴν σπεῖραν a cohort, which could be up to 600 soldiers, cf., Mt 27:27, Mk 15:16, Act 10:1, 21:31, 27:1) of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, went there with lanterns, torches and weapons. Despite the full moon, they took no chances and came with torches and oil lamps lest there were dark places like trees and caves in which one could hide. The Synoptics describe this band as “a great multitude” “with swords and staves” (Mt 26:47, Mk 14:43, Lk 22:47).

18:4-6: John skips the kiss with which Judas betrayed Jesus (Mt 26:48-40, Mk 14:44-46, Lk 22:47-48) and focuses on Jesus’ sacrificial protection of the eleven. Jesus “knowing all things that should come upon Him” (εἰδὼς πάντα τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἐπ’ αὐτόν), rather than attempting escape; or He could even pray to the Father for twelve legions of angels (Mt 26:53), went boldly forth to them and said, “Whom seek ye?” When they answered, “Jesus of Nazareth”, He said, “I am He.” Judas, who betrayed Him, stood on their side. As soon as Jesus said, “I am He,” they went backward and fell to the ground. The nobility and majesty of Jesus must have seized the multitude with fear. Jesus’ phrase “I AM” (Ἐγὼ εἰμι) echoes 8:58 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM”, 13:19 and Ex 3:14.

18:7-9: Jesus repeats the question, “Whom seek ye?” and when they again replied, “Jesus of Nazareth”, said to them, “I have told you that I am He: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.” This was in order that “the saying might be fulfilled, which He spake, ‘of them which Thou gavest me have I lost none’” (17:12). What courage, love and devotion the Master showed! What protection He gives to His own; for none can snatch out of His hands!

18:10: Then Simon Peter drew his sword and cut off the right ear of “the servant of the high priest” (τὸν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως δοῦλον) with two definite articles. Mt 26:51, Mk 14:47 and Lk 22:50 give τὸν δοῦλον τοῦ ἀρχιερέως which is alike. This was not any ordinary servant but the very servant (i.e. chief servant)

of the high priest. They had two swords, in accordance with Isa 53:12's prophecy that Jesus would be reckoned among transgressors (Lk 22:36-38). John alone tells us that it was Peter who drew the sword, and as he was known to the high priest (18:15), he quite naturally also alone tells the name of the servant, Malchus. Per Webster and Wilkinson, "As to the 'right ear', the man was 'likely foremost of those who advanced to seize Jesus, and presented himself in the attitude of a combatant; hence his right side would be exposed to attack. The blow of Peter was evidently aimed vertically at his head.'"

18:11: The Lord told Peter to put the sword back into the sheath (cf., Mt 26:52-54) and added, "The cup (τὸ ποτήριον) which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it (οὐ μὴ πίω)?" The double negative in a question always expects an affirmative answer, "Yes, I shall drink". The cup has reference to His death of cruel suffering at the cross (cf. Isa 51:22, Mt 20:22, 26:39, 42, Mk 10:39, 14:36, Lk 22:42); and may be contrasted with the Last Supper cup that He drunk with the Apostles (Mk 14:25).

18:12-14: The band of soldiers, their captain and the officers of the Jews then arrested Jesus and bound him. They brought Him to Annas first, the father-in-law to Caiaphas. Annas was a former and future high priest (Lk 3:2, Act 4:6), while Caiaphas was high priest that year, who also gave the prophetic counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people (11:50-51). In 2 Sam 15:35, Zadok and Abiathar were the high priests in David's time (cf. 2 Ki 25:18). It was likely that both Annas and Caiaphas had quarters, albeit separate, in the high priest's palace.

#### 18:15-27 Jesus Brought to Trial at the Palace of the High Priest

*And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.*

#### 18:15-18 Peter's First Denial in Answer to the Damsel who kept the door

18:15-16: Peter was following (Gk imperfect, active tense) Jesus, and so was another disciple (the author of this Gospel 21:24); who was known to the high priest, and who went into his courtyard (εἰς τὴν αὐλήν). However Peter was left standing outside the door, and the disciple known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the maid-servant who kept the door and brought Peter in.

18:17: "Then (οὖν) saith the damsel" - οὖν is a particle-conjunction, whose meaning vary with the context. Its' sense is inferential (*therefore, consequently, accordingly*) and transitional, as in Mt 1:17, Mk 10:9, Lk 11:35, Jn 6:13. It is used in narratives to a) resume a subject, as in Lk 3:7 connecting back to 3:3; b) to indicate a transition to something new as in Jn 1:22, Act 25:1; c) to indicate a *reply*, as in Jn 4:9, 48, 6:53. Other meanings are *certainly, really* as in Mt 3:10, Jn 20:30, and *but, however* in Jn 9:18, Act 23:21, 25:4.

The Gk οὖν is never found at the beginning of a clause. Here it is not indicating that the damsel there and then asked Peter the question but the consequence of her opening the door to Peter, which is that she later recognised him and asked him the question. Had she not opened the door, she might never have noticed or given Peter a second thought. John being there, was able to identify her for us. The immediate 18:18 "And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals (ἀνθρακιάς - anthrax, old word in LXX, only used here and in 21:9); for it was cold..." and "Peter stood with them, and warmed

himself” would indicate that she asked this question while they were all warming themselves.

The Greek construction, “You also are not (Μὴ καὶ σὺ) one of this man’s disciples, are you?” with the negative Μὴ implies that the girl recognized both the unnamed disciple and Peter as followers of Jesus. The question is asked in a way as to invite the compliant, “I am not”, which denies and disowns Jesus.

The Synoptics: all agree that the first questioner was a servant girl. Per Mt 26:69, Peter “sat outside the palace”; Mk 14:66 locates this as “beneath the palace”; and Lk 22:56 tells us that Peter “sat by the fire”.

### 18:19-24 Trials before Annas (and Caiaphas)

(cf. Mt 26:57-27:2, Mk 14:53-15:1, Lk 22:54-23:1)

18:19: Annas interrogated Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. This was not legal for Jewish law provided strict safeguards, and the accused is considered absolutely innocent and not even on trial until the evidence of the witnesses had been stated and confirmed by at least two or three witnesses. It is not lawful to try to trap the accused in order to incriminate him.

18:20-21: Jesus answered not the question about His disciples for He was determined to protect them to the end. To the question on His doctrine, Jesus answered, “*I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said.*”

Jesus did not here mean that He never had private conversations with individuals but in the context, is declaring that He had never taught in private anything different than what He taught openly and publicly. There were multitudes of witnesses to His public teachings, thus Jesus said, “Ask those who heard me.”

18:22: One of the temple officers who stood by, “*struck Jesus with his hand*” (ἔδωκεν ῥάπισμα τῷ Ἰησοῦ). This could mean to smite with a rod or with the palm of the hand (cf. Mt 26:67, Mk 14:65, Jn 18:22, 19:3), but whichever way, was a most insulting act, which was again clearly illegal.

18:23-24: Jesus makes a second dignified protest, “*If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?*” At this, Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas, the high priest.

### 18:25 Peter’s Second Denial while warming himself at the coals of fire

18:25: “Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, ‘You also are not (Μὴ καὶ σὺ) one of his disciples, are you?’” The same construction in 18:17 is used, with Μὴ expecting a negative answer, increasing the un-tenability of Peter’s situation, thus his emphatic denial, “I am not.”

The Synoptics: Mt 26:71-72: When Peter “was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, ‘This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.’ And again he denied with an oath, ‘I do not know the man.’” Mk 14:69-70a: “And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, ‘This is one of them.’ And he denied it again.” Lk 22:58: “And after a little while another saw him, and said, ‘Thou art also of them.’ And Peter said, ‘Man I am not.’” Summary: The second questioner is also a maiden and Peter’s denial grew in vehemence.

### 18:26-27 Peter’s Third Denial in answer to a relative of Malchus

18:26: “One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, ‘*Did not I see thee in the garden with him*’ (ὅκ ἐγὼ σε εἶδον ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μετ’ αὐτοῦ)? This was raised by a relative of Malchus, who also was at the garden, and worded to expect an affirmative answer.

The Synoptics: Mt 26:73: “And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.” Per Mk 14:70b: “And a little after, they that

stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.” Per Lk 22:59: “And *about the space of one hour after* another confidently affirmed, saying, ‘Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean.’”

About an hour passed between the second denial in 18:25 and the third in 18:26. By now, they had enough time to ascertain from Peter’s speech that he was a Galilean, making his identification with Jesus undeniable. This caused Peter to increase the vehemence of his third and final denial.

18:27: “Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.” Peter’s three denials contrasts with his three professions and display of love for Jesus; - 1) In the Upper Room, declaring that he would lay down his life for Jesus sake (13:37); 2) After they had sung a hymn and went out into the Mount of Olives, avowing, “Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended,” and “Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.” (Mt 26:33-35, Mk 14:29-31); and 3) When the crowds came to arrest Jesus, cutting off Malchus’ right ear with his sword; and then, after the disciples had dispersed, following Jesus all the way to the courtyard of the high priest.

Synoptics: Mt 26:74-75, “Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man; and immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, ‘Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.’ And he went out, and wept bitterly.” Mk 14:71-72, “But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, ‘Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.’ And when he thought thereon, he wept.” Lk 22:60-62, “And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, ‘Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.’ And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.”

As his denials increased in vehemence and cursing, the shrill cock crow suddenly broke Peter’s spell, and he remembered the words of Jesus just a few hours earlier, “Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.” Jesus also, at exactly that point of time, turned and looked upon Peter. Peter then went out and wept bitterly, in self-examination and realization of his utter weakness. His response was the opposite of Judas Iscariot’s, whose failure resulted in despair. Peter returned to Christ. Jesus knew Peter’s true heart and love for Him, albeit imperfect, and He foreknew the three denials would in God’s Divine purpose redound to Peter’s longer-term good and sanctification.

John, in his esteem for Peter, made no further comment. The Synoptics leave out mention of John in their accounts of these denials, perhaps so as not to blame him for having arranged for Peter to be let in.

### 18:28-19:15 Trial before Pontus Pilate at the Hall of Judgement

*Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the*

chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

### 18:28-37 Pre-Trial Hearing before Pilate

18:28: John skips the details of the trial before Caiaphas and the very early morning trial before the Sanhedrin, recorded in Mt 26:57-68, 27:1-2, Mk 14:53-65, 15:1 and Lk 22:66-23:1, and devotes his attention on greater details of Jesus' trial before Pilate.

“Leading then Jesus from Caiaphas “into the Praetorium” (εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον)”, a magnificent palace built by Herod the Great. In Rome, this was the camp of the praetorian guards (Phil 1:13), but in the provinces, it was the palace-residence of the governor (cf. Act 23:35). In Mt 27:27, the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole *Roman* cohort or battalion around Him (ὄλην τὴν σπεῖραν) – the Latin *spira* was anything rolled into a circle, in the military-court atmosphere.

“And it was early” (πρωί); technically the fourth watch or 3 to 6 am. The four night watches are evening (ὀψέ) 6 to 9pm; midnight (μεσονυκτίου) 9pm to 12am; cockcrowing (ἀλεκτοροφωνίας) 12 to 3am; and morning (πρωί) (Mk 13:35). Two Jewish legal procedures are violated – 1) holding a capital trial at night and 2) passing condemnation on the same day of trial. Roman courts could meet any time after sunrise.

“They themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.” (See Q5 of “Apparent Difficulties Examined”). Defilement by touching a Gentile or any unclean thing in the judgement hall, lasts until sundown (Lev 22:7), “And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.” As the Paschal Lamb is eaten at night, this meal would not be prevented. The Passover meal that they here wanted to eat was the Chagigah festive meals based on Lev 1-4, eaten between 3 to 6pm for seven days of the feast (2 Chr 30:22). They would not be able to partake of the Chagigah if they went into the judgement hall.

18:29-31: Since they could not go in, Pilate went out to them. When asked what valid accusation they had against Jesus, they deflected his question by saying, “If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.” At this, Pilate told them to take Jesus and judge Him according to their own law, which resulted in the admission, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.” This is not a statement that the Jews under Roman rule could not put anyone to death. They did not come to Pilate merely for permission to put Jesus to death. They did not ask when they earlier attempted to stone Jesus (10:31-33) nor when they later stoned Stephen (Act 7:58-60). The underlying request here is for a certain kind of death to be administered, for their own method was by stoning (Deut 21:21).

18:32: “This was to fulfil the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die,” a reference to 12:32-33, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.” Crucifixion was a most cruel form of death applied by the Romans as part of psychological-military warfare to safeguard their Empire, and it was not permitted to crucify a Roman. To the chief priests and rulers, Roman crucifixion would serve two great objectives – a most cruel humiliation of Jesus, bringing shame to his followers, and a public display of Jesus as “*accursed of God*” per Deut 21:23, “he that is hanged *is* accursed of God,” thereby discrediting Jesus' claims and depriving Him of future followers.

18:33-34: Pilate then entered the Judgement Hall again and called Jesus, and said unto him, “Art thou the King of the Jews?” “Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you

about me?” Politically as Rome’s representative, if Pilate had answered that it was of his own accord, it would clarify that Jesus was not starting a political rivalry with Rome. If Pilate answered that it was the Jews who had told him, Jesus could legitimately answer “Yes”, for He had come for that very purpose. Spiritually, if Pilate he had personally acknowledged Jesus as the King of the Jews, he would come face to face with the Promised Messiah and perhaps find salvation in the only Saviour of the world.

18:35-36: Pilate however answered callously, “Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?” Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. He is the king of a peculiar kingdom, not of this world.

18:37: Pilate therefore said unto him, “*Art thou a king then?* (Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ;)” The compound Οὐκοῦν ironically expects the affirmative answer (only used here in the N.T., and in LXX in 2 Ki 5:23). Jesus thus replied, “Thou sayest that I am a king.” “To this end was I born, and for this cause I came into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”

### 18:38-40 Pilate’s First Declaration of Jesus’ Innocence Resulting in Vehement Protests

18:38-40: At this, Pilate saith unto him, “What is truth?” After saying this, Pilate went out again to the Jews and saith unto them, “*I find in him no fault at all*”. But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the Passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?” But they all cried again, saying, “Not this man, but Barabbas.” Now Barabbas was a robber.

### 19:1-5 Pilate Scourged Jesus and Declared His Innocence a Second Time

19:1: Took and scourged (ἐλάβεν ... καὶ ἐμαστίγωσεν indicative aorist active of λαμβάνω to take hold of, grasp, and of μαστιγώω (from *mastix*, whip, flog, scourge lit. (Mt 10:17, 20:19, 23:34, Mk 10:34 and Lk 18:33, Fig. *punish, chastise* Heb 12:6). Pilate now redoubles his efforts to release Jesus by ordering a scourging to appease the mob, hoping thus to pave the way for his release. The Roman scourge consisted of a wooden handle to which several rawhide thongs were fastened. Into each thong, small butterfly shaped pieces of metal or bone were fixed, making this a cruel weapon, when wielded by a powerful arm.

19:2-3: They plaited a crown of thorns (πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν) and put it on Jesus’ head and put around Him a purple robe, (Cf., Mt 27:27-31, Mk 15:16-20, which entails removing His clothes and putting this back later), and they said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ and smote Him with their hands (ἐδίδουν αὐτῷ ῥαπίσματα) imperfect active of δίδωμι repetition, “they kept on giving him slaps with their hands.”

19:4-5: “Behold, I bring him out to you” (Ἰδε, ἄγω ὑμῖν αὐτὸν ἔξω) – a vivid picture as Pilate leads Jesus out of the Praetorium and makes an announcement to the mob. “That ye may come to know” (ἵνα γινώτε) - final purpose clause with the second aorist active subjunctive of γινώσκω “that I find no fault in Him”. Travesty of justice has been committed in the backdrop of Pilate’s moral weaknesses and weak sincerity, as Pilate struggles to dissuade the unrelenting mob and turn them away from the grip of the Sanhedrin

Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe; bearing the mockery with kingly dignity and endurance as part of the shame of the Cross (Heb 12:2). And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man (Ἴδε, ὁ ἄνθρωπος)! A fulfilment of Isa 53:2-3, “When we shall see him, *there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows!*” Pilate may have thought that this spectacle would evoke pity from the crowds, but he was quickly relieved of this disillusionment.

### 19:6 Pilate’s Third Declaration of Jesus’ Innocence as the Jews’ Clamoured for His Crucifixion

19:6: The response of the chief priests and officers when they beheld Jesus was to cry out loudly (ἐκραύγασαν) indicative aorist active 3rd person plural, “Crucify! Crucify!” (Σταύρωσον, σταύρωσον) imperative aorist active 2nd person singular of σταυρόω (nail to the cross, crucify), with a note of

heightened urgency (aorist imperative) with no resting breath or word for “him”. They were thus led by the chief priests and officers, until all the whole mob takes it up (Mt 27:22). Pilate thus finally saith unto them, “Take ye Him, and crucify: *for I find no guilt or fault in Him* (ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὐρίσκω).” This is the third time Pilate has declared his opinion that Jesus was guiltless (18:38, 19:4) but here he surrenders in disgust to the mob but tells them to do the unjust execution themselves.

Synoptics: Mt 27:2-24: v 14, Pilate marvelled greatly at Jesus; v 18, he knew they had delivered Jesus for envy; v 19, Pilate’s wife had sent him a message, “*Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.*” In v 23, he declared, “Why, what evil hath he done?” In v 24, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see to it yourselves.” Mk 15:2-14: v 5, Pilate marvelled at Jesus; v 10, he knew that the chief priests had delivered Jesus for envy. In v 14, he declared, “Why, what evil hath he done?” Lk 23:1-22: v 4, Pilate declared to the chief priests and the people, “I find no fault in this man.” In v 14-15, he again publicly declared, “Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.” In v 22, he said to them the third time, “Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.” Throughout, Pilate offered to release Jesus per a Passover custom, but the chief priests incited for the release of Barabbas, a notable prisoner (Mt 27:16), insurrectionist and murderer (Mk 15:7) and robber (18:40).

#### 19:7-15 The Jews Reveal their True Grounds for their Hostility Causing Pilate to Yield

19:7-9: The Jews now finally reveal their real ground of hostility to Jesus, and answered Pilate, “We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God” (ὅτι ἐαυτὸν υἱὸν θεοῦ ἐποίησεν), cf. Mk 14:61-64 for their basis of wanting to kill Jesus, which they had wanted to do for two years already (5:18). When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid (μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη) first aorist passive indicative. He was already afraid because of his wife’s message (Mt 27:19). Hearing of Jesus’ claim to Deity further excited Pilate’s superstitious fears. And he went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? (Πόθεν εἶ σύ;)? Pilate was now really alarmed.

But Jesus gave him no answer (ἀποκρισιν οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ); this silence, reminiscent of His silence before Caiaphas (Mt 26:63, Mk 14:61) and Herod (Lk 23:9), is however not the same. Caiaphas was the chief plotter of His death. Herod had beheaded John the Baptist for counselling him. This case of silence before Pilate was because Jesus had nothing to add. Pilate had already pronounced His innocence, so the alternatives are release or a gross perversion of justice. Jesus would make no plea for Himself.

19:10-11: Then saith Pilate unto him, “Speakest thou not unto me (Εμοί)?” emphatic dative. “Knowest thou not that I have power (ἐξουσίαν) to crucify thee and have power to release thee? This could be hurt arrogance on Pilate’s part, or simply what appeared to be contempt of court, in the light of what Pilate thought was his ἐξουσίαν authority. Jesus however answered, “Thou *couldst have no*” (Οὐκ εἶχες) imperfect active indicative. “... Power at all against me, *except it were given thee* (εἰ μὴ ἦν σοι δεδομένον) perfect passive nominative neuter singular; *from above* (ἄνωθεν) i.e. from God (Rom 13:1).

Jesus points Pilate to the real source of his “authority”, not from the Sanhedrin, nor from Caesar, but from heaven. “Therefore he that delivered me unto thee *hath the greater sin*” (μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει).

19:12: “And from thenceforth Pilate sought (ἐζήτει) imperfect active, “kept on seeking with renewed efforts” to release Him. But the Jews cried out, saying, “If thou *let this man go*” (Ἐὰν τοῦτον ἀπολύσῃς,) condition of third class, a direct threat by the Jews to Pilate, “Thou art not Caesar’s friend (οὐκ εἶ φίλος τοῦ Καίσαρος): whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

19:13: When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the Bema judgment seat (ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος,) in a place that is called the Pavement (Λιθόστρωτον),

compound from *lithos* (stone) and the verbal adjective *strôtos*, to speak, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha (Γαββαθα), which means an elevation, perhaps given because of the shape.

19:14: And it was *the Preparation of the Passover* (Παρασκευὴ τοῦ Πάσχα), i.e. the day before the Sabbath (see Mk 15:42, Lk 23:54); in Passover Week. “And about the sixth hour (ὥρα δὲ ὥσεὶ ἕκτη), i.e. about twelve noon. [Mk 15:25, “And it was the third hour, and they crucified him” is an apparent contradiction, dealt with in Q7 of “Apparent Difficulties Examined”. In Greek: “δὲ ὥρα τρίτη, καὶ ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτόν;” the conjunction καὶ = “and”, “not only”, “but also”, “even”, emphasizes not the time *when* they crucified Jesus but that “It was 9am AND they crucified Him”! The import being to highlight the unlawfulness and illegality of what they did in disregard of their own laws, which stipulates that capital offence trials be held in the day, with the Sanhedrin sitting from 9am. Instead, they started very early at the fourth watch (3 to 6am) and by 9am, had for all practicality, secured Jesus’ crucifixion!]

And Pilate saith unto the Jews, ‘Behold your King!’ (Ἴδε, ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν). The same exclamation (Ἴδε) was used in 1:29 by John the Baptist, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!’ Pilate makes a final appeal to the crowds for Jesus.

19:15: But they cried out, “Away with him, away with him” (Ἄρον, ἄρον, imperative aorist active from ἄρω cf. Lk 23:18) “Crucify him!” The repetition reflects the nerves of the crowd. Pilate saith unto them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” The chief priests were Sadducees, who had no Messianic hope like the Pharisees, and to carry their plot against Jesus, were even willing to renounce God as their national theocratic king (1 Sam 12:12).

In retribution, the Roman siege of Jerusalem from AD 68-70 was planned under the General Vespasian, and completed by his son, Titus, both of whom became Caesars, in AD 69 and AD 79 respectively.

### The Historicity of Pilate

Wikipedia: Pontius Pilatus (Πόντιος Πιλάτος) was the fifth Prefect of the Roman Province of Judaea, serving under the Emperor Tiberius from AD 26-36. The sources for his life are the four Gospels, Philo of Alexandria, Josephus and Tacitus. Pilate, an equestrian of the Pontii family once offended the religious sensibilities of his subjects, leading to harsh criticism from Philo and Josephus.

Per Flavius Josephus’ Jewish Antiquities 18.89, he was ordered back to Rome after harshly suppressing a Samaritan uprising, arriving just after the death of Tiberius on 16 March in the year 37. In 1961, the Pilate Stone was discovered by Antonio Frova, and dated AD 26-37, in the Roman theatre at Caesarea Maritima, capital of Judaea, bearing a damaged dedication by Pilate of a *Tiberieum*. This inscription is currently housed in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, with a replica housed at Caesarea. This stone confirms Pilate’s historicity and establishes his title as *prefect*. The early governors of Judaea were of prefect rank, while the later, beginning with Cuspius Fadus in AD 44, were of procurator rank.



Pilate’s tribute to Tiberius in Latin  
“This Building – Tiberium  
By Pontius Pilatus  
Prefect of Judea  
Has Been Built”

## 19:16-42 JESUS' CRUCIIXION AND BURIAL

## 19:16-30 The Crucifixion of Jesus

*Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.*

19:16: Pilate thus at that time “delivered” (παρέδωκεν handed, gave over, committed; in 18:30, 35 of the chief priests delivering Jesus to Pilate) Jesus back to the will of the chief priests (Lk 23:25), who then “took” (Παρέλαβον aorist active plural, receive, take over or along; cf. 1:11, 14:3) Jesus from Pilate.

19:17: Jesus, “bearing the cross Himself” (βαστάζων τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ), went forth into a place called the “place of a Skull” (Κρανίου Τόπον), which in Hebrew (Aramaic) is called “Golgotha”. Our English Bibles translate Κρανίου in Lk 23:33 as “Calvary”. The Synoptics further tell us that Simon of Cyrene was impressed to take over and carry the cross for Jesus. Given the night arrest, the long night trials with beatings at the hands of the high priest’s officers, and the scourging by the Praetorium guards, Jesus was by then very weak (Mt 27:32-33, Mk 15:21-33, Lk 23:26, 33).

Here also is a picture of how we should take up our cross and come after Jesus (Lk 14:27).

19:18: The soldiers “crucified” (ἑσταύρωσαν aorist active plural, nail to the cross) Jesus and two others on either side of Jesus. Per Mt 27:38 and Mk 15:27, these two were robbers (ληστές not thieves as in the KJV) like Barabbas (18:40). Lk 23:32 calls them malefactors (κακοῦργοι). This again fulfils the Scriptures in Is 53:12, “And he was numbered with the transgressors” (see 18:10, Mk 15:28).

19:19: Pilate wrote an inscription (“Ἐγραψεν δὲ καὶ τίτλον from Latin “titulus” or “title”. Mk 15:26 and Lk 23:88 use ἐπιγραφή, “inscription” or “superscription”, to describe the accusation for which Jesus was crucified. Mt 27:37 has simply αἰτίαν “accusation”. John’s description is most complete, plus comes with the personal insight that Pilate wrote this himself, which would mean he was literate in Latin, Hebrew and Greek, and he meant it in a titular sense, i.e. as an official title.

19:20: Many of the Jews read (ἀνέγνωσαν aorist active plural) this title (τίτλον) – a vivid picture of how they read, “for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city”. It was necessary that Jesus should die outside the holy city (Nu 15:35-36, Heb 13:11-12). The title was meant for the public to understand, written in the official Latin, Aramaic (Hebrew), the language of Judah, and Greek, the common lingua franca of the era (cf. Lk 23:38). Per Mt 27:39-41, Mk 15:29-32, Lk 23:35-37, those who passed by (and read this) railed on Jesus, with the soldiers also joining in, and the chief priests likewise.

19:21-22: Therefore the chief priests said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘He said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written” (“Ὁ γέγραφα, γέγραφα verb indicative perfect active 1st person singular from γράφω “to write down, compose, record”), which emphasizes the permanence of title that Rome through Pilate had ascribed to Jesus, which technically was also correct, being the primary charge levied by the Jews to Pilate against Jesus.”

19:23-24: When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments (ἱμάτια, clothing in general, outer garments) and divided them into four parts (τέσσαρα μέρη), one part for each soldier; also his tunic (χιτῶνα, garment worn next to the skin). But the tunic was seamless (ὁ χιτῶν ἄραφος), woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it (Μὴ σχίσωμεν αὐτόν,) but cast lots (λάχωμεν) for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfil the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots (Ps 22:18).” So the soldiers did these things.

Mt 27:35, Mk 15:34 & Lk 23:34 mention the parting of the garments but John tells us that there were four soldiers (beside the centurion, Mt 27:54, Mk 15:39, Lk 23:47). The four outer garment pieces would be the headdress, an outer robe, a sash-girdle whose folds would provide pockets, and sandals. The tunic was too valuable to ruin and therefore the soldiers agreed to cast lots for it, a common practice of the times in Judea (Lk 1:9, Act 1:17). [See Mt 5:40 for use of tunic (χιτῶνά) and outer garment (ἱμάτιον].

19:25: “Now there stood (Ἐίστήκεισαν pluperfect active 3rd person plural, put, place, set, stand – a picture of steadfast standing in vivid contrast to the rude gambling of the soldiers), by the cross of Jesus, His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.”

Are there three or four women mentioned here?! By Scripture to Scripture comparison: -

“Among which was *Mary Magdalene*, and *Mary the mother of James and Joses*, and *the mother of Zebedee’s children*.” (Mt 27:56)

“There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was *Mary Magdalene*, and *Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses*, and *Salome*.” (Mk 15:40)

Reasons put forth by commentators favouring four women include: - 1) *four* women balances *four* soldiers, 2) unlikelihood of two sisters having the same name, Mary, and 3) John would not name his own mother, Jesus’ mother’s sister, given that he did not name himself. The first reason has little merit; the second overlooks the popularity of Mary (Hebrew מִרְיָם, Miryām, or Miriam, Moses’ elder sister) as a first name; and the third is weak and self-contradictory as the identity of Mary’s sister as John’s mother is only clear if in fact three women only are here named. Furthermore since the above Scriptures identify the women by name – “Mary Magdalene”, “the mother of Zebedee’s children”, “Salome”, “Mary the mother of James and Joses,” the reasonable reading is for three women - Jesus’ mother’s sister *being* Mary the *wife* of Clopas, who by parallel comparison is Salome and the mother of Zebedee’s children.

19:26-27: “When Jesus therefore saw *His own mother* (τὴν μητέρα Greek idiom, the article as possessive), and *the disciple whom He loved* (ὃν ἠγάπα imperfect active) *standing by* (παρεστῶτα perfect active accusative, to put at someone’s disposal, cf., Mt 26:53, Act 23:24, Rom 6:13, 16, 19), He said to His mother, “Woman (Γύναι vocative feminine singular, woman, wife, not disrespectful in any sense), behold your son!” Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!”

Picture the devotion of Mary, a mother standing by her son to the end; and the devotion of John standing to the last as a soldier at his Lord’s disposal. See the dying Jesus, thinking as a filial son of His mother’s comfort and care, and thus entrusting her to John. See the tenderness in which Jesus said to John, “Behold your mother!” – My mother is now yours. Perhaps this was what deeply touched John and inspired him to add the phrase of himself as the disciple “whom Jesus loved”, here and in 21:7 & 20, for he was given to take over his Lord’s place as the son of Jesus’ mother.

If John were Jesus’ cousin, it would further explain why Jesus turns the care of His mother to him even though John’s mother, Salome, was also standing there. Jesus’ brothers were not present, having disbelieved His claims. John was also the only Apostle with courage enough to take his stand with the women by the Cross, for all the other Apostles were not there, having been scattered at that time.

And from that hour onwards, John took her to his own home (εἰς τὰ ἴδια – the same idiom of 1:11, 16:32, Acts 21:6). John probably had a home in Jerusalem given his familiarity with it and the people

there, including the high priests. Perhaps the family distributed their fishing catches there.

19:28-30: “After this, Jesus, knowing (ἰδὼν catching sight of, seeing spiritually, perceiving) that all things were now accomplished (ὁδη τετέλεσται perfect passive singular from τελέω bring to an end, finish, complete – see Jesus’ High Priestly prayer in 17:4 and cf. 19:30) that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished! (Τετέλεσται)” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.”

Thirst is one of the severest agonies of crucifixion. Our Messiah was truly “perfected” by physical sufferings for us (Heb 2:10, 5:7). This thirst of Jesus fulfils Ps 69:21 “They gave me also gall for my meat; *and in my thirst* they gave me vinegar to drink.” The soldiers twice offered Jesus vinegar to drink. The first was mixed with gall, a bitter herb, or myrrh, an opiate to numb the nerves before the crucifixion nails were driven in, which when Jesus had tasted, He would not drink of (Mt 27:34-35, Mk 15:23). This second was given at the end, before Jesus expired (cf. Mt 27:48, Mk 15:36, Lk 23:36).

This time, Jesus received the vinegar, to wet His throat for a final victorious declaration, “Finished!” All was completely and fully accomplished! Jesus paid it all! He had done everything that the Father had sent Him to do, and all things written concerning Him in the law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms had been fulfilled and brought to past! (Lk 24:44)

The picture of Jesus bowing (κλίνας aorist active incline, bend) His head is given only in John. He gave up his spirit (παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα). Per Lk 23:46, “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” and having said thus, He gave up the Ghost.” On the cross, Jesus died with Ps 31:5 upon his lips, corresponding with the loud cry of Mt 27:50 & Mk 15:37, which comes after the ninth hour prayer, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” of Mt 27:46 & Mk 15:34.

### 19:31-37 The Witness Record, which is True

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

19:31-34: It was the Preparation or Friday (19:14) and the Sabbath that followed was a high day, being also the first day of unleavened bread, providing double reason for wanting the bodies removed before sunset lest the curse of hanging on a tree be spread to Israel when Sabbath began. The Jews thus asked Pilate to have the legs of those crucified broken so that they would no longer be able to lift themselves up for air. The soldiers did this for the two robbers (typically with a heavy mallet that crushed the bones with one blow) but when they came to Jesus, they saw He was already dead and thus *did not break His legs*. Instead one of them having a spear, *pierced His side*, and at once, there came out *blood and water*.

The blood and water (αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ) that flowed from Jesus’ wounded side is proof of His incarnation as very man of very man. 1 Jn 5:6, 8: “This is He that came by water and blood (ὕδατος καὶ αἵματος), even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. ...And there are three that bear witness in earth; the Spirit (πνεῦμα), the water (ὕδωρ) and the blood (αἷμα): and these three agree in one.”

19:35-37: John, who has seen (ἑώρακώς perfect active) has borne witness (μεμαρτύρηκεν) and his testimony (μαρτυρία) is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth that you also may believe.

For these things were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, “Not *one* of His bones shall be broken” – based on the Passover ordinances and God’s promises (Ex 12:46, Nu 9:12 and Ps 34:20). And again another Scripture says, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced”, referring to Zech 12:10 and

looking to Rev 1:7 (cf. also Ps 22:16-17).

### 19:38-42 The Burial of Jesus

*And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.*

19:38-39: Joseph of Arimathaea, a disciple of Jesus, “secretly for fear (φόβον) of the Jews” – cf., 12:42-43 Some of the chief rulers believed on Jesus, but because of the Pharisees, did not confess Him, lest they be excommunicated for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God (7:13, 9:22, 51:41, 44). At this darkest hour, Joseph overcame his fear and went to Pilate to ask to be allowed to take away Jesus’ body. Nicodemus, who had come to Jesus by night, and who had once defended Him to the Sanhedrin (3:1-9, 7:50-51) also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred Roman pounds (λίτρας ἑκατόν) – a generous quantity (cf. 2 Chr 16:14), a dedication from his personal wealth.

19:40-42: They then wound (ἔδησαν) the body of Jesus in linen clothes (ὀθονίοις) with the spices, in accordance with Jewish burial practices. In the place where Jesus was crucified was a garden (κῆπος), in which was a new (καινόν fresh, unused) sepulchre, which Joseph had prepared for himself, a rock tomb hewn out of the mountain side (Mt 27:60, Mk 15:46, Lk 23:53), a custom common with the rich.

So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

## 20:1–31 JESUS' RESURRECTION AND POST-RESURRECTION APPEARANCES

### 20:1-10 Resurrection Morning

*The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.*

20:1: The first day of the week (Τῇ δὲ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων) or Sunday, Mary Magdalene came early (πρωῖ - fourth watch or 3-6am, same time at which they had brought Jesus into Pilate's Praetorium, 18:28), when it was yet dark unto the sepulchre. At her arrival, the sun was beginning to dawn: -

Mt 28:1: "In the end of the Sabbath, *as it began to dawn* toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." Mk 16:1-2: "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And *very early in the morning* the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun." Lk 24:1-2: "Now upon the first day of the week, *very early in the morning*, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre."

[By Jewish reckoning, Sabbath ends in the evening. However all four Gospels seem to use Roman or Christian era reckoning that this was Sunday morn "*began to dawn towards the first day of the week.*"]

John focuses on Mary Magdalene alone like Mk 16:9, 1-2, which emphasises that Jesus "appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils" after stating that with her were Mary the mother of James, as well as Salome. Mt 28:1 says beside Mary Magdalene, "the other Mary" also came. Lk 24:10 states "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles."

[Roman Catholics identify Mary Magdalene as Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany as well as the harlot of Lk 7:36-50. Eastern Orthodox considers these as three separate persons. The best view is that Mary Magdalene is Mary of Bethany while the harlot of Lk 7 is a clearly distinguishable person.]

Mary seeth "*the stone taken away* (perfect passive tense of αἶρω) *from the sepulchre*" - a brilliant phraseology of Inspired Scripture (cf. Lk 24:2). At we reach the end of Jn 19, nothing is mentioned of any stone at the sepulchre. By this short phrase, the reader realizes at once that a stone had been placed at the entrance of the sepulchre. This indicates also the harmony as one of the Four Gospels.

Mt 27:59-66: "And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre. Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." Mk 15:46-47: "And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Josès beheld where he was laid."

20:2: Then she runs (vivid, dramatic present active 3rd person singular of τρέχω) and comes to Simon Peter and to “the other disciple whom Jesus loved (phileo)” (cf. 13:23, 19:26, 21:7 & 20. That this is John is seen in Act 3:1, 3, 4, 11, 4:19, 8:14) and tells them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre and *we* (associating the other women with her, who were too old to run) know not where they have laid him.” At this time, she and the rest were in ignorance of the power of Jesus’ resurrection.

20:3-5: Peter and the other disciple went instantly forth (Ἐξῆλθεν) to the tomb, running together - a race in eagerness to reach the tomb. The other disciple, apparently younger and fitter, reached the sepulchre first; and stooping down and looking (present active singular from βλέπω), saw the linen clothes (ὀθόνια) with which Joseph and Nicodemus had wrapped Jesus (19:40) lying (present middle of κείμαι). John however did not go into the tomb, indicative of deference to Peter and reverence towards Jesus.

20:6-8: Then Simon Peter cometh following him and went in (aorist active of εἰσέρχομαι) - Peter’s impulsive nature not hesitating to first consider - and seeth (present active of θεωρέω – a vivid term of careful notice, not a mere glance) the linen clothes lie and the napkin (τὸ σουδάριον facecloth, handkerchief, see 11:44, Lk 19:20, Act 19:12) which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen clothes (χωρὶς separate from the other linen), but wrapped (rolled) up together (ἐντετυλιγμένον – in Mt 27:59 and Lk 23:53 of the manner in which Joseph of Arimathaea had carefully wrapped Jesus’s body) in a place by itself, i.e. separate from the body linen. Mk 15:46 uses the aorist active of ἐνείλεω wrap in. (Lk 24:12: “Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre and stooping down, beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves (μόνα alone) and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.”)

20:8-9: “Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed!”

What did he see? The two cloths wound around the body and head acted as one covering when attached around the body. With the body resurrected, the two cloths still wrapped, but by now hardened like empty cocoons, fell apart from each other! If they had taken away the body of Jesus, they need not have removed the linen clothing; in fact, it would be very difficult and unnecessary to do so. The two cloths moreover could not be wrapped like this, and separated from each other like this, if there was no dead body around which they could be wrapped-rolled around. Only the resurrection can explain this!

20:9-10: “For as yet they did not understand the Scripture that He must arise from the dead.” One Scripture given by Peter in Act 2:25-28 is Ps 16:8-11. Jesus had repeatedly foretold His resurrection but this was not something that one can easily, humanly understand, and the disciples were slow to perceive and did not fully understand this. The chief priests and Pharisees recalled these words of Jesus and thus set a watch over His sepulchre (Mt 27:62). “Must” (δεῖ), concerning the necessity of Jesus’ resurrection is also used in Mt 26:54, Mk 8:31; Lk 9:22, 17:25, 22:37, 24:7, 26, 44; Jn 3:14, 12:34, Act 1:16.

“Then the disciples went away unto their own homes (πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς literally “to themselves”). Cf. Lk 24:12, they went back in wonderment and some excitement and perplexity but not yet in full faith.

### 20:11-18 Mary Magdalene first to see the Risen Christ

*But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.*

20:11-12: “Mary stood (past perfect of ἵστημι as in 19:25 of the women at Jesus’ cross) in front of the

tomb, weeping” (cf. 11:31 as she had done at Lazarus’ grave). “As she wept, she stooped down *and looked* into the sepulchre (cf. 20:5) and saw (θεωρεῖ) two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

Peter and John had already departed and thus missed seeing the angels. A woman’s devotion is stronger than a man’s, and none is as devoted as Mary Magdalene. She, staying on in watch, beheld the angels as well as the risen Lord Jesus soon after. Other references to angels in the Gospels include Mt 28:5, Mk 16:5, Lk 24:4 and Jn 12:29, 20:12.

20:13-14: “The angels say to Mary, “Woman, why weepest thou?” She replied, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not (οὐκ οἶδα) where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back” (ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω aorist passive). Mary reflectively sensed the presence of someone behind her and she turns back) “and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.”

20:15: “Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus had repeated the question of the angels, but she did not recognize him. A new, though still mistaken idea, struck Mary, and she asked if he had taken the body away.

20:16: “Jesus saith unto her, Mary (Μαρία). She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni” (ῥαββουνί Hebrew, heightened form of ῥαββί, *my Lord, my Master*; used in Mk 10:51) “which is to say, Master.”

20:17: “Jesus said to her, Do not cling to me” (Μή μου ἄπτου present middle imperative in prohibition with genitive case, meaning “Cease clinging to me” rather than “Do not touch me”). Jesus allowed the women to take hold of his feet and worship in Mt 28:9. One meaning is that this is a reminder to Mary that the previous personal fellowship by sight, sound and touch no longer exists and that the final state of glory was not yet begun. Another possible meaning is a reminder that she need not detain Jesus or fear that He would suddenly vanish, as He planned to remain with the disciples for a little while.

“For I have not yet ascended (ἔγω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα perfect active indicative) to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Jesus in the Gospels does not address God as “our Father” or “our God” (other than in the Lord’s Prayer, which is for the disciples to pray (Mt 6:9-13, Lk 11:2-4). The reason for Jesus’ distinction here is not that there are two gods but rather that the disciples’ relationship with God the Father is different from His. He is the Eternal Son of the Father. All believers become a member of God’s family through Jesus.

20:18 “Mary Magdalene went and announced (ἀπαγγέλλουσα present active) to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord” (ἑώρακεν τὸν κύριον perfect active indicative. She will always carry in her heart that sight of the Risen Christ. She then delivers His message “and that He had said these things to her.”

Per Mk 16:11 and Lk 24:11, the disciples did not believe Mary’s report nor that of the other women. In 1 Cor 15:5-7, Paul does not specifically list the women in Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances, although they may be numbered among the five hundred. Paul had a different, cardinal purpose in that passage.

### 20:19-23 Jesus’ Appearance before the Ten

*Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

20:19: “Then *the same day at evening*” (Οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας, τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ The genitive absolute of ὄψις late is understood as the time from six to nine. (The four night watches being evening (ὀψέ) 6 to

9pm; midnight (μεσονυκτίου) 9pm to 12am; cockcrowing (ἀλεκτοροφωνίας) 12 to 3am; and morning (πρωΐ) in Mk 13:35). Also used in Mt 8:16, Mk 1:32, 11:11, Jn 6:16). “*Being the first day of the week*” (τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων cf. 20:1). This clearly is still the first Resurrection Sunday.

This verse causes some to theorise that John’s Gospel uses Roman time reckoning on an incorrect supposition (see 5:2) that John’s Gospel was written after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, while the Synoptics uses Jewish reckoning. By Jewish reckoning, Monday would by now have started, whereas by Roman reckoning, we are still in the “same day”. This theory is put forth as a way to solve the apparent discrepancy between Jn 19:14 and Mk 15:25. Applying to all the other hour-time references in John however, 1:39 would be 10am instead of 4pm (rather early for necessitating the two disciples to abide with Jesus that day); 4:6 would be 6am instead of the high noon when Jesus asked the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well for water. 4:50-53 would put the time when Jesus told the nobleman, “Go thy way, thy son liveth” at 7am instead of 1pm and the events of Jn 19:14 started at 6am, both unusually early. As all this is not tenable, I would suggest that from the Resurrection onwards, all four Gospels use Roman or Christian era time reckoning – see 20:1 above. Prior to this event, all times are in Jewish reckoning.

“When the doors were shut” (καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων perfect passive) “where the disciples were assembled for fear (φόβον) of the Jews” – the disciples were fearful given the ruthless behaviour of the chief priests, and by now, news of the empty tomb had already spread (Mt 28:11). “Came Jesus and stood in the midst (ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον aorist active. “stepped into the midst”), and saith unto them, ‘Peace be unto you’” (Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν). This greeting is repeated in 20:21, 26 (see also Lk 24:36) with probable reference to Jn 14:27 (the peace of Christ).

20:20: “And when He had so said, He shewed unto them *His* hands and His side.” Jesus’ resurrected body retained the marks of the nails and the soldier’s spear (cf. Rev 5:6). “Then were the disciples glad (Ἐχάρησαν aorist passive; “overjoyed”), when they saw the Lord.” Jesus had said to them that when He sees them again, they will rejoice with a joy that no man will take from them (16:22). Lk 24:41-43 says they “disbelieved for joy!” when they saw His hands and feet. He soon after took a piece of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb and ate before them.

20:21: “Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me (καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέν με ὁ πατήρ perfect active), even so send I you” (ἐγὼ πέμπω ὑμᾶς present active). Jesus here uses *apostellō* of His Father sending Him and *pempō* of His sending the disciples. The manner in which we are sent is the same manner in which the Father had sent our Lord Jesus. Just as Jesus still bears the Commission of the Father, we are to continue to bear Jesus Commission to us.

20:22-23: “And when he had said this, he breathed (ἐνεφύσησεν aorist active) on them” – the same word is used in the LXX of God breathing life into Adam (Gen 2:7). “And saith unto them, Receive (λάβετε imperative aorist active, “take hold of”) ye the Holy Ghost.” It is our Christian duty to take hold of the Holy Spirit, promised to us by Jesus (14:26).

“Whose soever sins ye remit” (Ἄν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας second aorist active subjunctive with a condition of the third class) “they are remitted unto them (ἀφίενται forgiven, perfect passive); and whose soever sins ye retain, are retained (κρατῆτε present active subjunctive κεκράτηνται perfect passive).

The power to forgive sin belongs only to God and His Son, Jesus (Mk 2:5-7). What Jesus commits to the disciples is the power and the privilege of the Great Commission to preach the Gospel, for therein is the power of God unto salvation (Rom 1:16). In the course of the Gospel proclamation, there will be the forgiveness of sins found by those granted repentance, as well as retaining of sins by those rejecting the great salvation offered through the blood of Jesus. As in Mt 16:19, 18:18, when Jesus put into Peter’s hands the Gospel commission to build His Church upon the foundation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, He gives this same key of the Kingdom to all who will preach the Gospel of God’s love to open the door for those who would enter in repentance and faith. This verse does not teach, as is claimed by some quarters, that Popes and priests have been given by Jesus the power to forgive sin.

### 20:24-29 Doubting Thomas and Jesus' Appearance One Week Later

*But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

20:24-25: Only John's Gospel tells us of Thomas other name "Didymus" (11:16, 21:2), which means "twin". He is the pessimist of the apostolic band. The term twelve is still applied to the Apostles, although Judas Iscariot was dead. The other disciples tell Thomas, "We have seen the Lord" in the same language as Mary Magdalene had used (20:18) when none believed her.

Thomas' response was, "Except I shall see (Εάν μὴ ἴδω negative condition of third class with aorist active) so as to place his finger into the mark of the nails and place his hand into Jesus side", "I will never believe" (οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω – a strong refusal to believe).

20:26: "And after eight days" (Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ i.e. the next Sunday evening; cf., "after three days" with "on the third day when Jesus arose) "again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came ("Ἐρχεται vivid dramatic present) Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." This was the same greeting of peace in precisely the same setting one week earlier except Thomas was now with them. Due to these first day of the week appearances, Christians later assembled on Sunday, which came to be known as the Lord's Day (Rev 1:10, Act 20:6-7, 1 Cor 16:2).

20:27-29: Upon the invitation by Jesus to Thomas to "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side" and the exhortation, "Be not faithless, but believing" (μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος "stop becoming disbelieving"), Thomas answered in repentance, "My Lord and my God" and in complete expression of faith in the Deity of the Person of the Son of God.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." This is the blessedness for all who will come into faith in Jesus through the Gospel preaching hitherto, who are in a sense more blessed than Thomas (cf. Heb 11:1, 1 Pet 1:8).

### 20:30-31 Statement of Purpose of This Gospel

*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

20:30-31: "And many other signs" - not only those described in the Synoptic Gospels or referred to in general statements, but many alluded to in John's Gospel (2:23, 4:45, 12:37) are not expressively written in John's Gospel. John had made only a small selection of the vast number of signs wrought by Jesus "in the presence of the disciples" in order that the reader might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, they might have life eternal through His Name.

These two verses sum up the purpose of John's Gospel hitherto.

## 21:1–23 EPILOGUE - SEA OF TIBERIAS APPEARANCE

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### 21:1-14 Jesus' Appearance at Sea of Tiberias (Third Time to Disciples)

*After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.*

21:1: After these things (Μετὰ ταῦτα – a lapse of some time,) Jesus shewed (ἐφάνερωσεν – manifested; revealed) Himself again to the disciples, this time at the sea of Tiberias, capital of Galilee, where Jesus had fed the five thousand with five barley loaves and two fish (6:1-14). Their return to Galilee where they came from was natural and in accordance with the message of the angel to the women (Mt 28:7, Mk 16:7). Here they were also safer from the scrutiny of the chief priests.

During the forty days after the Resurrection, various instances of Jesus' showing Himself are recorded, at Jerusalem (Mk 16:9, Lk 24:33-36, Jn 20:14-17, 19-23, 26-29), on the road to Emmaus (Mk 16:12, Lk 24:13-32), at Galilee (Mt 28:7, 16, Mk 16:7) and at Bethany (Lk 24:50, Act 1:12).

21:2: There were together seven - Simon Peter, Thomas Didymus (11:16, 14:5-6, 20:24-29) Nathaniel of Cana (1:45-50, or Bartholomew "son of Tolmai" of the Synoptics), the sons of Zebedee (John and James) and two others unnamed, probably of the Apostles.

21:3: Simon Peter told them, "I go away fishing (Υπάγω ἀλιεύειν)", the present active infinitive expressing purpose. They were all fishermen by trade and must make a living so Peter's proposal was natural as was the response, "We go also with thee." They went out and got into the boat (πλοῖον cf. 6:16-24) but that night, caught nothing.

21:4-5: When the morning (Πρωΐας – the fourth watch, 3 – 6am, cf. 18:28, 20:1, Mt 27:1) came, Jesus stood on the shore yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. He then saith to them, "Children (Παιδία - very young children, colloquially as in 1 Jn 2:13. 18), Have you any fish to eat? (μή τι προσφάγιον ἔχετε) with the negative answer expected (cf. 4:29). They naturally answered Him, "No".

21:6-8: This event is reminiscent of an earlier event recorded in Lk 5:4-5, which occurred in the same Sea of Galilee but by Gennesaret, in which however the net broke and the number of fishes caught were not given, and in which Peter fell down astonished at Jesus feet. As in the earlier event, they dutifully did as told and upon casting, were not able to draw the net due to the multitude of fishes caught! This clearly is a miracle, not based on Divine knowledge alone of the presence of the fishes. Just as Jesus gave a specific command to the seven, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find", He must also have commanded the fishes, and they came! Another possibility is that being the Creator, He multiplied the fishes as He did when He fed the five thousand two years earlier.

And upon this miracle, the disciple whom Jesus loved saith to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he immediately put on his outer (fishermen) garment for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea - Peter's reaction revealed his real feelings toward Jesus, as he dived

overboard, eager to see Jesus. The other disciples came in the little boat (τῷ πλοιαρίῳ) for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits i.e., about 100 meters, dragging the net with fish.

21:9-11: *As soon then* as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals (ἀνθρακίων - same word as in 18:18, cf. “anthracite”, only used twice in the entire New Testament). This may not mean anything to the seven, aside perhaps for John. As soon as they reached land, the first thing Peter saw, with its flames burning on his memory, was the recollection of his warming himself by the fire of coals and his three denials that fateful night. Upon this fire, was laid fish and bread; far more comforting for the hungry and cold disciples on that early morning than the empty fire of coals at Caiaphas’ Palace.

Jesus had breakfast already prepared and waiting for the disciples! He still nevertheless suggests that they bring some of the fish they had caught to make real their miraculous catch to them.

Simon Peter now went up and alone drew the net to land full of great fishes (ἰχθύων μεγάλων). Whereas the rest had struggled, Peter now had some special extra strength! And they counted the large fishes, 153 in all, and for all that weight, the net did not break. It was as if Jesus was showing that God is able to uphold us in all our trials, which will not overcome us or cause our nets to break (cf. 1 Cor 10:13).

21:12-13: Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast!” Now none of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish – He again plays the host to them, in this last meal with His seven faithful followers.

21:14: This *is* now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead; adding a further the reminder to Peter of his three denials.

### **21:15-19 Peter’s Restoration through Jesus’ Three “Lovest Thou Me?” Questions**

*So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.*

#### First Question and Response

21:15: So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Peter, “Simon, *son* of Jonah (Jesus addresses Peter as Simon as in 1:42 before He changed his name to Cephas), do you love me (ἀγαπᾷς με – agape self-sacrificial love) more than these (other apostles)?” This directly addresses Peter’s earlier avowal that he would stand by Christ even though all men (including the other apostles) forsook Him (Mk 14:29).

Peter’ reply was humble, “Yes, Lord; You know (οἶδας - used all three times in recognition of Jesus’ Divine absolute knowledge that had foretold his three denials), that I love You” (φιλῶ σε - phileo love of a friend, used in all Peter’s three replies). He said to him, “Feed (Βόσκει tend to) My lambs (ἀρνία μου).”

#### Second Question and Response

21:16: He said to him again a second time, “Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me (ἀγαπᾷς με)?” Jesus drops “more than these,” lowering the threshold. Peter said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Tend (Ποιμαίνει shepherd, lead, guide, rule) My sheep (πρόβατά μου).”

#### Third Question and Response

21:17: He said to him the third time, “Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me (φιλεῖς με - lowering the

threshold to the love of just a friend, the new limit that Peter dared claimed for himself in his humbled replies. Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me (φιλεῖς με)?”

The grieved Peter drops the “Yea, Lord” on this third answer, and answered plainly, “Lord, You know (οἶδας) all things; You know (γινώσκεις - personally, in an experiential way) that I love You.” Peter was now a changed man, no longer impetuous, boastful and self-trusting. He affirms Jesus’ Divine absolute knowledge in all things and appeals to Jesus’ experiential knowledge of his phileo love for Him.

Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep” (Βόσκει τὰ πρόβατά μου).

These three searching questions on Jesus’ third appearance to the Apostles after His Resurrection were applied with the coals of fire burning to cleanse Peter’s dross and failures, and to restore and strengthen Peter, after his three denials. This was in keeping with Jesus’ promise to Peter in Lk 22:31-32, “*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*”

21:18-19: The Lord, who knows all things absolutely, then foretold the manner in which Peter would die willingly for Him, “*Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish. This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, Follow Me.*” Church tradition holds that Peter when condemned to death by crucifixion, asked to be crucified upside down.

#### 21:20-23 Concerning the Disciple whom Jesus loved

*Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?*

21:20-21: Peter suddenly turned around and sees the disciple whom Jesus loved, following (Jesus and him). This was the disciple that had leaned on Jesus’ breast at the Last Supper and asked, “Who is that is going to betray you?” (13:23, 25). Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what *about* this man?” (κύριε, οὗτος δὲ τί – literally “But this one ... what?”)

21:22: Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me.” This was a rebuke to Peter, and a reminder that only God is Sovereign about all that pertains to our lives.

21:23: Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If I will that he remain till I come, what *is that* to you?” In case some may misinterpret, John makes it very clear what Jesus actually said and emphasized concerning His prerogative for whatever should befall John. Peter has absolutely no prerogative on such matters.

## 21:24-25 COLOPHON – THE DISCIPLE WHO WROTE THIS GOSPEL

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*This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*

21:24: This is (Οὗτός ἐστιν) - the disciple just mentioned in 21:20, who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things (καὶ γράψας ταῦτα) - a definite statement that John wrote this book. And we know (οἶδαμεν - first person plural to indicate the identification and endorsement of a group of disciples who know the author and wish to vouch for his identity and the truthfulness of his witness – perhaps a group of elders in Ephesus where John had long laboured); that his testimony is true.

21:25: If they should be written one by one in full detail (ἐὰν γράφηται καθ' ἓν), I suppose (οἶμαι) – note the author's change back to the first person singular. Would not contain (οὐδὲ αὐτὸν τὸν κόσμον χωρῆσαι) - future active infinitive in indirect discourse after "I suppose". This natural hyperbole depicts the vastness of the work and words of Jesus from which the author only made a small selection (20:30). This nevertheless yet produced the greatest of all the books heralding the eternal Gospel from the eagle who soars to the very heavens and gives us a glimpse of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

## The Greek Alphabet

In this study, we freely refer to the original language Greek New Testament text for additional light when encountering apparent difficulties. This table gives the Greek letters, their names, equivalent English letters and pronunciations where the Greek is pronounced differently from the equivalent English letters.

A	ά	alpha	a	As in “father”
B	β	beta	b	
Γ	γ	gamma	g	
Δ	δ	delta	d	
E	ε	epsilon	e	As in “end”
Z	ζ	zeta	z	
H	η	eta	ê	As in “hey”
Θ	θ	theta	th	As in “thick”
I	ι	iota	i	As in “it”
K	κ	kappa	k	
Λ	λ	lambda	l	
M	μ	mu	m	
N	ν	nu	n	
Ξ	ξ	xi	ks	As in “box”
O	ο	omicron	o	As in “off”
Π	π	pi	P	
P	ρ	rho	r	
Σ	ς or σ	sigma	s	As in “say”
T	τ	tau	t	
Y	υ	upsilon	u	As in “put”
Φ	φ	phi	f	
X	χ	chi	ch	As in “Bach”
Ψ	ψ	psi	ps	
Ω	ω	omega	ô	As in “grow”

There are two forms for **Sigma Σ**. It is written ς at the end of a word; and at all other times, is written σ.

**Upsilon Y** is pronounced like “u” in “put”, or like the German “ü” as in “Brücke”, or the French “u” as in “tu”. **Chi X** is the same sound as “ch” in “Bach”, not like “ch” in “chair”. The same sound occurs in the Scottish “Loch”, as in “Loch Lomond”, or the German “ach!”

**Diphthongs** occur when two vowels combine to make one sound. There are seven diphthongs in Greek: -

αι	Like “ai” as in “aisle”
ει	Like “ei” in “freight”
οι	Like “oi” in “oil”
ά	Like “ow” in “cow”
ευ	Like “e-w” in “Edward”
ου	Like “oo” in “food”
υι	Like “uee” in “queen”

The “eu” combination is probably the hardest to learn. Say the “ow” sound slowly and try to notice the two sounds in “ow” - it starts out with “ah”, then glides to an “oo” sound, “ah-oo”. Do the same with “e” (as in “edward”) and “oo” - “e-oo”. This is a little like the “e-w” in Edward, if you remove the “d”.

Source: <http://www.ibiblio.org/koine/greek/lessons/alphabet.html>

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