

Jesus Christ in His Own Words : Taking The Teachings of Jesus Seriously

The Genesis of this Book

This is my third book about God, and Jesus as *The God*. The first attempts to establish the rational case for the belief in a deity, the second seeks to establish the case for Jesus as the deity. What actually spurred me on to pen this current work was encountering the work of Michael Satlow¹ who is Professor of Religious Studies and Judaic Studies at the prestigious Brown University, USA. Shockingly, in his book “How the Bible Became Holy” he makes the following statements:

“ ... and I must confess that to this day I have not read the Bible , or even a single testament , cover to cover.” (Satlow, 2014)

“Jesus himself, growing up in Galilee, had very limited knowledge of scripture.” (Satlow, 2014)

Concerning the first, it is hard to take such a person seriously as a scholar of Judaism, especially from such a leading university, though fair play to his honesty in the matter. The second statement is equally as extraordinary as Jesus regularly quotes scripture, and makes reference to much in the Old Testament. I take a dim view of the ‘quality’ of his scholarship and naturally want to address some of its shortcomings. Initially I sought to just look at the Gospels and pull out each scriptural reference to satisfy myself that this particular professor was profoundly wrong, and that I was not imagining that I thought I saw in the Bible.

When reading the Bible, I have always understood Jesus as a man, fully aware of, and readily using, scriptural references to demonstrate His fulfilment of a lot of the prophetic material in the Old Testament – indeed, Jesus’ very own coming, to be the Messiah no less springs vividly to mind. It became clear to me that in doing this I was actually enjoying a richer learning experience by looking at each and

¹ http://www.brown.edu/Departments//Judaic_Studies/people/facultypage.php?id=10132

every scriptural reference and focusing on what Jesus himself was teaching. Addressing the shortcomings of this professor paled into insignificance as I then took time to look at everything Jesus had said and taught and investigating where, if at all, in prior scripture, these ideas came from. At this juncture, I should add, although Jesus is an expert Bible scholar, what he was quoting from in the Old Testament was of course always inspired by God. So when I say Jesus is teaching, being inspired from this or that part of scripture, this should come as no surprise as it is the other Fatherly part of the Godhead, that is doing the inspiring with the prophets in the first place. It soon became apparent that so much of what Jesus was teaching was tied up inextricably with prior scripture that I might as well begin by systematically studying and noting down all His teachings independently of their prior scriptural antecedents. Jesus said He came to fulfil the Law, so we should expect to find all His teachings in prior scripture. That we do. However, we also can see that He clarifies, refines, fine tunes and gives us some more extensions of the Law with His teachings in the New Testament. My project was becoming more ambitious, but certainly more fulfilling.

So many people over the centuries have said Jesus has said X,Y or Z or meant A,B or C, or did not say M,N or O. Without a line by line study of the complete recorded words of Jesus, it is hard to make any factual comment on the matter. Often, what one great scholar asserts with confidence will be flatly contradicted by another. So what did Jesus actually say? What were His inspirations? What were His teachings? The purpose of this book is to be able to provide the reader with only the recorded words of Jesus Christ in one clear text with a supportive narrative just exploring what these words or teaching actually mean to us today.

The only source for the words of Christ is the Four Canonical Gospels, the book called Acts of the Apostles, two letters written by Paul to the emerging Church in Corinth, 1 & 2 Corinthians, and the Book of Revelation. The words of Jesus are not reported anywhere else. I have copied and pasted the words of Jesus from the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Bible (MacArthur, The Bible , 1997), and *framed*

*in bold, italicized red*², so we can be in no doubt that it is Jesus who is speaking to us. Note, these words are expressed in American English and not English, so from an English readers' perspective, we may come across some interesting spellings. Likewise, if you read/speak in American English, you will find the same type of anomalies in my narrative notes. The Shakespearean³ language of the King James "Authorised" Version (KJV) of the Bible, is my preferred translation, However, I use the NKJV as it does contain a modified version of the translation, keeping some of the style of the KJV, but makes it more readable to a modern audience. Thus, the on the whole, NKJV forms the quoted parts of the Bible, unless otherwise stated. I also use Greek Testament (Alford, 1863), supported by the Novum Testamentum Graece (Nestle-Aland, 2012) and the Septuagint (Pool, 2013) to make sure in my own mind that all of what Jesus said that we know of is faithfully recorded and reproduced here.

So, the sections *marked in bold italicized blue* are to be seen as supporting texts underscoring where Jesus is taking His core teachings from. I labour this point as it is crucial for understanding the teachings of Jesus, which are always as fulfilment of the prior scripture of the Old Testament. The Old and the New can't be separated. The Old is not just Old myths, but the teachings of God from the dawn of mankind. The New is not just updated myth, but direct fulfilment of the Old. Separate the two and we lose the key teachings of the Bible as well as the various revelations of God to us, His creatures. Jesus was a Jew. He lived as a Jew. So did all the Apostles. All the Old Testament authors were Jewish. Only possibly Luke, author of two books in the Bible, who is the only born Gentile writer. Although that said, he could well have been a convert as he was a believer and at the time of writing, like all the Gospel authors, Luke included, would have considered themselves to be followers of the Jewish faith. That said, Jesus is the fulfilment of

² I do not put cut and pasted text from the Bible in quotation marks as often we end up with sentences that contain quotes within quotes within quotes and it can all become confusing. As the words of Jesus are always *bold red italic* and the old testament quotes *bold dark blue italic*, I don't think we can be mistaken while reading of the text.

³ Shakespeare himself used the Geneva Bible, so really it is the magic of that group of translators who produced such a memorable Bible.

what they understand Judaism to be about. If you call yourself a Christian, in this sense, you are part of the now wider Jewish family of Israel. That may come as a surprise to you, but its conclusion can't be avoided if you read and understand what I do in the scriptures. The use of the Greek Testament is particularly important as we can show from what ancient manuscript evidence the saying is recorded in and how old is this recording. Other texts from antiquity are recorded in ***bold Green italics*** in order to distinguish them.

By precisely extracting the words of Jesus and studying them in isolation, whilst always being mindful of the context⁴ from which I have taken them, I find that I have been able to get more of an understanding about what He was teaching His companions - and indeed us. By putting the microscope of my own studying of Jesus' own words, lifted in isolation from the sacred text, I have come closer to the Lord than ever before. Re-reading the whole Bible again, I find that experience more rewarding. This book is not a substitute for reading the Bible and it could only have been done with the great support of two Bible scholars John MacArthur and Henry Alford, with great support from the Eardmans Commentary on the Bible; each is a magnum opus. There is background and context given by the Gospel writers, such as the genealogy of Jesus (Matthew records it via His lawful father, Joseph to establish the link to King David, the other Luke to Mary from King David, showing His biological claim to Kingship), which is essential to the Jesus story and Luke's eyewitness testimony of the birth of Jesus taken directly from His Mother Mary, and much, much more. So although there are all the words of Jesus recorded here, there is no substitute for proper Bible study and meditation on all of the entire works of scripture. I don't think you will find this a fruitful read if you have no Bible knowledge. I have tried to make the narrative as accessible as possible, clearly all deficiencies are my own.

⁴ *I should note that some words of Jesus need minimal context. So I provide my own small narrative to link the various sayings together and provide any historical backdrop that would be useful to clarify the saying and teaching.*

I owe an intellectual debt to those authors mentioned, I know that sometimes I will interpret things differently to them, and sometimes very differently. That said, this is thoroughly my understanding of what Jesus is teaching us and no blame falls upon them for views and interpretations people may disagree with that I am putting forward.

I write this for my children and other members of my family and all who want to get closer to the teachings of Jesus. I recently had the great pleasure of being a helper to Nicky and Pippa Gumbel⁵ in one of their small Alpha Groups, their 77th such group. It was a transformational experience for me personally as I watched the Holy Spirit at work drawing a group of 24 individuals closer to Jesus. All bar one of our group did not find they had drawn closer to Jesus by the end. It is to this group and to other Alpha groups that I also dedicate this book to and I hope they may find it a helpful aid to their biblical reading.

Summary of the Teachings of Jesus: A Thematic Index to His Teachings

The code to the left and start of the teaching theme is unique to that specific teaching and is embedded in the actual text where I have made more commentary on that particular teaching of Jesus. Suffice it to say, as a summary it compacts lots of rich teachings and ignores others, but all are hopefully brought to life later in the narrative.

The Gospel According to St Matthew

- (a) Jesus and His Humanity
- (b) Jesus submits to the Mosaic Law
 - a. Jesus teaches that this Law applies to each and every one of us already
- (c) Jesus is God incarnated
- (d) Jesus has the potential to sin

⁵ <https://www.alpha.org>

- (e) Jesus implies the Trinity
- (f) Jesus is in direct line of the prophetic tradition
- (g) Jesus is the second Adam
- (h) Jesus is sinless
- (i) Jesus is divine
 - a. As the Son of man (77 times) in the sense of Daniel 7:13-14
 - b. Total power over nature
 - c. Total Power over the animal kingdom
 - d. His word only does the healing
 - e. He is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent
 - f. Forgives sins (as only God can do)
 - g. He is the coming Messiah
 - h. Is Wisdom itself
 - i. Is in the Davidic line
 - j. He is The Temple
 - i. He is the chief cornerstone
 - k. Uses the “I am” of Exodus 3:14, the divine name for Himself
 - l. Total power over all demons
 - m. He is the Kingdom of God itself
 - n. Rejecting Jesus is Blasphemy itself
 - i. We will be condemned to hell if we do reject Jesus
 - o. He is the father of all mankind
 - p. His word can only open us up to His divine teachings
 - q. He draws out Peter to underscore His divinity
 - r. Jesus renames Peter as God renamed Abraham, the inference being Jesus is God
 - s. The Feast of Tabernacles represents God saving the Jews from slavery in Egypt, Jesus uses this time to demonstrate at His Transfiguration, that He is their saviour.
 - t. Jesus grants Peter and the Church, on whose shoulders it will be built, the authority to decide if we sin or don't sin, an attribute of God
 - u. Jesus teaches the Good and the God are one and the same in Him

- v. He receives the same praise as God in the Old Testament
- w. All of creation is His
- x. He jettisons His humanity at the final moment on the cross to be at One in all respects with the Father
- y. He is sovereign over the whole universe
- z. Is the Almighty.
 - i. The Alpha & Omega
 - ii. The First & the Last
 - iii. He is the Living God
- (j) Jesus teaches trust the Lord and we will be safe
- (k) Jesus can't be tempted but we always will be
 - a. The world will always be tempting us to sin
- (l) Jesus teaches you must demonstrate repentance for our sins
- (m) Jesus calls His own followers and they are compelled to come
- (n) Jesus follows the Jewish teaching of distinguishing between righteous and unrighteous
- (o) Jesus teaches it is Grace and not anything else that gets us salvation, we will be spiritually rich
- (p) Jesus teaches that being open to God and able to empathise or mourn brings us salvation
- (q) Jesus teaches that humility and total control is key to salvation
- (r) Jesus teaches servant leadership
- (s) Jesus is more mighty in His weakness
- (t) Jesus is the new Moses
- (u) Jesus is the new King of Kings, and of the Jews
- (v) Jesus teaches that the self-righteous, or those who are 'holier than thou', won't get to heaven. Jesus teaches the righteous will find their salvation in Him
- (w) Jesus teaches we must be merciful to all those less fortunate than ourselves
- (x) Jesus teaches we must have a clean heart or, in Old Testament language, an uncircumcised heart.

- a. Jesus teaches that we should not worry about what we put in our mouth, it is what comes out of it because we have a polluted heart that is the issue
- (y) Jesus teaches: be always a peacemaker.
 - a. Being proactive for peace in His name may cause violence to be made against us
- (z) Jesus teaches war in some circumstances can also lead to peace
- (aa) Jesus teaches that if we suffer or are martyred for the faith we will receive salvation
 - a. This intensity of suffering for the faith and work in promoting the Gospel will get us into heaven.
 - b. We can never fully understand the suffering He will have to endure on the Cross
 - c. In our own way, we will all need to drink the cup of wrath and suffer with Jesus
- (bb) Jesus teaches that all believers may suffer for their beliefs
 - a. Jesus also teaches that His teaching will divide families as well
- (cc) All works should be for the glory of the Lord
- (dd) Jesus fulfills the Mosaic Law as He only can due to being sinless
- (ee) Jesus teaches that He fulfills all the ceremonial aspects of the Mosaic Law
- (ff) Jesus upholds the doctrine of Inerrancy, scripture is without fault
- (gg) Jesus teaches the spirit of the Law is a better yardstick than the letter of the Law and He knows the Law better than anyone
 - a. Jesus teaches that being concerned with heavenly signs when they can't even read the sign of the current time is very hypocritical and counter productive
 - b. The heirs to Moses have the right to teach the Law, but should jettison the tedious aspects of the Law
- (hh) Jesus teaches that the urge to utter insults is the same urge that leads to murder

- (ii) Jesus teaches come before God with a pure heart and with no disputes when we worship, hence the Christian custom of showing the sign of peace during an act of worship
- (jj) Jesus teaches that his word is his bond.
- (kk) Jesus teaches that proportionality is the correct yardstick for passing judgment for crimes
- (ll) Jesus teaches us to turn our cheek and love our enemies
 - a. Jesus teaches to love those whom we are in dispute with and above all love Him
 - b. Jesus is driven by universal love and compassion. This is His example to us all
- (mm) Jesus teaches: don't flaunt our piety
- (nn) Jesus teaches: give liberally
- (oo) Jesus teaches us how to pray:
 - a. Direct our worship to God
 - b. Pray in private ...
 - c. and with meaning, and from the heart
 - d. Personal requests are encouraged
 - e. There is a positive power in prayer
- (pp) Jesus teaches the Lord's Prayer
 - a. That there is an objective and personal God
 - b. Whose name is sacred
 - c. His Kingdom is coming
 - d. Our wills must be subservient to His will and His Mosaic Law
 - e. We should be asking for His gracious provision for our physical needs, just as He provided for the Jews in the desert
 - f. We should ask for His gracious provisions for our spiritual needs, which He provides us with via the Eucharist supper (the nature of which will be revealed by Jesus later in His ministry)
 - g. God feeds us
 - h. God is our daily gift
 - i. Ask for forgiveness for our sins
 - j. Ask to be kept out of the Devil's way

- k. We know we have sinned, but should ask God to make the punishment bearable
- l. Forgive those who commit wrong against us
- m. If we don't forgive, don't expect a forgiving God at our judgment
- n. Ask God to guide us from evil and be always focused on Him
- (qq) Jesus reminds all that the Devil can work to God's commands
 - a. Jesus teaches that if he removes His Presence from cities (including Jerusalem) due to citizens' immoral behavior, the devil then has free reign and terrible things happen to those cities. He foretells of their future destruction and as it was when the cities of old were destroyed
 - b. Jesus teaches that His Grace will be removed if we blindly follow other leaders who are blind to Him.
 - c. Jesus foretells the destruction of the Temple
- (rr) Jesus teaches fasting should be modest and sincere
 - a. The real reason to fast is to remember His Resurrection
- (ss) Jesus teaches that the love of money in and of itself is wrong
 - a. ... as is sole love of possessions
 - b. Richness in possessions does not mean we are blessed, whereas richness in heart and spirit does
- (tt) Jesus teaches that it is our own free will that controls your passions, which may be good or evil.
- (uu) Jesus teaches us that the resources of the world are plentiful, and that we should have abundant faith
 - a. Jesus teaches: listen well and our faith will ensure we are 'planted' on the most fertile ground
 - b. The most faithful produce the best fruit always; the least faithful, vice versa
- (vv) Jesus teaches that amounts of earthly refinery can disguise an evil heart
- (ww) Jesus teaches we will find a pure heart with Him
- (xx) Jesus teaches that His Kingdom in our heart is in the present

- a. Jesus also teaches that His physical kingdom on earth will come later
- b. Jesus shows a foretaste of this at His Transfiguration
- (yy) Jesus teaches that we need to be able to make discernment in your judgments
- (zz) Jesus teaches that God is like a parent to us
- (aaa) Jesus teaches the Golden Rule
- (bbb) Jesus teaches faith above all will grant us salvation, while just being a nice guy won't
- (ccc) Jesus teaches that false prophets will come
 - a. They will appear as a pious people
 - b. At heart, they will be degenerate
 - c. They will promote an easy way of life
 - d. They will be here today and gone tomorrow
 - e. Avoid them
 - f. At worst they can kill the flesh, but they have no command over the soul
 - i. Jesus also teaches: beware of false teachers, such as the Pharisees and Sadducees
 - ii. And false teachings of any kind will close the door to heaven, as will false oath taking, superstitious prayers etc
- (ddd) Jesus teaches He is The Judge, a role only traditionally assigned to God
- (eee) Jesus teaches that justification by faith and not good works will get us salvation
- (fff) Jesus teaches us to bury our foundations in Him and to build on Him
- (ggg) Jesus teaches, via the supernatural miracles, His status as The Deity
 - a. The marginalised are chosen to remind us not to forget the marginalised
 - b. Always look out for them
 - c. If we look after them, we are actually looking after God
 - d. They will always be with us

- (hhh) Jesus teaches us never to neglect those who we don't think are part of our community
- (iii) Jesus teaches that His Grace therefore applies to the Gentiles as well as the Jews
 - a. Jesus also teaches that this is spiritual nourishment to all the peoples of the world
 - b. Jesus teaches us that He wants spiritual liberation for us and not physical liberation, as such; He is not teaching Liberation Theology
- (jjj) Jesus teaches following Him would be hard.
 - a. Don't hang around, reform our lives now
- (kkk) Jesus teaches He is the bridegroom and we are the bride, therefore separate from Him today and at our resurrection we will be separated for eternity.
- (lll) Jesus is teaching that the Old Covenant will be replaced by the New Covenant
 - a. This Covenant never changes and it is for us to take up this free offer of salvation
- (mmm) Jesus teaches that our very faith alone may get us healed
 - a. ... even if you are a Gentile
 - b. And that the disciples' floundering faith makes them lose their gifts of healing
- (nnn) Jesus teaches that Grace is a free gift
 - a. Jesus teaches that it is His Grace that will select who is drawn to Him
 - b. This is given to people who can't make a choice, such as the very young and the mentally impaired
- (ooo) Jesus teaches that the divine also controls even the most minute matters, suggesting determinism
- (ppp) Jesus foretells His death on the cross and His Resurrection
 - a. Jesus teaches that as we know of this event, we are greater in knowledge than all who have come before us, and have more of a chance of salvation
 - b. Jesus teaches that the Resurrection event has prior scriptural pointers that all should know

- c. Jesus teaches that our first resurrection is spiritual
- (qqq) Jesus teaches us to be dead to sin in this world and alive to His sovereign grace and the sinless afterlife
 - a. Jesus teaches that we need to lose our life of this world in order to gain it
- (rrr) Jesus teaches that we need to overcome the hypocrites, current leaders of this world, who spend too much time taunting each other and too little learning scripture. They are the evil generation.
- (sss) Jesus teaches that we must approach our belief in Him as a small child approaches their parents, in humility and in innocence.
- (ttt) Jesus teaches: accept His teachings and welcome Him into our life and we will be liberated
- (uuu) Jesus teaches that genuine, necessary work can take place on the Sabbath – indeed, it positively should.
- (vvv) Jesus teaches that there is no middle ground between belief in God and non-belief. If we are agnostic and hold the middle position, you are with Satan.
 - a. Jesus teaches that if we reject Him in genuine ignorance, we may be forgiven
 - b. If we reject Him with knowledge of Him, we commit blasphemy, an eternal sin
- (www) Jesus teaches that we always need to rejuvenate and keep afresh His words and keep the Holy Spirit burning with life inside us, otherwise bad will start slipping back into your life again
 - a. If we only have a skin deep religion, then in reality we have no faith at all
- (xxx) Jesus teaches that parables are used a) to really help and teach the faithful and b) in effect to filter out the dull and those who can't be bothered to understand
- (yyy) Jesus teaches that believers will shine
 - a. As we shine like treasure, it is very easy to identify us

- (zzz) Jesus teaches that we should honour our parents as they have created us as this a reflection of our need to honour the Father, who created the universe
- (aaaa) Jesus teaches: if we try to thwart the divine plan, we would actually be Satanic
- (bbbb) Jesus teaches that we need to recognise our spiritual weakness and dependence on Him, in order to be able to come back to Him
- (cccc) Jesus is teaching He is the Shepherd of the flock of humanity (the sheep), as foretold in the scriptures⁶
- (dddd) Jesus teaches that forgiveness of sins needs to be an ongoing activity of ours and not qualified
- a. Jesus also teaches that sin will get punished in Hell
 - b. This Hell is everlasting
- (eeee) Jesus teaches the sanctity of marriage and that only the immorality of one party justifies divorce.
- (ffff) Jesus teaches the sanctity of contract
- a. Don't charge excessive rates of interest
- (gggg) Jesus teaches don't let the cloven hoof of envy (the evil eye) eat us up
- (hhhh) Jesus teaches that the purpose of the holy places in the Temple is for prayer only
- (iiii) Jesus teaches that John the Baptist was foretold as the prophet to prepare for the Messiah
- (jjjj) Jesus teaches traditional landlord and tenant relations and private property rights.
- (kkkk) Jesus teaches that the Gospels are the Gospels of the Good News
- (llll) Jesus teaches us that earthly governments will always be with us; as such, He does not teach a truly libertarian world view.
- a. We must also obey the tax laws
- (mmmm) Jesus teaches that we must always help widows
- (nnnn) Jesus teaches about His second coming

⁶ The Hebrew Bible

- a. Don't be unaware that this will happen, otherwise we will suffer the same fate as Noah
 - b. No one knows the time when He will come again
 - c. At Judgment Day, we will be given your reward in proportion to the efforts and results we attained with His creation and vice versa
- (oooo) We are all stewards of His creation, and for what we are stewarding we should be the best stewards we can be.
- a. If we trust in His teachings, we will be great stewards
 - b. Being a bad steward will result in no salvation
 - c. Always keep our faith strong while we are waiting
- (pppp) Jesus teaches that charging interest is ok
- a. Jesus likes those who look after His estate, diligently
 - b. The key teaching here is that everyone will need to give an account of themselves to their Master upon their death
 - c. Jesus is teaching us at the time of the day of judgement, he will not know you if you do not have the faith
- (qqqq) Jesus teaches that the woman that anoints Him will be famous forever
- (rrrr) Jesus teaches that bread is the symbol of His body, broken on the cross.
- a. His blood that is shed on the cross He does so for our sins, and for everyone to come and for those who have already come. This is the greatest act of forgiveness, ever
 - b. Drinking the symbolic blood symbolises our recognition of the New Covenant
 - c. Jesus is the Passover lamb
 - d. The whole Eucharistic feast is the gateway to heaven and our reconciliation with the Father
 - e. As the Passover Lamb, he is without blemish
- (ssss) Jesus foretells of Peter's three-time denial of Him
- (tttt) Jesus knows we are physically and spiritually weak; He knows, and He cares and He forgives.
- (uuuu) Vengeance is always the Lord's

- (vvvv) Mary Magdalene is given the first and the greatest apostolic commission post the Resurrection: to tell the disciples of this event
- a. This event is Good News
- (wwww) Jesus teaches that baptism cleanses
- (xxxx) If we have eat the Bread of Life, we are no longer slaves to sin
- (yyyy) Love God the most to love your family the best you can.
- (zzzz) Jesus is coming to serve both the poor and the spiritually poor.
- (aaaaa) You are blessed if you have the Lord's peace.
- (bbbbb) Jesus teaches that happiness is only found in righteous behaviour or pathways.
- (ccccc) If your truly mourn concerning the bad things you have done, and repent, the Lord will comfort you.
- (dddd) Jesus is here to fill us up with righteousness, so long as we let Him in the door.
- (eeee) Antinomianism⁷ is not taught by Jesus, in fact the opposite, you do need to keep the moral law, even if you are under His Grace.
- (ffff) Jesus teaches the correct use of oaths.
- (ggggg) Jesus teaches that personal retribution is not to be allowed, but that is the role of the civil judicial authorities.
- (hhhhh) Jesus is obliquely informing us to avoid evil people, don't engage with them.
- (iiii) The Kingdom of Heaven can come to you in the present individually and globally when Heaven and earth are united in the future.
- (jjjj) Jesus teaches us that the wisdom or cunningness of the Devil is worth knowing and understanding.

In the following 2 Gospels, I record anything that is new (ie in comparison with St Matthew, just examined), with a numeric index. If His teaching, in essence, is the same, the specific teaching is given the same alphabet letter as listed in the Gospel of St Matthew. As teachings are often repeated, this is not to say the following two Gospels are 'teaching light', it is just to avoid repetition.

⁷ The belief that if you are saved, well, just that you are saved, so obey the Law is actually irrelevant to you.

The Gospel According to St Mark & St Luke

- (1) Jesus teaches with a more binary emphasis on repenting, or seeking forgiveness, urgently, as the Kingdom could come anytime.
- (2) Jesus teaches that we must believe in the teachings of the Gospel
- (3) Jesus teaches that instead of fishing for fish, they will be fishing to save souls
 - a. His harvest is us.
- (4) Jesus teaches by way of example, that He is going out to evangelise
- (5) Jesus teaches healing motivated out of compassion
 - a. Jesus had genuine compassion to feed people
- (6) Jesus teaches that His Ministry is to the sinners
- (7) Jesus teaches that weddings are joyous occasions and better still if it is a wedding to Him, thus there is no need to fast
- (8) Jesus teaches that the Sabbath was made by God so we all don't have a work burden all the time. By making tedious rules and regulations, it becomes a burden
- (9) Jesus is divine
 - a. He is Lord of the Sabbath
 - b. He names Himself as Lord
 - c. Names Himself as the Son of God and calls God His Father, and they are one and the same
 - d. He is the one predicted by scripture and He tells all that He fulfils that scripture
 - e. The forgiveness of sins is in direct magnitude to the sin
 - f. Jesus extends the power He has over the demonic world to his 70 disciples
 - i. With these powers, use them only for the purposes which they were granted

- ii. Their names are written in the book of heaven
 - iii. They are more privileged than any of the prophets in relation to what they have witnessed
 - g. The 'good part' of Jesus, is the ticket to eternity for Mary, sister of Martha and all believers
 - h. Jesus is the ultimate Magistrate
- (10) Jesus is teaching that Judgement Day is when Satan will also be disposed of forever
- a. The Judgement of Jesus is individual and personalized.
- (11) Jesus is teaching that if we mistake the work of Satan for God, we commit an eternal sin
- (12) Jesus is teaching that His family is everyone and not just His immediate family
- (13) Jesus teaches that the cares of the world should be avoided, much akin to how we, today, should avoid excessive celebrity culture
- (14) Jesus is teaching He is the light of world and we can dial up that intensity
- (15) Jesus teaches that the God-ordained Laws of nature govern us
- (16) Jesus teaches that these Laws imply a certain amount of determinism
- (17) Jesus teaches in the Mustard Seed parable that the spreading of His Good News Gospel would accelerate and pick up momentum just like that small plant does.
- (18) Jesus teaches that if we ridicule Him, He will cast us aside, away from the heavenly realm
- (19) Jesus teaches that if the disciples are rejected when going about His business, then the shaking off the dust of their feet, as they left those sinners, would effectively condemn them as unbelievers.
- (20) Jesus teaches that prayer can be undertaken in a peaceful and private place
- (21) Jesus is teaching that He will test our faith
- (22) Jesus teaches that the Mosaic Law takes precedent over any practice the Pharisees have concocted

- (23) Jesus teaches Christian Unity
- (24) Jesus loves those who sincerely try to follow Him
- (25) Jesus teaches that our benefits in heaven are amplified, not just rewarded like-for-like
- (26) Jesus is teaching: pray according to God's Law and we will get what we pray for.
- (27) Jesus is teaching that we must forgive, if we want God to forgive us
- (28) Jesus teaches with words of encouragement as He wants us to get salvation
- (29) Jesus teaches us that charity can always be offered, no matter how hard up we are
- (30) Jesus is teaching us that just like ripe fruit is ready to pick, so will we be aware of the Second Coming
 - a. Only the God part of the Godhead knows the time of the Second Coming
 - b. Get all our spiritual affairs well in order as this event could happen anytime
- (31) Jesus is teaching that the Great Commission, to preach the Gospel, is universal
- (32) Jesus teaches that the New Golden Rule is not just about reciprocity, but about us positively going out our way to help our neighbour
 - a. In Jesus, God becomes our neighbour on the roadside of life
 - b. Love conquers all
- (33) Jesus teaches that we don't need any more signs, we just need to wake up and have better perception
- (34) Jesus teaches that if we blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, then there is no chance of salvation for us
 - a. Jesus teaches that He is our advocate on Judgment Day, and if we blaspheme, we lose Him as advocate and meet Him as Judge only
- (35) Jesus is teaching that He judges the fate of our soul
- (36) Jesus teaches that if we are rich in material things, never forget that all these riches stem from the resources that He made.

- (37) Jesus teaches that if we are blessed with wealth, make it work for the poor and the marginalised
- (38) Jesus foretells of the coming of Pentecost and His in-dwelling Holy Spirit that will reside forever, or Baptism with the Holy Spirit
- (39) Jesus teaches that He views His Resurrection with great anticipation
- (40) Jesus teaches that a terrible earthly fate does not mean God is punishing us for our sins; there is no correlation between the two as God is only judging the sins of our soul in order to decide whether we live for eternity or die.
- a. If we are wealthy, this also does not mean God has blessed us and we are blessed
- (41) Jesus is teaching that if we are spiritually barren, He will attempt to 'fertilise' us, but after the three years of His teachings of the Gospel, if we don't 'get it', perhaps we never will
- (42) Jesus teaches that the pre-invited guests (to salvation) were the Jews; if they did not pick up the free gift, then the poor and the marginalised would be invited across the globe i.e., the whole Gentile world.
- a. Their reward would be magnified
- (43) Jesus is teaching that the disciples must be dedicated, with no family ties, in order to complete the task at hand
- (44) Jesus teaches that we must always analyse ourselves and keep that flame of faith burning alive in us; don't lose our saltiness - or your mo-jo.
- (45) Jesus teaches that if you choose to embrace sin and reject God, we will experience misery - slavery to the sin. However, we can be redeemed or forgiven part way through your life if we do penance, and make reparations
- (46) Jesus teaches that God is justice
- (47) Jesus teaches that believers should make friends with unbelievers as the shining of the former should prod the latter into investigating their own capacity for faith

- (48) Jesus teaches that often it is the regular sinner who actually has more faith than the self-righteous; the former will have more chance of salvation than the latter
- (49) Jesus teaches that the Mosaic Law applies for eternity
- (50) Jesus teaches: pursue the riches of the heart first and foremost
- (51) Jesus teaches: don't corrupt His children
- (52) Jesus teaches that with faith, anything is possible
- (53) Jesus teaches at the destruction of Jerusalem that no Christians would be killed, as they were not
 - a. He also foretells the terrible things that would happen to the 'daughters of Jerusalem'
- (54) Jesus teaches that the Eucharistic Feast is one of remembrance of the sacrifice He made for us
- (55) Jesus teaches that it is wise to be prepared to defend ourselves for our faith
- (56) Jesus teaches that man has no power over Him. Neither does Satan, but sometimes Satan is allowed apparent power over Him so that the prophetic in scripture can be fulfilled
- (57) Jesus teaches how He remains in sovereign control at His Crucifixion
- (58) Jesus teaches that there is a Garden of Eden/Paradise
- (59) Jesus is teaching that there is a bodily resurrection as well as the ongoing life of the soul.
- (60) Jesus is teaching that He is very much a human being , just like all of us and not a phantom.

The Gospel According to St John

For the numbering of the summary of the teachings found in this Gospel, I have chosen Roman numerals as this Gospel is quite unique.

- (i) Jesus teaches that he likes straight and honest people.

- (ii) Jesus teaches that the opening of heaven is symbolic of imparting divine grace and generating revelation; Jesus has come to open the gate of heaven as God had for Jacob
- (iii) Jesus teaches that only God can regulate the times of worship
- (iv) Jesus is teaching that we need to live in the day to see the Kingdom. This implies we need to be born again and not just have knowledge. This prepares for the Christian practice of being born again via the process of being Baptised.
- (v) Jesus teaches that in Baptism we are born again
- (vi) Jesus teaches, and reaffirms from prior scripture, that we need to walk with the Holy Spirit to walk with God
- (vii) Jesus is teaching He is divine as He is the only person on earth that has been in heaven and earth
 - a. Only God can comment on God, and Jesus is doing just that
 - b. He is the Living Water
 - c. He is the Word of God
 - d. He is the Bread of Life
 - i. This bread of life will sustain all believers
 - e. The Son of Man harvests souls
 - f. Jesus is teaching that the output of His work is Wisdom, which is the output of God's work; He is Sophia, or the Logos
 - g. He has power over life and death as only God does
 - h. He is the Judge of all Judges
 - i. John the Baptist is witness to His deity
 - j. He is pre-existent with the Father
 - k. He has the power over life and death
 - l. The Glory of God is in Him
 - m. If we receive Jesus, we receive God
 - n. Jesus is the vine of life
 - o. God is Jesus' namesake
 - p. He is the voice of Truth
 - i. He is the Truth
 - q. He is sovereign over all sin

- r. He is the Risen Lord
 - i. He rises with a perfected body following his Crucifixion
- (viii) Jesus is teaching that the Holy Spirit is like the wind and blows totally free, i.e., we have no control over it.
- (ix) Jesus is teaching: keep fully focused on Him and His teachings, always, and we will achieve eternal life
- (x) Jesus is teaching that the son-sacrifice story of Abraham and Isaac is a forerunner to His real, ultimate son sacrifice.
- (xi) Jesus is teaching that He, as the incarnated God, is His free gift to us so that we can obtain eternal life
- (xii) Jesus teaches He has come to save the spiritually blind.
- (xiii) Jesus teaches that what really matters in worship is what is in our heart, not where we are praying
- (xiv) Jesus teaches blessed are those who just hear and believe
- (xv) Jesus teaches: lead as sinless life as we can and we are less likely to get into any physical difficulties
- (xvi) Jesus is teaching: as a believer, we will honour Him just as we honour the Father; this leads to your spiritual resurrection. The physical resurrection comes later, along with the same judgment of salvation or hell
- (xvii) Jesus is teaching: read scripture very carefully and we will obtain eternal life
- (xviii) Jesus teaches that Moses prepared the ground work for the understanding of the Trinity
- (xix) Jesus teaches that the feeding (bread) of the 5,000, was a precursor to the feeding of us all via the Eucharistic Feast started at the Last Super
- (xx) Jesus teaches: as the Bread of Life, consuming Jesus is the best way to achieve spiritual salvation
- (xxi) Jesus teaches that for us to accept the Bread of Life / Vine of Life we need to exercise an element of free will, but we only can achieve this only if we are being drawn near to faith by God
- (xxii) Jesus teaches that all believers will abide in Him for ever
 - a. Abide in Jesus and we will be a freed slave from sin

- b. Isaac abides in His Covenant and Ishmael does not
- c. Abide in Him and we will deliver great fruit
- (xxiii) Jesus teaches that at the Eucharist Feast, we are at one with Him
- (xxiv) Jesus teaches he is not anti-Jewish, as a Jew Himself, but the food laws are now irrelevant to salvation as they need to eat Him as the Bread of Life
- (xxv) Jesus teaches that the world of unbelievers will hate us
- (xxvi) Jesus teaches that His witness is God and that He and God are one and the same
- (xxvii) So Jesus teaches that, in effect, it is not just our blood line that will guarantee salvation, but our ability to copy the piety and obedience of Abraham, which means of course we could be Jew or Gentile to achieve salvation.
- (xxviii) Jesus is teaching that He works in the light of the Lord, in the name of God's business; darkness would befall Him as He was crucified, dead and buried. We need to work in that light, or spiritually we will just die.
- (xxix) Jesus teaches that His female disciples always have greater faith than His male ones
- (xxx) Jesus teaches His death and Resurrection is for the redemption of our sins
- (xxxi) Jesus teaches that after His Resurrection, only He will be dealing with our own potential resurrections
- (xxxii) Jesus teaches it is the Spirit that washes away sins
- (xxxiii) Jesus teaches that we need to honour our enemy
- (xxxiv) Jesus will send the Comforter, Advocate, Helper, Holy Spirit, Paraclete - this is His first Parousia
 - a. This Holy Spirit is also partly coming to protect the disciples who will no longer have the direct physical protection of Jesus
 - b. The Holy Spirit is fully active in the world
 - c. Jesus teaches that He is in control of the Holy Spirit as it proceeds from Him as well as the Father as per the Nicene Creed.
- (xxxv) Jesus teaches greater deeds will be done by His followers than by Him in His earthly Ministry

- (xxxvi) Jesus teaches of an eternity of deep heavenly peace
- (xxxvii) Jesus teaches that the Holy Spirit is helping write the Gospels
- (xxxviii) Jesus teaches that when we believe we become a friend of God
- (xxxix) Jesus teaches: if we only love ourselves, we live in a world of hate
- (xl) Jesus is the Real Living Presence
- (xli) Jesus teaches, and He foretells, that He will come at Pentecost
- (xlii) Jesus teaches, and He foretells, that there will be His Ascension into heaven
- (xliii) Jesus teaches that the disciples will spend an eternity in heaven with Him
- (xliv) Jesus teaches that after His death, we should now pray to the Father via Him
- (xlv) Jesus teaches that after His death, Resurrection and Ascension He will dwell in us, and this is a joyful experience for us
- (xlvi) Jesus teaches that in His earthly Ministry He did protect His disciples
- (xlvii) Jesus teaches He will drink the cup of divine wrath to secure our redemption and forgiveness of sin
- (xlviii) Jesus teaches His Kingdom is spiritual
- (xlix) Jesus teaches that following His death all believers are brethren
- (l) Jesus teaches St Thomas to believe by giving Him physical proof of His Resurrection
- (li) Jesus teaches that if we follow Him, there are no half measures, we follow with total love and dedication
- (lii) Jesus teaches that He knows the fate of Peter and John
- (liii) Jesus teaches of both His and the Fathers aseity or self existence.
- (liv) Jesus teaches us to read scripture to understand the 400 odd prophetic announcements of His coming.
- (lv) For those destined for salvation, home is abiding in Jesus or being as one with Jesus.
- (lvi) Jesus teaches Monism, that there is a oneness to reality.

For the remaining sayings or teachings of Jesus, spread across the **Acts of the Apostles, two Epistles of Paul and the Book of Revelation**, I will use the capital letters.

- (A) Jesus foretells of the disciples' Baptism via the Holy Spirit.
- (B) Jesus teaches that the Gospel is now going to be taken global by them
- (C) Jesus teaches that Paul is His chosen apostle to convert the Gentiles
 - a. Paul will suffer during this Ministry
 - b. Jesus teaches that His ongoing grace will suffice and that the physical weakness of Paul would help amplify the grace of the Lord emanating from Him.
 - c. Jesus comforts Him with respect to the massive task ahead of Him
 - d. Jesus especially reminds Paul that Paul's mission is to the Gentiles
- (D) Jesus teaches Peter about the food laws and Peter's Ministry to the Gentiles
- (E) Jesus is divine, He is the Alpha and the Omega
 - a. He is all knowledge
 - b. He is the First and the Last
 - c. He is Master of the dead
 - d. Holy and True
 - e. He is the Amen, or Eternal Word
 - f. He is the Bright Morning Star
- (F) Jesus shows empathy with the persecuted church
- (G) Jesus teaches repent and truly love the Lord, or His Presence will go
- (H) Jesus is teaching believe and book ourselves into the Tree of Life or Paradise
 - a. The Book of Life is also used to signify that entry into eternity of Heaven
 - b. Who controls the Tree of Life controls the access to everything
- (I) Jesus teaches: stand firm in faith and avoid our second death on Judgment Day
- (J) Jesus teaches them not to adopt idol worship and practice fornication
- (K) Jesus teaches that those who keep the faith until the Second Coming will have dominion over all mankind

- a. His Judgement and rule thereafter will be like a 'rod of iron'.
- (L) Jesus will save His Church from the terrible calamities outlined in the Book of Daniel
- (M) Jesus is teaching us to clothe ourselves in His spiritual clothes
- (N) Jesus is teaching that if we hear His voice, He will knock at our door, we will let Him in and He will dwell in us.
- (O) Jesus is teaching: always make sure we are clothed in the garments of faith as the arrival of Jesus at His second coming will take us by surprise
- (P) Jesus is teaching that if we believe, He is our Life Partner
- (Q) Resistance to the will of Jesus as Lord is futile.
- (R) Jesus is very much anti sectarian when it comes to His love and Gospel to us.
- (S) He is a transcendent being.
- (T) The church is the light to the world.

Chapter 1

The Gospel According to St Matthew

Now I move straight on to the first recorded words of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel at His Baptism in answer to John the Baptist's reluctance to baptise Him.

Matthew 3:15 (Mark 1:9-11 & Luke 3:21-23)

But **Jesus** answered and **said** to him, **"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness."** Then he allowed Him.

The Gospel of John in 1:28 tells us of the location of the baptism of Jesus as Bethabara (so named the House of Passage). This was on the river Jordan as Joshua, the captain of all the Israelites, crosses the Jordan, at this place, to conquer the various Canaanite tribes and gain the Promised land. The symbolism is clear for us to see, we now have Jesus, at that same crossing, coming to be the leader of His people and the salvation of the people. Jesus is now the successor to Joshua, who was the successor to Moses. Moses brought the Law down for all to observe and Jesus is its fulfilment. Also, this was the first time in Law, that Jesus could begin His ministry. It was not clear to me why Jesus just arrived aged 30 until one is reminded that it was custom that you needed to be 30 years old to be a priest., So, with little known about Him before, with a bright flash and heavenly words at His Baptism, to kick off His formal Ministry on earth. It could not have been otherwise.

Numbers 4:3

³from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting.

The other key symbolic messaging to us is that Joshua took three days before he passed over the Jordan at the House of Passage to start to conquest of Canaan. It was then to be three years for Jesus to cross to His death and then triumph over death at the crucifixion and the resurrection. Of course, Jesus was dead and buried for three days in His own river Jordan, before His resurrection triumph.

St Paul amplifies for us the double significance that we are both baptised into His death and life.

Romans 6:3

³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

John the Baptist had been reluctant to baptize Jesus and indeed suggested it should be the other way around, as Jesus was sinless and had no need to repent. Why did Jesus need to be baptized? (a) Well, just as He participated in Passovers, He was numbered a man, just like anyone else. It should be viewed as an act of (b) submission to the Law as an assurance that you are doing all the right things or fulfilling all righteousness. This was indeed for Jesus, a demonstration of a great act of self-consecration to the Father. This is the very future orientated part of anybodies baptism and Jesus teaches us that all, including Himself, even a sinless man like Himself, must also do this. However, as God became flesh in the form of Jesus, the (c) incarnation, as we are flesh, Jesus inherited all the potentiality to sin, "He was made sin for us" if you prefer. (d) As in likeness to sinful flesh, but not a sinner, Jesus still needed to go through the purification rituals. This was the first step in His move towards the cross where He took on the sins for the entire body of mankind, now and forever, in His own sacrifice. It is very right that the first recorded words in the Gospel set the scene for the entire Gospel. It is also referencing the story of Jonah and how he voluntarily offered to have himself thrown out of the boat in the stormy sea that he thought he was responsible for:

Jonah 1:12

12 And he said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.

This is Jesus identifying himself with sinners, and being the bearer of their sins.

This, in turn, is a direct reference to Isaiah 53:11:

He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

This arrival of Jesus at His Baptism is announced in Psalm 40:7-8 and this no doubt is being referenced by Jesus as he takes over as the central actor, from John the Baptist:

Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.

Also of great significance during this opening scene when Jesus' words are first recorded is when the voice of God is heard to say: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am most pleased". The words are delivered by the Holy Spirit appearing like a dove. (e) Here we also have the first taste of the Trinity and the three parts of it. The *epiphany* or manifestation of the Lord at His baptism is loaded with significance. The seeds for the trinity, the sinless nature of Christ, His taking on of our sins, the start of the timeline to His death and Resurrection, of the forgiveness of or sins and the fact that He is the Son of God, or one of the co-equal parts of the trinity, are all embedded in this so all-important start.

The second thing he says is during his Temptation by the Devil

Matthew 4:4 (Mark 1:12-13 & Luke 4:1-4) The Temptation of the Lord

These Temptations, as with the Baptism preceding them, shows us the connectivity between this verse and the last as the focus is on the very human Jesus. As a man, Jesus, like us all, struggles with temptations from time to time. Jesus is faced with the very human choice of self-advancement or self-sacrifice in all these temptations. This connectivity is not just like having sympathy with us, it is actually driven by the fact that He did have temptations thrown at Him. The Devil tempts Jesus three times. The first is by offering food to Jesus who is in his 40th day in the desert. In Genesis chapter three, food was the key factor in the first temptation of man. The eating of the apple from the forbidden tree. This triggered the demises or the Fall of Man from the Creators Grace. The symbolism here can't go unnoticed. The signalling at play here is that (f) Jesus is the new Adam, in the direct line of the prophetic tradition of Moses who spent 40 days and nights in the desert in the Exodus narration as well as Elijah's 40 days fast reported in 1 Kings, as did Jesus spend 40 days in the wilderness.

4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

This is a specific reference to Deuteronomy 8:3

So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

The Deuteronomy quotes derive their source in turn from the 'Bread of Heaven' chapter in Exodus 16. God provided the spiritual food and the Devil's bread was irrelevant.

It is suggested to Jesus, at His second temptation from the Devil, that after being lifted to the top of the Temple, exulted almost, that He throw Himself from the top of the holy city and save himself with a host of angels.

Matthew 4:7

7 Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

This is a direct reference from Deuteronomy 16:16

"You shall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted Him in Massah"

And also the reference to Massah is in turn a reference to when the Jewish people were demanding Moses to produce water where there was not any, in Exodus 17:2-7:

"Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink." So Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the Lord?" And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!" And the Lord said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the

sight of the elders of Israel. So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

The third temptation of the Devil is next.

Matthew 4:10

"Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

This is a reference to Deuteronomy 16:13

"You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name"

(g) It should be noted that all the Temptation references are used specifically by Jesus to provide the setting of He, the Second Adam, not being tempted in contrast to the Jews being tempted after the Exodus and succumbing to temptation, as in Deuteronomy 8:2, this also (h) *underscores* His purity and divine status.

"And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."

These temptations are collectively rejected by Jesus. They are also, in that proses, refuted by Jesus with His choice scriptural references showing both His command and understanding of the law and (b) His total submission to the Law. The teaching here is clear: submit to the Law and we shall not be tempted.

In the appendix of my copy of the Qur'an (Al-Hilali, 1996) there is an attack on some of the "errors of Christianity." **Matthew 4:10** is highlighted as an absurdity as the Devil can't tempt God. Worse still, the Devil orders Jesus to prostrate Himself before him. But with knowledge of the Holy Books for all the Abrahamic faiths you can quickly see there is no place in the Bible where God himself tempts *people*. In The Book of Job, the Devil – Satan - is the *agent* of

temptation, so the New Testament section that we know as the 'Temptation of Christ' is very consistent with the Old Testament in its treatment of temptation. (i) The temptations were: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Satan is there to see if he can violate the plan of God by creating division between God and Jesus. It is precisely to demonstrate their (God and Jesus) unity - their Godly unity - that Satan is the instrument to really highlight this. What is more, all the replies of Jesus carefully reference passages directly from Deuteronomy and relate to things God did as a rebuff to the satanic temptation. To stretch the point about their oneness of Jesus and God further, Satan deploys a quote from Psalm 91:11-12 (he is an accomplished Bible scholar, beware!) which is twisted to sound as though it means we can test God and that what he was doing was perfectly acceptable: God would always protect us if you were the Messiah, Therefore Jesus, why don't you jump from the Temple and you will be safe, as distinct from the (j) real meaning which is one of trust in the Lord to keep us safe. This teaching was also prefigured in the Book of Wisdom:

Wisdom 2:18 (RSVCE)

for if the righteous man is God's son, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries.

Satan's attempt to split the worldly God, from the immaterial God spectacularly fails; there is only a oneness between God and His Son. It is also of no coincidence that this passage of the Bible is recorded straight after the Baptism of Christ.⁸ That prior event, which in itself was a glorious event, with God intervening in it directly by announcing His great pleasure in Jesus, reminds us that no matter how elevated we may aspire to become, we are all susceptible to the errors of temptation all of the time. (k) Only one perfect man, Jesus, fully over comes this. *Jesus can't be tempted by the Devil as we can be.* Jesus is using Deuteronomy 6:13-14 to great effect to show how the Israelites, being shepherded across the desert - or call it the wilderness - were tempted, whereas Jesus, in the wilderness and in the company of Satan, was most certainly not.

⁸ Gumbel's BiOY application, March 21st 2015 commentary points this out.

Matthew 4:17 (Mark 1:14-15 & Luke 4:14, 31)

Another great signalling event at the start of Jesus' ministry, is all about (l) repenting for our sins and preparing for the heavenly kingdom. Just as John the Baptist had been preaching, now Jesus was teaching repentance, as in Him, it had arrived. Jesus is asserting His divine status as the vehicle through which "heaven is at hand." This is His first teaching, or sermon. What is also interesting is the connection with His last, on the Cross, where He forgives those who cast lots for His clothing.

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:19 (Mark 1:16-20)

(m) Jesus collects His first two groups of two apostles at the start of His ministry. We see a carpenter command a group of fishermen to following Him. It is clear Jesus is setting out His stall, that this Ministry is for the masses and not the privileged few. Jesus is also saying who he wanted His friends to be: the regular folk. I can't help thinking of the symbolism of this in relation to Noah bringing in the animals of the world to survive into the New World ordered, ushered in by God, via the terrible flood that destroyed most of mankind. This time around Jesus was going to be the only sacrifice and not the death of most of mankind as is the case with the Noah story. Caught in the net of salvation would be those who they had converted to followers. There is also an implied message to His earthly preachers, the souls of mankind are important and it is your job to keep fishing for them and to capture them into a unity with the body of Jesus. The physical work of fishing God's creatures is replaced with the spiritual work of finding them and or guiding them to a life in Jesus.

19 Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

(n) The Beatitudes are all a build on the earlier Jewish teachings. For example, Psalm 1 itself lays out the way of righteousness in juxtaposition to the fate of the unrighteous.

1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Jeremiah 17:7-8:

7 Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord. 8 For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.

Here we hear from Jesus, after He has announced that we must repent of our ways if we are to get into His Kingdom, we can now get an understanding from Jesus as to what type of person will get into that Kingdom. Jesus tells us what our character needs to be like to be chosen to rest with Him for eternity. Jesus does not endorse those who think they are being diligent to God, by observing ritual, His radicalism shocked the prevailing religious orthodoxy of the day. They held that the rich in wealth were blessed, the poorest not so, the ritually pious, but not necessarily the fallible but genuinely charitable person, were not blessed and so on and so forth. Jesus turned this thinking on its head.

Matthew 5:3 (Luke 6:20-26) Jesus says

3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

There is a double meaning in this teaching of Jesus. In the first instance (zzzz), His Ministry on earth is universal, but focused on the poor and the marginalised. This is what the Old Testament had told us to expect, notably the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 61:1

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;”

In the second instance, what is interesting here is Jesus sets out contrasting paths to happiness. The conventional earthly way involving material chattels and gratification is contrasted with the heavenly way, that of being “poor in spirit” or dependent on God (as opposed to those with hardened hearts), knowing that humility trumps self-belief, always. (bbbb) In following righteousness alone will you find happiness and His peace. (aaaa) When you are blessed, you are blessed by something, that something being God. You are in His rest and at peace irrespective of what is going on around you. (o) Here we have the first outlines of the doctrine of His saving Grace, given to all those who recognize their total dependence on Him. Those who recognize their errors will receive comforting grace.

Matthew 5:4:

Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

Jesus is focusing us not on mourning and becoming despondent and, in extremis, hating life, but in fact, being mournful in a positive way. (p) This is the mourning we participate in when we have opened yourself up to the Lord and let Him flood in and start to cleanse us. Out goes black, dankness of the heart, and in comes great hope and love for humanity. Mourning for our past sinfulness keeps us focused on trying to be as sinless in the present and as righteous as can be in the future.

Mourning in sympathy or empathy with others demonstrates your deep care for them. This should be contrasted with the mourning for yourself, if some event did not happen that would have promoted your or your ego.

This is referenced from Isaiah 61:2

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn.

And from Isaiah 40:1-2:

Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord's hand Double for all her sins.

(cccc) Jesus is teaching that if you spiritually mourn and by implication genuinely repent, His grace will comfort you. If you show genuine sympathy, He will comfort you.

Jesus continues.

Matthew 5:5:

5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Faced with a Pagan world where vocal outpourings of strength by their leaders, was the norm, Jesus, once again, turns conventional wisdom on its head, to teach self-control. (p) What is wonderful about this is that those with total self-control, who are not in your face, boisterous, boastful, but *in control*, and meek with it, will inherit the earth. These "meek" folk are no patsies, but indeed the strongest of the strong. They get the full rewards of peace. This is also the start of His teaching concerning (q) (r) servant leadership as it is precisely those in control, who are meek with it, who are commanded to lead, in service. They must also show the way towards how to look after the poor. Jesus does not teach in the Sermon on the

Mount that the poor and meek are one and the same - they are in fact not necessarily related, as we can be temporally poor, but spiritually rich just as we can be temporally rich and spiritually bankrupt. If we are meek and in control, as well as spiritually rich, our temporal status is irrelevant and we are fit to both serve and to lead.

This teaching is directly taken from Psalm 37:11:

But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace

Isaiah 10:2 is interesting as this could also have been the inspiration for the scriptural quote because here Isaiah is showing why God's wrath is inflicted upon people who don't look after the meek/poor:

To rob the needy of justice, And to take what is right from the poor of My people, That widows may be their prey, And that they may rob the fatherless.

Jesus was also signalling to us that He, (s) is more mighty in His meekness than Moses and is the New Moses as was prophesized.

Numbers 12:3:

“(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)”

Jesus was also signalling to us that He would be the (u) *lowly*⁹ forthcoming King riding on that donkey as prophesized by Zechariah 9:9-10:

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal

⁹ It's a common mistake to assume that the riding of a donkey displays the humble nature of Jesus and His arrival into Jerusalem, as opposed to riding of a horse. The humble nature is displayed by His total control and the fulfilment of scripture that as a king, no ***The King of Kings and a man of peace***, He would arrive not on the war horse of a King, but the King's donkey that was ridden in times of peace only.

of a donkey. 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be 'from And from the River to the ends of the earth.

He is the King by virtue of His lowly meekness, not by virtue of His having many men and chariots under his command. His Kingdom shall be from the rivers to the ends of the earth. This universal kingdom, is the worldly kingdom of peace. Our task is laid out to always pursue this.

Jesus continues:

Matthew 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

(v) (w) There is no home in heaven for the self-righteous - only those seeking the ultimate spiritual righteousness that is found in Jesus. This opens the Gospel up very early on in His ministry to the forthcoming attacks we will read about, against the hypocrisy of those, like some of the Pharisees, that He debates with, who are more concerned with the letter of the Law, and being *self righteous*, over the more important spirit of the Law and grace, those that are *righteous*. (dddd) Jesus died for us, but here He is signifying that He is there for us, there to fill us up with holiness or righteousness, should we desire it. Jesus is always knocking on our door, until we choose to let Him in. He is indeed our real food.

This in part, relates to Isaiah 55:1:

Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

and Isaiah 65:13:

Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Behold, My servants shall eat, But you shall be hungry; Behold, My servants shall drink, But you shall be thirsty; Behold, My servants shall rejoice, But you shall be ashamed;

Psalm 107:9:

For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness.

Psalm 22:26:

The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let your heart live forever!

Isaiah 41:17:

The poor and needy seek water, but there is none, Their tongues fail for thirst. I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

Matthew 5:7:

Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

(x) Jesus showed us how the strong should guide the weak. Also, He shows us we must be merciful to those in situations less fortunate than ours.

Matthew 5:8:

Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

(y) The Kingdom of God starts with the person having a clean heart (the Old Testament imagery is to circumcise our heart). The obligation for all of us is to clean our hearts: continuously by repenting and being penitent. This is an obligation for us to always keep seeking the righteous way and finding God. Jesus is emphatically telling us not to engage in life led only by the head, but crucially by the heart. Moses had taught this as did King David.

Deuteronomy 10:16:

Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

Deuteronomy 30:6:

And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Psalm 24:3-6

3 Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive blessing from the Lord, And righteousness from the God of his salvation. 6 This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face.

Matthew 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

(z) Jesus is teaching that the focus of all activities should be for peace. This is His doctrine of active grace being preached. We are not called to put ourselves in a bubble, but to be pro active in securing peace with our fellow mankind. Indeed, you need to be internally at peace to make peace. Jesus is love, He is peace itself. However, (cc.a) He knew His message would divide families and friends. But anyone who truly promotes peace is a son of God, or child of God. What this Beatitude does not rule out is having to go to war to establish peace. (aa) We may well still be peacemakers if our war is just. There would appear to be no Christian compulsion for unilateral pacifism.

Matthew 5:10

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(bb) Jesus is teaching: suffer for the faith as a martyr and we will find our place in heaven. This is a very upfront teaching of Jesus as at this time, His ministry had just started and he was on a roll, with people only seeing positive things, His popularity was high. This teaching, once again would have perplexed people.

Matthew 5:11-12:

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

(cc) Jesus is teaching us that as believers in Him, we will suffer persecution, as did all the prophets before us, but that we should not worry as this will be well worth the price of an eternity in heaven.

Matthew 5:13-16:

Believers Are Salt and Light "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

(o) Now addressing His Disciples, Jesus is teaching the doctrine of God's saving Grace is also introduced again. Salt preserves and His salt preserves the enlightened chosen people of faith for salvation. Because of this, they also do good works that will shine for all to see. Note: good works are the by-product of saving grace and not the driver to obtaining saving grace.

Also, Jesus is teaching us that all our works should be to project the glory of the Lord.

Matthew 5:17:

Jesus makes this statement which starts the second part of the Sermon on the Mount, in which we hear the teachings of the Torah.

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil.

It is clear Jesus refers in general to the whole corpus of the Laws of Moses. (ee) Jesus stakes his claim that He does fulfil the moral aspects of the Mosaic Law, as He maintained a sinless life. (ff) He fulfilled all the sacrificial ceremonial aspects of the Law as all of these events pointed to Him¹⁰.

He reaffirms this.

The audience are scandalized as the teacher of the Torah is Moses, who took his instruction from God, and Jesus is using the authority of "I" to attest to His equality with God.

Matthew 5:18-20:

For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

(gg) Here we encounter the doctrine of inerrancy, or the teachings of the Law of Moses as being without fault and timeless. (eeee) Antinomianism, or the thought that you can discard the keeping of the moral law as you have salvation, is clearly not a sound teaching and not something Jesus taught. Salvation still occurs to people even if they offend against the Law, they will just be considered the least in heaven. (hh) Also, again we see Jesus pressing the point that He has no interest in those, like some of the Pharisees, who self-righteously obey the letter of the Law, but don't practice the spirit of the Law. The spirit is nobler than the letter. In fact, Jesus who does not break the law in anyway, sets the very high standard for His followers. Christianity is not a cop out of doing tedious ceremonies, it is a challenge

¹⁰ For more details of this, please consult the appendix I where all the Old Testament prophecies are listed that related to Jesus fulfilling those prophecies and the coming of the Messiah.

to live life like Jesus, impossible in truth for any of us to attain in full, but only in part.

In Matthew 5:21-22:

You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire."

Jesus is addressing the masses who may not be able to read, but would have certainly heard of these teachings (ii) Jesus is teaching us that the same urge that drives insults drives the urge to murder. Here Jesus is building on our understanding of the prohibition of murder in the commandments to really focus us on the original urge to sin as actually the wider problem. This is the start of His overtly ethical teachings.

Exodus 20:13:

You shall not murder.

Deuteronomy 5:17:

You shall not murder.

Leviticus 24:19-20:

If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor, as he has done, so shall it be done to him—fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he has caused disfigurement of a man, so shall it be done to him.

He is also, in referring to "hell fire", referencing Hinnom Valley where idolatrous Jews sacrificed their children to the God Molech. By Jesus' time it was the rubbish dump of Jerusalem, always burning away. Offal and corpses of criminals were dumped there.

2 Kings 23:10:

And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech.

Isaiah 30:33:

For Tophet was established of old, Yes, for the king it is prepared. He has made it deep and large; Its pyre is fire with much wood; The breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, Kindles it.

Jeremiah 7:3:

And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.

Matthew 5:23-26:

23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

Christian churches require us to show a 'sign of the peace' before we take part in communion. It would seem that Jesus here gives (jj) His first teaching concerning cleaning out from our heart all our disputes before we come to His altar ie, don't arrive at the altar polluted, but pure of heart.

Matthew 5:27:

You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery'

Exodus 20:14:

You shall not commit adultery.

Deuteronomy 5:18:

You shall not commit adultery.

Matthew 5:28-30:

28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

The imagery Jesus uses to teach is very powerful but not meant literally, as the sin of lust emanates from the heart, so cutting off a physical part of the body, would never cure the lustful desire, only total self-control will.

Next Jesus admonishes the Rabbis (Rabbi Hillel in the matter of divorce, was for allowing the husband to find any fault and Rabbi Shammai to only allow divorce for adultery) for making the law of divorce a paper shuffling exercise. This forgot that divorce is only allowed in the marriage if one party has become unclean, which is referenced from the original passage in Deuteronomy.

Matthew 5:31-32:

Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4:

When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife, if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Matthew 5:33:

Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.'

(fffff) Jesus is making the very important distinction that the only oath you swear is to the Lord, the creator of the Universe and everything in it. This is the essence of religion no less. God can swear by Himself as there is nothing greater to swear to. These are His covenants to us. We need to enter these covenants to be saved. We must perform to our oaths to the Lord. Jesus' well-known teaching, as he continues to unfold in the subsequent verses, is that any of your words should be truthful and binding, not just those said on oath. What is in the heart when said is the real issue, not what is written on the paper, which had become the practise by the time of Jesus.

This is a reference to Leviticus 19:12:

And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.

And Numbers 30:2:

If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

And Deuteronomy 23:21-23:

When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.”

Matthew 5:34-37:

34 But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; 35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

The Old Testament taught that God did not have and single physical location, so making an oath to some fictional place was pointless.

Isaiah 66:1

“Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest?”

(kk) Again, Jesus is teaching us that there is no merit in making oaths off the cuff. We must only say something if we mean it. Better still, always have a pure heart and make sure our word is, just that, our word, and that we will perform to that word. The need to swear an oath implies that there must be some existing distrust about our word.

Matthew 5:38:

(ll) Jesus then teaches and clarifies the law concerning proportionality in punishment. The level of crime should have the same level of punishment. As with the verses before, this does not mean literally if someone has hurt our eye, we go and do the exact same hurt back. Jesus' main point is to move people away from a

culture of revenge and to a culture of proportional restitution in the judicial system. This is what was being taught at the time of Moses, but clearly people had not understood its true teachings, Jesus clarifies.

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

Exodus 21:24:

eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

Leviticus 24:20:

fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he has caused disfigurement of a man, so...

Deuteronomy 19:21:

Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand

Matthew 5:39-42

39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

(hhhhh) Jesus is obliquely informing us to avoid evil people, don't engage with them. There you have it: one of the toughest of Christian commandments, (mm) in which Jesus teaches us to turn the other cheek. To be clear, this is a compulsion not to do so in retaliation. (ggggg) The resistance to evil is via the law, we do not take it into our own hands. Jesus is teaching us that we should always let the official judicial authorities deal with civil punishments and not take matters into our own hands. This would have been clearer to a 1st Century audience and the local scribes were known to turn a blind eye to personal retribution. Jesus clarifies the Law and indeed fulfils it by this teaching.

Matthew 5:43 (Luke 6:27, 32):

(mm) Jesus teaches a famous bit of scripture and amplifies it by saying not only should we love our enemies, but we should *very much* love our enemies. Jesus also makes no distinction between a member of your nation and or tribe and the rest of the world, as the Old Testament verses do. For Jesus, this command if properly fulfilled then it must apply universally.. He is reminding His audience that this was actually part of their Holy Scripture as well.

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.

Leviticus 19:18:

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Proverb 25:21:

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;

Psalms 145:9

The Lord is good to all, And His tender mercies are over all His works.

Matthew 5:44-48 (Luke 6:27-38) Rules of Conduct for This Life:

44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

(o) Jesus teaches us in this commandment to love our enemies, and shows that God has common grace extended towards all people of the world, enemies

included. This love is universal. We must treat our enemies with positive kindness. On a historic note, the Jews and Muslims up until the last century did not greet Christians. Some Muslims still to this day do not allow males to shake hands with Christian ladies; this may also be a teaching directed towards reaching out to those communities.

This section finishes with the point that perfection is as the Father is in heaven. (i) If we lead that perfect life, we are the same as God, just as Jesus was. This is another of His demonstrations of His divinity as He was the only sinless man.

Matthew 6:1-4:

1 Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

(nn) Jesus is teaching that showboating (blowing your own trumpet) our so called pious nature to our friends and those we seek to impress with our charitable deeds, does little to demonstrate that our motivation to help others is genuine. The practise of the Muslims of public prayer 5 times per day, would also be an example of this show boating. We must let our actions shine like a light to the world, so people will seek and enquire what motivates these good works, and then find out that it is for the love of the Lord that motivates these good deeds. It would also seem that if we are given reward and recognition on earth for these acts, we don't get that repeated in heaven. (oo) Give liberally. Jesus' focus at the time would be the practice of deceiving people at the local synagogue by giving open displays of piousness, while being corrupt at heart. In many churches today, we still witness this behaviour. This should not be confused with those who publically display themselves in order to glorify the Lord.

(oo) Jesus, in the above verse, also builds on the positive virtue of the already existing Jewish teachings of alms giving, for example:

Tobit 12:8-10:

8 Prayer with fasting is good, and so is giving to the poor with righteousness. The possession of a little with righteousness is better than much with injustice. Giving to the poor is better than storing up gold. 9 Giving to the poor saves from death, and it washes away every sin. Those who give to the poor will feel satisfied with life, 10 but those who commit sin and injustice are their own worst enemies. CEB

Jesus then focuses on teaching about praying.

Matthew 6:5-14 (Luke 11:2-4)

5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. 7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. 9 In this manner, therefore, pray:

A man who prays out in the public to show his apparent piety must be very satisfied with himself. A truly penitent prayer is precisely the opposite, highly dissatisfied with himself, so that a public display would be unthinkable. Jesus does not have a problem with you standing or kneeling for prayer, in the public domain or the private domain. He has a problem with your posturing in prayer and your motivations for prayer. Here Jesus is just about to teach us the (qq) Lord's Prayer. Displaying our so called pious nature in open devotion will get us nowhere, as will endless repetition for the sake of repetition. (pp.a) Muslim repetitive 5 times a day prayers would seem to be exactly the type of pray that would seem to fall into this category. 600 years before Muhammad, there must have been similar prayer demands from the authorities. Prayer should be both directed towards the

worship of God and requests for human (pp.d) personal needs, said meaningfully and, if need be, (pp.b) in privacy. And above all, (pp.c) said from the heart.

The Old Testament had taught you to seek out a private place to pray as opposed to gushing outpourings in the public.

2 Kings 4:33

³³ He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord

God comes into our private chamber and transforms it into a Temple. We then shut out the world to our heart and expose our heart totally to God. You can be on the crowded underground Metro line in any major city and be truly in intimate prayer. Prayer can often be in silence. Hannah, an important Old Testament figure, a prophetess, prayed in silence. You don't need to think/say much, God knows all your intimate thoughts and indeed what is best for you and when it is best for you, you just need to demonstrate your genuine thirst for righteousness and the Lord's acceptance of it and forgiveness for any short comings.

1 Samuel 1:9-16

⁹ So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the Lord. ¹⁰ And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish. ¹¹ Then she made a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head." ¹² And it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli watched her mouth. ¹³ Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴ So Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!" ¹⁵ But Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. ¹⁶ "Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman,^[d] for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now."

The Lord's Prayer is then taught.

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. 14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Jesus, the Jew would have used the Siddur or prayer book. The 3rd, 5th, 6th and 9th benedictions are similar to the central service at the synagogue, the Amidah. The first verse of the Lords Prayer, (qq.a) teaches of an objective and a personal God and that we can know Him as Father, as we have known Him via the Son. The Greek translation ΠΑΤΕΡ ΗΜΩ renders it literally "Father mine." (qq.b) His name is the sacred name that shall not be taken in vain, the name that Moses first encountered in the desert: "I am who I am." He has no limits, he is not a finite thing, hence the Jews' reluctance to ever express His name: YHWH. This is worthy of worship. Worship is not because the Lord is some kind of narcissist, wanting and needing adulation, but because you don't see unhappy worshipers. Also, it encourages us to stop focusing on ourselves and worship something infinitely better than us. This helps us be humble. The Old Testament had also provided an expectation that the hallowing of His name would culminated in the coming of His Kingdom.

Zechariah 14:9

And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be—"The Lord is one," And His name one.

(qq.c) That His Kingdom is coming is laid out in the second verse, to which (qq.d) our wills will be subservient to God's will and thus the Law of Moses and at some

point, the (iiii) Kingdom of earth and heaven will unite as one. No more trials and tribulations, just peace and abundance. The Old Testament prophet Danial saw it this way.

Daniel 2:44

44 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

Danial 7:26-27

'But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever. 27 Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

The Kingdom of Heaven can also come to you personally. The most obvious expression of this will be when all are obeying the Decalogue as how it is developed in the Sermon on the Mount. Indeed the delivery of the Gospel itself is the very essence of His Kingdom coming in the present. The Kingdom can come into you today and triumph spiritually when you absorb and act upon its teachings. The kingdom can arrive in you, when you have loyalty to Jesus, no rebellion in your soul, just His peace.

(qq.e) Jesus' teaching in the third verse is that we should be asking for His gracious provision for our physical needs, as He provided for the Jews' in the desert, (qqq.f.), as well as our spiritual needs, which He provides us with via the Eucharistic supper (which will be revealed by Jesus later in His ministry). As Jesus is the Bread of Life, this is also Jesus teaching us, that by following His ways, you will really partake in life to the full. Jesus teaches in this way (qq.g) that God feeds us in total: (qqq.h) God is our daily gift.

Exodus 16:4:

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.

In the fourth and fifth verses, Jesus is not teaching us to ask for debt forgiveness for what we may lawfully owe to the tax man or shop keeper, but (qq.i) forgiveness for our spiritual inequities. In the sixth verse. This is one of the most powerful things we can do, forgive others who have sinned against us. Jesus took the nails or "bullets" on the cross for us. He paid the full price for our sins in the most excruciating and painful way. He forgave us for everything we have done. All we are required to do is in a small way, ape this act of forgiveness, graciously not having to die for the act, but to actually liberate ourselves from the burden of and blackness, terror or hatred that may be eating us up if we do not forgive. This gives us life, a life free from this terrible burden(qq.j) On the Cross Jesus mirrors the Beatitudes, blessed is the poor in spirit (dependent on God) , those who mourn (He mourns for our sinful state), who are meek (He sets aside His powers to meekly die for us), righteous (He was never anything but), merciful (He made sure we are not condemned), pure in heart (He was always), persecuted (there is no denial that the Crucifixion was nothing but persecution), As we think about Jesus on the Cross, we can recognise it as the ultimate act of fulfilment of all the Beatitudes in this one act of His sacrifice for us. With that intense isolation of Jesus on the Cross in our minds, as we pray, we can weep in our small expression of empathy.

Jesus is teaching us to ask not to be put in the tempting way of the devil, but praying for any guidance to avoid this pitiful fate. (rr) It is an acknowledgement, too, that the Lord can give Satan the leeway to tempt us, as we observe in the story of the book of Job. However, we petition that we are weak and can only take so much. We know we need to do penance, (qq.k) but we plead that it will be something we can bear. Also, by not falling into the temptations like, drug taking, use of prostitutes, adultery, lustful behaviour, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, excessive

celebrity worship, idolisation, too much pride, the list goes on, you are actually maximally free. Jesus is teaching us once again how to be fulfilled and joyously free. The final two verses say (qq.l) we must be prepared to forgive those who have committed wrongs against us. (qq.m) If we don't, we can't expect God to do the same on our Day of Judgment. (qq.m) The prayer for being delivered from evil is also a plea for guidance to always focus on God and His teachings, observance of which will keep us away from evil.

16 Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Jesus teaches we can (ss) fast, but this should be modest and sincere. The Psalms of King David had taught that the spirit of fasting is all about the heart.

Psalm 35:13

But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; And my prayer would return to my own heart.

Psalm 69:10-13

10 When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, That became my reproach. 11 I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. 12 Those who sit in the gate speak against me, And I am the song of the drunkards. 13 But as for me, my prayer is to You, O Lord, in the acceptable time; O God, in the multitude of Your mercy, Hear me in the truth of Your salvation.

The Prophet Isaiah had also taught that fasting was far from publically groaning, seeking human praise rather than Godly praise, like the hypocrites and show-boating about their great pious act.

Isaiah 58:5-7

5 Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the Lord? ⁶ “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

Matthew 6:19-34 (Luke 11:34-36, 12:22-34):

19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Jesus is teaching that the (tt) love of treasure, or money, in and of itself is wrong; the real treasure we should work towards is given in heaven and we must have a pure heart. The real treasure is actually Jesus Himself.

22 The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

(uu) Jesus is teaching that our mind's eye, or our consciousness, shows you like a lamp the right way to conduct ourselves in control of our darker passions. If our mind's eye is in a dark place to start with, corrupt or broken, we will have a diminished moral compass and we really will descend into deep darkness. You should always work to make sure your mind's eye is as pure and focused on the good as possible. The true light of the world is of course Jesus and if our mind's eye stays focused on Jesus and His teachings, your whole body, or whole lamp will shine with a bit of His radiant glory.

24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Jesus is teaching that again: (tt) don't love money; if we do this in and of itself, it signifies that we love the devil, meaning that we won't be able to love God, which is infinitely more important.

25 Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Job 38:41:

Who provides food for the raven, When its young ones cry to God, And wander about for lack of food?

Psalm 147:9

"He gives to the beast its food, And to the young ravens that cry."

Jesus is teaching that there are abundant provisions across the globe for our sustenance, far more than the birds and the bees need. God has provided this abundance for us. He does not mean we should not work for our just deserts - far from it - but that we should have (vv) abundant faith, not little faith, always in the Lord. Practically Jesus is teaching us that to deal with tomorrow's worries, we actually should be dealing with today's worries. Also, our time horizons should extend beyond our physical life on earth and into the heavenly realm that we should all aspire to. Worrying about splendiferous clothing and the like are false

roads to travel down as (ww) just as what comes from outside our heart can't make us foul, no about of finery from outside can make our heart pure. This teaching also references the kingdom of God. This is not a place we go to like we may travel to Mayfair, but a place in your heart where His Laws rule, where our moral compass is guided by His teachings. If we are looking for a physical location, we may find it in the church and amongst its servants and community, but the key place is, first and foremost, within our innermost heart. More importantly, for those listening to His teachings then, Jesus was saying to those listening to him that they would find it in the earthly Jesus right there and now! Blessed were those early followers. But so are we. (xx) We see this Kingdom in our hearts if we are following His teachings. (yy) We see it in others if they are following His teachings. His kingdom is very much in the present. That there is an end-of-times destiny for humanity which both the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation heavily point to, I don't doubt; but one thing is for sure: Jesus wants you to experience His kingdom in the now, right now.

Matthew 7:1-6 (Luke 6:37-42):

Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. 3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. 6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

(zz) The key take-home message from this teaching of Jesus is that we need to be able to discern when arriving at our judgments: be thoughtful in judgment. Remove all barriers to this, especially unwarranted self-righteousness. Don't judge others when it may be us yourselves who is in more need of correction. When we realize that, we can truly be of help to others. Judge ourselves first. Be able also to discriminate between believers who do deserve holy blessing, and unbelievers who don't, the former, once known to you, are a waste of time and effort. This does not prevent outreach to unbelievers, just the practical

pointlessness of teaching once revealed as a true unbeliever, don't put anymore effort into trying to teach them the Way of Jesus, there are better people to help embrace the love of Jesus.

Matthew 7:7-11 (Luke 11:9-13):

7 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Using parent/child imagery, Jesus is teaching us how (aaa) God is like a parent who always wants the best for his children. There is no doubt that Jesus is teaching us to have a personal prayer relationship with God. We have to believe and we have to be prepared to ask. However, just like a parent, when asked for A or B, by a child, A and B might not be suitable to be granted or given permission for. When we ask, we make a request. When we knock, we press the request, when we seek, we are seriously persistent with the request. In the Luke parallel, it is put simply as being persistent. This teaching of Jesus is a more roundabout way of reminding you to be persistent in prayer.

See more complete notes in Luke

Matthew 7:12 (Luke 6:31, 38):

12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

This is Jesus' first teaching of the (bbb) Golden Rule. Note: it is a positive command, unlike older notions of the Rule which are more often phrased negatively, ie, don't be hateful to X and X should not be hateful back to you. Jesus gives a positive command to love. This rule does have its scriptural antecedents in the Old Testament, but as we shall see later with things like the Good Samaritan and the

Last Super, as told by John, we will see that Jesus, pushing the positive injunction to actually not only do unto others as we would ourselves, but to do this *in service* to them, as Jesus really did for others. It is the essence of the laws of the Prophets, or the Old Testament, but just not applied as Jesus would point out it needs to be applied, in service to others and universally without favour or discrimination. This moral law was always there, just like the laws of nature and the fundamental constants of the universe are always there. The former have just not been applied properly, the latter are just static and we have no choice but to accept them as they are. Jesus make this Golden Rule the first and the last commandment of the Christian faith. Of all the equalities that mankind asks for, of rights, of education, to health care, to life, the list goes on and on, this right of mutual service, the servant serving the master and the master serving the servant, is one that is actually well within all our grasp.

Examples of the negative Golden Rule of the Old Testament

Leviticus 19:18:

18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Tobit 14:15

15 And what you hate, do not do to anyone. Do not drink wine to excess or let drunkenness go with you on your way. NRSV

Matthew 7:13-14:

13 Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Jesus is teaching that (ccc) faith in God will get us the potential for eternal life. Just being a nice guy on its own won't, you will meander down the wide road and miss

that gate. The way is fraught with difficulties and few will make it and find the narrow gate to the blessed kingdom. Narrowness also means you have to put in the effort to be a believer. You must work hard at it, be humble, and be childlike in your innocence. Concerning broad way, you have more to worry about as evil is all around us, you don't actually have to do anything, it will engulf you, in contrast, you have to do everything to avoid it. You are a slave to evil unless to focus proactively of the straight path that Jesus shows us to follow.

Matthew 7:15-20 (Luke 6:43-45):

15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

(ddd) Jesus is teaching that a false prophet will come in the guise of a (ddd.a) pious person, though at the core of this person will be (ddd.b) total degeneration. The false prophet will promote the (ddd.c) easy way of life, the fast and the quick way. (ddd.d) We will know them as they do not stand the test of time. (ddd.e) Avoid them and don't be tempted.

Matthew 7:21-23 (Luke 6:46):

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

(eee) Jesus sets himself up as the ultimate judge, a role only considered as belonging to God, implicitly revealing (i) His divinity. The two Lords are Jesus and God and in effect are indistinguishable. (ccc) True faith, not uttering Holy words,

is the key to heaven. Followers of Muhamad, pagans and the Jews need to take note here as they are pious in their beliefs, but as these are false, they are not going to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (fff) Justification by faith in Jesus is the key. That said, this does not rule out good works as if we do have that faith, we cannot *not* do good works.

Matthew 7:24-27 (Luke 6:47-49):

24 Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

The parable of building the house, is actually about building the dwelling that you will live in as a home for your life, be at a bungalow or a mansion, or anything in between. So, the importance of getting this dwelling built on firm foundations, and being exactly right and secure, is the point of Jesus' teaching. And naturally if you follow his teachings, you will be living in a house, built on very firm foundations. These firm foundations will allow you focus on doing the blessed fruits of your work, done in name of the glory of Jesus. Jesus is also subtly teaching that it is not just the foundations, but also the fruit of the work that those foundations allow. You are known by the fruit of your work. Jesus will deny you access to salvation if you know him and his works and show no good fruit born about by this understanding. Jesus is above all teaching that the house is the good religious life/practice. The Rock is Jesus and we need to (ggg) bury your foundations in Him in order to build our life. The rain/floods are God's judgment. The solid foundation is obedience to God's teachings. The parable contains an analogy. The Sea of Galilee has a hard coating of sand around it during the heat of the summer. A careful builder would lay foundations down to the rock to insure his house did not get washed away in the rains. I dare say this teaching of Jesus was deliberately positioned like this as it would have so much relevance to His immediate listeners. However, like all his teachings, it is still relevant today where ever we are in the

world. However, we must remember that the foundation serves only to ensure a good and purposeful live, the fruits of which are evident to the Lord. There is also a warning implied to all, even though you think only a fool would build a house on sand, there are many fools amongst us all who play casually with their religion and are oblivious to themselves being swept away for eternity in the shifting sands.

Matthew 8:1-4 (Mark 1:40-44, Luke 5:12-14):

The (hhh) healing miracles of Jesus now start to be recorded. What is important to note is that leprosy was the disease of the living dead, slowly eating away at you each moment of the day. You were believed to have been a sinner if you were defiled by it, so not only were you an outcast from society, you were deemed to be a sinner. If you ever touched such a person, you too were deemed unclean and to also be cast out of the community.

Leviticus 13:46

46 He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.

Jesus choose His first miracle with this most marginalized member of 1st Century Jewish culture, teaching us implicitly not to ever abandon the most (hhh.a) marginalised. Also, we have a great reminder, in the personage of the leper, that His faith in Jesus as the Lord, healed him.

*1 When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. 2 And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 3 Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, **"I am willing; be cleansed."** Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. "And Jesus said to him, **"See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."***

Note, Jesus touched the leper, making Him an outcast until the evening in accordance with the requirement to stay away from the community until evening

for touching things like dead meat. The leper is a symbol of sin in this context. Jesus is demonstrating His divinity and therefore His ability to forgive sin.

The reference to what then follows is to Leviticus 14:4-7 where the priest is the rightful person who could declare you healed.

then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

Matthew 8:5-13 (Luke 7:1-10):

The second miracle is done for a member of the occupying forces of Rome. Being Gentile he was deemed unclean as well. (iii) Jesus is teaching us once more that even those that you think are not part of your community are in fact part of it, and should never be neglected.

*5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, 6 saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." 7 And Jesus said to him, **"I will come and heal him."** 8 The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, **"Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! 11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."** 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, **"Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you."** And his servant was healed that same hour.*

This Centurion knows how to command and knows how to take commands, as all good soldiers do. And, more importantly, he knows he should ultimately obey Jesus as the Lord God. The Centurion is (i) attesting to the divinity of Jesus, as Ruler

of all nature. The Centurion had absolute faith in Jesus and His divine status. Jesus noted this faith and contrasted it with the unbelief He was witnessing in Israel. Jesus, in his healing of the Centurion's servant passages in **Matthew 8:11**, takes time to remind all that in heaven, it is not just the Jews, but the Gentiles ("Sinim" was probably China) as well who obtain salvation. As it was written in scripture, this was in contrast to the prevailing Jewish belief that salvation was only for them. (jjj) The potential for salvation is open to all, Jew or Gentile. This is contrasted with Hell for those who don't obtain salvation. This giving of Grace to the Gentiles was revealed by God to really make the Jews reflect on their own position as the first chosen people. God was arousing jealousy in the hearts of the Jews.

Another key teaching we have present is that a Master should serve his servant as Jesus is clearly Master and attending to this Centurion's servant. The teaching of (r) servant leadership is obvious.

Isaiah 49:8-12:

Thus says the Lord: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth,..... They shall neither hunger nor thirst, Neither heat nor sun shall strike them; For He who has mercy on them will lead them, Even by the springs of water He will guide them. I will make each of My mountains a road, And My highways shall be elevated. Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west, And these from the land of Sinim.

Malachi 1:11:

For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, And a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations," Says the Lord of hosts.

After curing Peter's mother-in-law (without being asked, suggesting a really true bonding with Peter, his chief servant) out of an act of love, Jesus departs to another part of the lake, far away from the commotion caused by all His healings. A person, a scribe no less, wants to follow Him, counsels the following:

Matthew 8:20-22 (Luke 9:57-62):

20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." 21 Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

To the scribe, the teaching by Jesus here was that the road of (kkk) following Jesus would be hard, harder than a feral fox's existence. For the disciple, following Jesus could not wait until he had received the inheritance he expected (upon the death in the future of his father), but the man would be buried within a day and that the disciple should not worry about burying the spiritually dead as the dead will deal with that: time was of the essence. This sounds a harsh rebuke from Jesus, but the Jewish tradition of the time, was for the son to stay in the house for 7 days post the death of the father. The body would then decay to the extent that the bones could then be taken and placed in an ossuary. At this point, months later, the mourning stopped. Later in the Gospels we will see that Jesus is always (kkk.a) teaching: don't leave our move to faith and the reformation of our life until it's too late. Follow the Lord with a sense of urgency and purpose.

Jesus is teaching that He is the "Son of Man."¹¹ (i.a) The same Son of Man used in Daniel 7:13-14 and is Messianic in its usage. Jesus uses it Himself 77 times in the Gospels¹². As these references crop up, I will not individually report them, although they are of course rooted in Daniel 7:13-14.

¹¹ "Son of David" and 9:27 is a similar Messianic title.

¹² The Son of Man is used by Jesus in the following Gospel accounts 77 times;

Matthew (29 times) 8:20, 9:6, 10:23, 11:19, 12:8, 12:32, 12:40, 13:37, 13:41, 16:13, 16:27, 16:28, 19:9, 17:12, 17:22, 18:11, 19:28, 20:18, 20:28, 24:27, 24:30, 24:37, 24:39, 24:44, 25:13, 25:31, 26:2, 26:24, 26:64

Mark (12 times) 2:10, 2:28, 8:31, 8:38, 9:12, 9:31, 10:33, 10:45, 13:26, 14:21, 14:41, 14:62

I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

Matthew 8:26 (Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25) Jesus Stills the Storm:

Jesus displays (i.b) total power over nature by stopping the storm. He chastises His disciples for showing little faith.

26 But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

The Jews would have expected only God to have been able to be in command of nature herself. Jesus was once more displaying, and teaching, His divinity.

Psalm 93:3-4:

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, The floods have lifted up their voice; The floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier Than the noise of many waters, Than the mighty waves of the sea.

Psalm 104:7

Luke (25 times) 5:24, 6:5, 6:22, 7:34, 9:22, 9:26, 9:44, 9:56, 9:58, 11:30, 12:8, 12:10, 12:40, 17:22, 17:24, 17:26, 17:30, 18:8, 18:31, 19:10, 21:27, 21:36, 22:22, 22:48, 22:69,

John (11 times) 1:51, 3:13, 3:14, 5:19, 5:27, 6:27, 6:53, 6:62, 8:28, 12:23, 13:31

The Book of Jeremiah uses the words “son of man in a very non-specific sense to refer to human beings. The Book of Ezekiel uses it 93 times as a mortal prophet of God. The newer Book of Daniel transforms this usage in the Jewish scriptures to be God Messiah of future expectation, that Jesus says is fulfilled in Him.

At Your rebuke they fled; At the voice of Your thunder they hastened away.

Psalm 107:29:

29 "He calms the storm, So that its waves are still."

Jesus is teaching us that we are figuratively *that* boat in the stormy sea, when we have forgotten His teachings. Remember His teachings and welcome Him back into your heart and soul and your own storm in life will be calmed. Jesus offers us here a very clear picture of His peace.

(i.c) Jesus is then reported having total control over the animal kingdom when he casts out the demons, (i.d) via His word only, from the two possessed men and fittingly for His Jewish audience allowed them to escape into a herd of pigs (for the Jews, totally unclean animals). This was after they acknowledged Him as the Son of God and having a rightful role in judging them (just arguing that He was a little bit too early.), he then says

Matthew 8:32 (Mark 5:1-17, Luke 8:26-37):

32 And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

Jesus is once again demonstrating His divinity, judging and moving the demons on, but not exercising His final judgement that only comes at the very end of days, these demonic's were still allowed to exist. The surrounding villages hear about this miraculous event but instead of welcoming Jesus, beg Him to depart their area. Then Jesus gets on a boat and sets sail for home.

Matthew 9:2 (Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:17-26):

Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."

(i.d) Jesus demonstrates His divinity by curing this man. For the miracle of curing the paralytic, Jesus is accused of blasphemy. He responds:

Matthew 9:4-6:

"But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? 6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

As (i.e) Jesus is omniscient, He knows that the observing priests disbelieve. However, who but God could actually do the impossible and cure the paralytic? Only Jesus. And just like that? Only God. Who has the power to forgive sins? Only God. The latter we can't prove in this life, but the former we can witness right in front of our own eyes. So here we have Jesus, empirically demonstrating His divinity once more. (i.d) Jesus points out and teaches that words are cheap and anyone can make a claim to heal or forgive sins, but only the Divine Jesus can cure the sick with His Word. So although Jesus does (i.f) forgive the man's sins, with words, the paralytic is healed, the far greater issue for the paralytic is actually his salvation. Jesus demonstrates His divinity, because His Word is the ultimate creative force in the universe with the power to forgive sins.

Jesus was seen dining with "tax collectors and sinners." This poses a problem for the Pharisees as they can't understand why a preacher like Jesus would stoop to dine with this 1st century version of low life. To which Jesus magnificently responds.

Matthew 9:12 (Mark 2:14-17, Luke 5:27-32):

When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."

The warning to the self-righteous here is clear: (v) salvation will not come to them.

When he eats with the taxpayers and sinners Jesus causes a raising of the Pharisees' eyebrows, who question His followers as to why He is doing such a thing. (hh) Jesus teaches that it's the moral content of the law that is important and not its outward manifestation.

Matthew 9:13: Jesus Tells Why He Has Come to See the Pharisees

But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

The scriptural references.

Hosea 6:6:

For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

1 Samuel 15:22:

So Samuel said: "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.

Micah 6:6-8:

With what shall I come before the Lord, And bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

This saying mentioned in all three of the synoptic gospels cuts deep, Jesus has come for the waifs and strays the poor the marginalised. Every missionary activity established there after, every Christian philanthropic endeavour, has been

motivated by this teaching since.

The disciples and Jesus are accused of not fasting enough. In this parable Jesus uses a wedding analogy to (III) to teach that He is the bridegroom and they, the bride, are joyous as long as they are together. And that when He departs from them, then they will surely mourn: in short, don't get divorced from Jesus. This analogy is also another hint at His imminent death and Resurrection, a time when He and His believers will be physically separated. Now that would be something to mourn!

Matthew 9:15-17 (Mark 2:18-22, Luke 5:33-39):

15 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. 16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. 17 Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.

(ss) The practical inference of this narrative was also that there was too much faux fasting with little meaning. This should stop, as shortly (ss.a) we will have a real reason to fast: His death and Resurrection. (mmm) Jesus is building up to showing that what was done of old, will be blown away, replaced, by the new. The wine skin analogy is pertinent as skins stretch as they fill up as they are still fairly elastic, but as we re-use them, they lose this elasticity and break. Jesus was hinting at the New Covenant to come. The pouring in of the wine is the pouring in of the spirit of the New Covenant, resplendent in all its glory, and without doubt it will split open the worn old skin of the Old Covenant. The New Covenant is also like the new garments, fit to clothe such a magnificent outpouring.

A ruler visits Jesus in order to worship Him. His daughter has died and he appeals to Jesus to come and just "lay Your hand on her" so she will come back to life. Jesus makes His way to the daughter with His disciples in tow. A woman from the crowd

touches His garment. This part of the garment was associated from the time of Moses with the Law of Moses or God's own Law. She had thought that just by the fact of touching it, she might be healed, He responds:

Matthew 9:22 (Mark 5:21-43, Luke 8:40-56) (First Raising of the Dead):

22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.

Although the woman was mistaken about the power of a garment, (nnn) Jesus teaches that her faith was 100% correct and that is what healed her and nothing else. She is comforted by Jesus (indeed called daughter, the only time Jesus does this) and her public confession is recognised and praised by Jesus. He specifically calls her out of the crowd so her faith could be a light to others. Knowing the thoughts of all men, Jesus was not unaware of this lady's faith, but being touched by faith gave Jesus the opportunity to demonstrate a person who was on the way to salvation. Jesus once more, even though He is on His way to the ruler's house, to cure his daughter, Jesus pauses, to knowingly let these events with this very obscure and marginalised lady, play out. Jesus is for everyone, not just the elite.

Numbers 15:38-41:

Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the Lord your God."

At the ruler's house, Jesus makes his way past those in desperate mourning.

Matthew 9:24:

He said to them, ***"Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping."*** And they ridiculed Him

And she arises, well again. The Official's faith is in sharp contrast to that of the crowd. Once more, (i) Jesus demonstrates His divinity.

This healing spurs on two blind men to plead and try their luck with Jesus.

Matthew 9:28-30:

*And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, ***"Do you believe that I am able to do this?"*** They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." "Then He touched their eyes, saying, ***"According to your faith let it be to you."*** **30** And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, ***"See that no one knows it."****

(nnn) Faith, once again, is what allows the cure of these blind men.

Jesus moves about the area and sees crowds of people, all un-churched, not of the faith and He has compassion for them.

Matthew 9:37-38:

*Then He said to His disciples, ***"The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. 38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."****

This is a positive upbeat statement from Jesus concerning the success of His spiritual harvest, or Mission. He encourages prayer to more. This prayer is answered in the next chapter by Himself. Thus far, Matthew has comprehensively laid out the case of Jesus the miracle worker. (pp.e) Jesus is teaching the positive power of prayer.

In Jesus' second major discourse in Matthew¹³ He reminds his disciples, when He sends them out to preach His Word, that the road ahead would be often violent as people will reject the message of the Gospel. Metaphorically speaking, (z.a) Jesus knows that as the result of his teachings of peace, paradoxically his followers will have great acts of violence committed against them. This is the first time the word 'apostles' is used (sent ones).

Matthew 10:5-14 (Mark 6:8-13, Luke 9:2-6, 12:2-10):

5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' 8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. 9 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, 10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food. 11 "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. 12 And when you go into a household, greet it. 13 If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.

He advises them to preach to the Jews first, as this took place in their immediate locality. What is more, to speak first to those in spiritual need, the "lost sheep." Conversion of as many Jews as possible would undoubtedly speed up the conversion of the Gentiles. Jesus supplies them with great powers to heal, that they must not charge money for it but can accept sustenance for their efforts. (ooo) His Grace is supplied freely. People who accepted this Grace would also support the deliverers of this Grace freely. Jesus is implanting in His disciples the ability to leave a solemn warning to those Gentiles who heard the message but did not believe. The Pharisees would dust of their feet symbolically on leaving a Gentile area. These people would miss out on grace and salvation.

Matthew 10:15-33:

¹³ Matthew chapter 13, 18 are the 3rd and 4th with the final discourse being chapter 23-25

15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! 16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. 17 But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. 18 You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; 20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. 21 "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. 23 When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. 24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! 26 Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. 27 "Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. 28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."

The Sodom and Gomorrah story is in Genesis 19; I refer to Genesis 19:27-28:

And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord. Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.

Jesus, the Shepherd send his flock, the Disciples, out to start spreading the message of the Gospel. (jjjj)The serpent and dove reference is that the former is usually associated with the Devil and the latter with the Holy Spirit. Jesus is teaching is that each of these has things to give in knowledge. The cunningness of the serpent is very useful at least to understand, for a dove like creature, or a pure spirit to be aware and understanding of the potential to do evil. (cc) All the disciples that we

are aware of suffered such persecutions as beatings, imprisonment, and capital punishment of the most horrible kind. They were truly sheep amongst the wolves, as Jesus is teaching. (cc.a) He is also teaching that families will be internally split between those who do, and those who believe in His teachings and believe in Him. This is not exactly a great rallying cry to enlist converts by the bucket load, this was His harsh, but nevertheless true teaching of coming splits and disputes within families. This will cause much angst for people, including the disciples. He is also teaching that as a follower of Jesus, to have true love for your child and or parent, even though you love them unconditionally, of course, you will want them to be obeying the universal moral law of the Lord. So, if they infringe this, due to your love for the law and for them, you will be in conflict with them. This will necessarily happen and will cause conflict until it is resolved, you must do your best, first and foremost to make them see the errors of their ways and adhere to the law. Fear God first and last, everything else pales into insignificance. The servant is not above the Master and this is our relationship to God the Master. Jesus is teaching that the end goal is peace, but there will be trouble on the way, so be prepared. The disciples are taught to have humility in their use of these supernatural powers and in the teachings they can only ape the Master. (ddd.f) Crucially, Jesus is teaching that those who falsely say that he is Satan, the disciples will have nothing to fear as they should only fear God who can kill body and soul, rather than any who can just kill the body. Divine providence controls even the most mundane and tiny of matters, suggesting an extreme form of determinism. Also, in verse 23, we have the first hint of Jesus' latter predictions of the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem. All the Christian communities had indeed fled the City by then, as told to by Jesus. Jesus reminds all of His complete unity with God as he says all who accept Him will be a represented by Him to God and vice versa for those who reject Him. We must be prepared to confess our believe in Jesus and not shy away from it. (ppp) He teaches His omniscience and hence His ability to know the actions of every single thing in the universe. This is strong teaching about His divine status.

Matthew 10:34-38:

“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.”

(cc.a) Jesus knows His teachings will be controversial. The sword is metaphorical, not literal, as this is told via a parable. Indeed, this is one of the most contentious parts of New Testament scripture. (mm.a) He knows His teachings will divide households. In those blood thirsty days, this means that such division may well end up in blood-shed within families. (yyyy) However, Jesus teaches that the way out of this situation is, above all, to love Him, His teachings, His exemplary life, in order to avoid all confrontations. Above all, if you love Him more than anything, you are aware that this love should then be the core to your life. If this is the case, you can only but love, unilaterally, unconditionally, your mother and father. God loves us unilaterally and unconditionally as He wants the best for us. Learning from this, we to must want the best, even when it displeases, or even when it seems to go against our own direct and selfish interests, the best for our parents and indeed our children, despite our needs and desires. If I loved the members of my family and did not exercise tough love when needed, say to stop them getting drunk or committing adultery, I would love them more than God. So loving God the most is actually the key to loving your immediate family the most (qqq) I note here the first reference to the cross by Jesus. He knew His destiny. The extra significance of the reference to the cross is that it was certainly not a Jewish punishment and would not have been an association that would instantly chime with His disciples until after the event. This teaching is an oblique reference to His death and Resurrection. (rrr) Crucifying the life of this world, the life of sin, to gain eternal life is the core teaching. Be dead to sin and alive to His Sovereign Grace.

This Holy Scriptural reference is to Micah 7:6 is where the painful part about families being pulled apart by His teachings comes from.

For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her

mother-in-law; A man's enemies are the men of his own household.

Jesus then continues to teach.

Matthew 10:39-42:

"39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. 40 "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. 41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

(rrr.a) Jesus is teaching that if we "lose" our life to Jesus, we in fact purchase your freedom now and forever, whether we are the most insignificant or the grandest person.

Jesus moved on from this current location. On the way, He was stopped by some followers of John the Baptist. John, already a witness to the Baptism of Jesus, was in no doubt about who Jesus was and what was His mission. Imprisoned, he could do little to make the connection between his followers and those of Jesus. I suspect his followers, not having met Jesus had doubt, so John the Baptist, from prison sends some of his followers to seek Jesus out. He uses the word "Messiah" to really call Jesus out so that no one was in any doubt about what He was divine.

Matthew 11:4-6 (Luke 17:19-30):

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

Undoubtedly, they now knew for themselves who He was. The scripture Jesus quotes from known Old Testament passages that relate to the (i.g) coming Messiah, the inference being it is Jesus, and is as follows as shown in this prior scripture:

1 Kings 7:19-22 (concerning the raising of the dead):

19 And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. 20 Then he cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" 21 And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." 22 Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived."

Isaiah 26:19:

Your dead shall live; Together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew is like the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead."

This was a direct quote from Isaiah 29:18:

In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

And Isaiah 35:5-6:

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.

And Psalm 22:26:

The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let your heart live forever!

Isaiah 42:7:

To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house

And Isaiah 42:18:

Hear, you deaf; And look, you blind, that you may see.

And Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

Matthew 11:7-9 (Luke 7:24-30):

7 As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet."

John the Baptist was the "reed shaken in the wind." Those in the Kings court of Herod wore the fine smooth garments who Jesus contrasts with John the Baptist. The reed also survives gusts, but not most storms by waxing and waning in the wind. This contrasts with the oak, although very strong and with deep roots, could only snap in a major storm, if that. Jesus is also using the Reed and the Oak Tree 1st Century Jewish story to say "did you really expect to see a wishy washy weakling as the spoken about prophet of the Messiah?" Now, after talking to some of the followers of John the Baptist, Jesus turns to address the general crowd concerning himself. Jesus is also teaching that John the Baptist was not only a prophet, but he was also the subject of a prophecy, so he was "more than a prophet."

He quotes direct from Holy scripture:

Matthew 11:10:

"For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.'"

Which is taken from Malachi 3:1:

Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the Lord of hosts.

And:

Exodus 23:20:

Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.

(i.g) It is clear Jesus is declaring Himself to be greater than a prophet and indeed the Messiah, the implication being that John the Baptist is just a prophetic forerunner to the arrival of Jesus, the God/King.

Matthew 11:11-12:

"11 "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."

(qqq.a) Jesus is teaching that the challenge to us all is to be a least as great as John the Baptist if we want to enter heaven. That might be achievable if we fully understand the message of the Resurrection of Christ Jesus which, of course, John the Baptist never witnessed. As a result, he could not learn anything from that. We, however, know of the significance of that event in retrospect and can therefore become greater than even John the Baptist. (bbb.a) Also, Jesus is teaching that John the Baptist, as an agent of heaven, suffered extremely, and in turn, heaven experiences this violence. It is only metaphorically speaking, when that level of energy is focused on doing the good of the Gospel and possessing faith, which will lead you into heaven, and heaven, in turn, will experience its peace.

In **Matthew 11:13-14** Jesus continues, reminding them that John the Baptist was predicted by the Prophet Malachi

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come.

Malachi 4:5-6:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

Jesus continues:

Matthew 11:15:

15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

The Lord commands us to use our faculties to hear the Word of the Lord.

In Matthew 11:16-17 (Luke 7:31-35) Jesus Critiques His Generation:

16 But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, 17 and saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not lament.'

(sss) Jesus admonishes the current generation of spiritual leaders who seemed hypocritical, passing too much time taunting each other like little children in a playground and not listening to the teachings of scripture. This generation undoubtedly recalls the “evil generation” of the Israelites of the wilderness recorded in the Torah.

Deuteronomy 1:35:

Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to give to your fathers,

Deuteronomy 32:5:

They have corrupted themselves; They are not His children, Because of their blemish: A perverse and crooked generation.

Deuteronomy 32:20:

And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, For they are a perverse generation, Children in whom is no faith.

(i.a) Jesus admonishes his Pharisee contemporaries and reminds them that He is the Son of Man (as discussed above) and (i.h) wisdom itself.

Matthew 11:18-19:

“For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ But wisdom is justified by her children.”

Proverbs 1-9 is all about the wisdom Jesus is referencing in this passage. Wisdom is reason itself, the very logos or Word of God, no less.

Jesus continues his discourse. (rr.a) He prophetically condemns the contemporary cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum and reminds his audience of the terrible judgment of the Lord against the City of Tyre and what might happen to them when they did not conform to His ways and rejected Him. Those cities fell. This is not to say that God caused this, but that removing His protection or *presence* from them led to those terrible events.

Matthew 11:20-24:

20 Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought

down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

This teaching, or warning, concerning the consequences of the removal of God's presence is mentioned:

2 Kings 17:20,23:

Therefore the Lord rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence.

until the Lord removed them from his presence, as he had warned through all his servants the prophets. So the people of Israel were taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria, and they are still there.

(rr.a) Most of the Kings of Israel lost His Presence by doing evil in His eyes as well as about half of the Kings of Judea who also did evil in the eyes of the Lord. That is the lesson for the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum: that they would lose God's protection and be left to their own devices.

That city was a key city of the Phoenicians. Hiram its King was in an alliance with his friend King David and helped David's son, Solomon, build the first Temple. It turned against the Jews and sold them into slavery. From 585-573 BC God made Babylon attack and lay waste to the City. Again, Alexander the Great in 322 BC laid waste to it and laid waste to the Island the inhabitants escaped to with the very dust and rubble predicted by Ezekiel. Also, as in Ezekiel, in the mist of the water where it was relocated to. It is not appropriate to reproduce here the full 2 x chapters of Ezekiel 26-28 which Jesus is referencing. Suffice to say, He knew His scripture, and how the predictions of Ezekiel were brought about with great devastation.

Jonah 3:6 is probably being referenced by Jesus when he mentions how: "they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes". Israel, on the whole, and

these cities in particular - unlike Nineveh - did not repent.

Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

The King of Nineveh *did* repent when faced with the overwhelming evidence of Jonah's three-day survival in the fish. The people of Tyre did not, neither did Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, faced with the multiple miracles of Jesus; they still did not repent.

Jesus also compares these cities to the ancient city of Sodom (the whole of Genesis 19 is about this City). This was frequently used as a sinful comparison to then contemporary Israel of the time the particular prophet was active in his ministry.

Deuteronomy 32:32:

For their vine is of the vine of Sodom And of the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter.

Isaiah 1:10:

Hear the word of the Lord, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the law of our God, You people of Gomorrah:

Isaiah 13:19:

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Lamentations 4:6:

The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people Is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, Which was overthrown in a moment, With no hand to help her!

Ezekiel 16:46-57:

Your elder sister is Samaria, who dwells with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who dwells to the south of you, is Sodom and her daughters. You did not walk in their ways nor act according to their abominations; but, as if that were too little, you became more corrupt than they in all your ways.

Matthew 11:25-27

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. 26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. 27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

(i) Once again Jesus is teaching about His inseparable, indistinguishable divine unity with God. (ttt) Jesus joyously celebrates the fact that the innocent and not yet corrupted young accept Him as well as those older people who come to Him with that same level of innocence. (ooo.a) God draws who He wants to Him and He clearly does not want stuck up, self-righteous windbags. Jesus is stating his unequivocal unity with God. God speaks of Himself in Isaiah 45:22 and says look to Him/God for our spiritual salvation. The Jews at the time would have known what Jesus was describing. The scribes and the Pharisees, still in disbelief following the Sabbath healings, ask for a physical sign, a sign of astronomical proportions, from heaven only, not from Jesus Himself. Dealing with spectacular miracles was clearly not enough for them!

Matthew 11:28-30:

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

(uuu) Jesus is teaching us to accept Himself, and we will be surprised how light His burden is on us as opposed to the ultimately heavy yoke of our sins that He would take and place upon Himself. (xxxx) We will be no longer a slave to sin, no longer a slave to modern excessive celebrity/consumerist culture, but genuinely free. We

get to off load your spiritual bankruptcy - a weighty, self-made, and foolish yoke. Jesus is putting Himself forward as the very expression of the Torah, the very Word of God, which of course is how John, in the fourth Gospel, describes Him. This is amplified in the next recorded things He says.

The Pharisees are rebuking Jesus and His disciples for picking grain to eat on the Day of the Sabbath:

Matthew 12:3-8 (Mark 2:23-28, Luke 6:1-5):

Jesus reminds us that the Sabbath restrictions, as of old, have never applied to what was necessity. The Sabbath is for mans' benefit and the Glory of God. He also reminds them that if the Sabbath could have been broken in the Temple, One Greater than the Temple, Himself/God, as divine, can do what He likes. Jesus is 100% supreme over the Law and His disciples are like the Temple priests, guiltless in doing their work to support the new Temple.

3 But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? 6 Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. 7 But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

The Davidic reference is to 1 Samuel 21:6:

So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the Lord, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day when it was taken away.

And Hosea 6:6:

For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Hot bread had been put in on the Day of the Sabbath, in accordance with the

instructions of Leviticus 24:8, and David was eating it out of need. (ii) The first thing to note is Jesus is equating himself with David, his ancestor, thus amplifying his “Davidic Line” antecedents, which would awake people’s interest as they would all have been aware of its prophetic nature. (vvv) This, then, would be considered a profanity in the eyes of the Pharisees, as well as the eating of the bread taken from the sanctuary on the Sabbath. Jesus is very much using it to remind the Pharisees that if there is genuine need, then work/eat they must on the Sabbath. The Pharisees knew that it was lawful for the priests to work on the Sabbath in order to perform their Temple duties. For example Numbers 28:9 shows us what type of work they were doing:

And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, with its drink offering— 10 this is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.

(i.j) Jesus was making sure people knew He was the Temple, and that His disciples could lawfully be working on that day. Jesus showed, that when the priests work in the temple on the Sabbath, the Sabbath is subordinate to that which is being worshipped: God. He was clearly declaring his divinity, and putting peoples priorities in the right place, God first, and the Sabbath made for man second. Some men think they are made for the Sabbath, this is the height of self righteous arrogance. This underscores the fact that Man has not been made, to just be industrious with his business, busy all the time making money, but he's actually to make friendships and that relations matter. Above all, mankind is to worship its maker: God. The key teachings of the letter kills the law in spirit gives life. Exalt the spirit above the letter. Don't go about profaning God's Holy Day; your thoughts and words He always sees what is in the heart.

Jesus tops this off with his Hosea reference, reminding His audience that he does not require sacrifice but mercy, and that He is the Daniel-like Son of Man, ie the Messiah and Lord of the Sabbath. This was one of His chief demonstrations of His divinity, the Temple of the New Covenant being Himself.

Matthew 12:11-13 (Mark 3:1-15, Luke 6:6-10):

11 Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? 12 Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." 13 Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other."

Jesus is then questioned a second time on this in the synagogue by a man with a withered hand: was it lawful for him to be healed on the Sabbath? (vvv) The teaching here, is that the man with the wounded hand believed and had faith, therefore stretch out your hand with faith and believe, and you too can receive the blessings of Jesus. The Mosaic Law concerning the Sabbath is trumped by his own teachings to do good as a priority. Thus a shepherd rescuing his lost sheep was perfectly acceptable, and doing some good to a fellow human being should be as well. (mm.b) Jesus makes multiple healings - of this man and others who follow - demonstrating His unilateral love and compassion which angers the Pharisees increasingly. Jesus then leaves and asks all His followers to not publicize these healings as His time had not yet come.

Matthew 12:18-21:

that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; And in His name Gentiles will trust."

(i.k) The first thing to note is that the use of the phrase "I am well pleased" by Jesus comes from Isaiah 42:1-4 (see the actual quote that follows). In the Jewish culture of the time, the servant is chosen rather than beloved, so Jesus is identified as both servant and Son of God for the sake of completeness. The bruised reed shows that the weak and the marginalised and the humble as very much a place in the Kingdom. This contrasts with nature which is driven by red in the claw survival of the fittest.

He then utters the longest quote from scripture from Isaiah 42.1-4. He clearly tells us that His Mission is also to the Gentiles

1 Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. 2 He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law."

Jesus is reminding all that He does not make a big deal of things in the public arena of His miracles. He does no harm or injury to anyone. He is not a burden to His followers:

Matthew 12:25-30 (Mark 3:22-27, Luke 11:17-23):

The Pharisees suggest the healing power of Jesus is the power of the devil himself: Beelzebub. The Lord's disciples, cast out Demons in his name. If they were working for Beelzebub, He could not cast out Demons in his name. If you Blaspheme against the more esoteric or unknowable aspects of God that's one thing but if you blaspheme against the visible aspects of God or God's work, then you are truly exiled from His presence

25 But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. 30 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

(i.l) Jesus presses the point concerning His divinity when he reminds all how He, and only He, can control and cast out Satan's demons because He is more powerful

than them and the satanic strong man analogy. The Lord's disciples, cast out Demons in his name. If they were working for Beelzebub, I could not cast out Demons in his name. This sons of the Pharisees casting out demons etc, were the exorcist probably alluded to in Acts 14:13 and by Josephus in Antiquities of the Jews 8,2,5. If you Blaspheme against the more esoteric or unknowable aspects of God that's one thing but if you blaspheme against the visible aspects of God or God's work, then you are truly exiled from His presence (i.m) What is more, He teaches that the Kingdom of God is upon them. So much was it upon them that Matthew, the tax collector, and Mary Magdalene, both sinners, could be released from the strong man's grip by One who was even stronger. So dull and unresponsive were the Pharisees that they did not even notice they were in the presence of God! (www) He is also reminding us that there is no middle ground between Satan and Christ. We are either in Christ or in Satan. So if we are just simply agnostic in your belief, we are in Satan.

Matthew 12:31-37 (Mark 3:28-29):

31 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. 32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. 33 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. 34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. 36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

(www.a) Here, Jesus is saying that if we have not seen His divine power and we reject Him in ignorance, then fine, we can be forgiven. (www.b) But when we reject the man-Christ we are actually rejecting the Holy Spirit, and this is blasphemy. If we mistake God's work for Satan's, well, we commit the eternal sin. The clear implication is that Jesus is pointing out (i.n) His divine status. There is a moral teaching in here as well - that pollution of our character and values comes from within us and not from anything beyond us.

Matthew 12:38-42 (Luke 11:24-26, 29-32):

The Pharisees continue to probe and question Jesus. And He responds:

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." 39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."

The "evil and adulterous generation" is a reference to Jeremiah 5:7-8:

How shall I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me And sworn by those that are not gods. When I had fed them to the full, Then they committed adultery And assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were like well-fed lusty stallions; Every one neighed after his neighbor's wife.

Then Jonah 1:17 (a prophet who gives us a foretaste of Jesus):

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Jonah 3:5-10:

So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that

He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

(qqq.b) The people of Nineveh are contrasted with the Pharisees. The former accept the sign and overnight convert the whole of Nineveh. On the other hand, the Pharisees ignore the miracles of Jesus and choose to ignore Him, so they will have no place in heaven. The three days and night Jonah spends in belly of a sea creature is an obvious reference to the coming Resurrection of Jesus.

And the Queen of Sheba reference is from 1 Kings 10:1-7:

1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions. 2 She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. 3 So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her. 4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, 5 the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her. 6 Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 7 However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard."

The Queen of Sheba knows she has found Wisdom personified. The Pharisees don't. (i.h) Jesus is that wisdom. Both the Queen of Sheba, and they Ninevites, we are both heathen, and they excepted the Lord. This contrasts with the Jews, particularly the Pharisees who are refusing to except, the evidence that the Lord was with them. There is abundant evidence for the truth of Christianity, you only have to receive it with an open heart. Gods grace has been in work during history, and the Ninevites and becoming of Sheba are great examples, we should learn from them.

Matthew 12:43-45:

43 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. 44 Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes,

he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.

(xxx) Jesus then presses home the point that if we reform ourselves from bad to good, this is great. However, if we don't rejuvenate ourselves in His teachings, and absorb the moral teachings by inviting in the Holy Spirit, allowing it to penetrate through all aspects of our life, then like a recidivist the unclean spirits will return to occupy our heart once more. The analogy is also to the many times when the Jews have reverted to idolatry and disaster then strikes them. The Babylon conquest, the Greek and Roman profaning and, in the latter case, destroying of the Temple, come to mind.

Matthew 12:48-50 (Mark 3:31-35):

Jesus then carries on talking to the multitudes and a member of the audience points out that his own family is waiting to speak to Him:

48 But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" 49 And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

Jesus is not being disrespectful to His family. On the contrary, He is pointing out that all the people who follow Him *are* His family. It is the one, all-encompassing message of Jesus: that we are all from one parentage and all part of one family. (i.o) This can only be viewed as not being in conflict with the fourth commandment to "honour your father and mother" if Jesus is God, the very Word of God, and is the Torah and the creator-father of all mankind. The other key teaching of Jesus, is that nothing, including family and loved ones, can get in the way of the mission of the Lord. What is this also teaches, is that it may be natural for you to expect that if your brothers or sisters you closely cooperate and help each other, however Jesus is spectacularly saying that even if you are not a close relative, He is there entirely for you, to serve you. It can't get much better than that!

Jesus then moves to talking in parables to his disciples away from His mass preaching to the multitudes that is characteristic of His early ministry. Matthew 13 opens with the Parable of the Sower. The Sower of the seeds is the Lord, and the seeds are our faith, indeed, the very Word of God. Some of us fall by the wayside, our faith goes wayward. The agents of Satan, all the birds, in this parable, pluck us up off the ground before we even have a chance to plant or faith in good soil. If our faith, is not rooted in good soil, as is the case when we tried to grow on a rock, our faith won't develop anywhere. In modern society, the rock of secularism is the danger. The cult of excessive celebrity, is like the sun sucking any chance of faith out of you. The thorns, are unbelievers, who choke you and your development in faith. In the good soil, your faith will grow more and more, in any other situations, you will lose your faith rapidly. Some hearts are receptive to God's grace, some are not. The sower sows the word everywhere, we as His followers must do the same. In this parable, it is clear, that in some cases, it will be a waste of time, as the recipients heart is fully hardened. In some cases it will start to grow, sending some it will grow, then wither. In the latter case, that for sure is the saddest, as these people have known faith, and rejected it.

His disciples ask Him why He speaks in parables:

Matthew 13:3-13 (Mark 4:1-20, Luke 8:4-15):

3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. 5 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. 8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" 10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" 11 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 13 Therefore I speak to them in

parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.”

Jesus uses a parable that has its roots in what was told by Isaiah:

Isaiah 55:10-11:

For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, 11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

And in Jeremiah 4:3:

For thus says the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: “Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns.

(vv.a) Jesus reminds us in this parable the degrees of faith some may possess (from nothing, to temporary or lukewarm, to strong, depending on what ground of faith they plant). And if we really listen and understand, we will fall into the final category: to be planted well.

(yyy) He also rhetorically answers, in effect, by saying He is obscuring the truth from unbelievers to make it easier for believers to understand, as the juxtaposition in our dull minds is then forced to become clearer. The scriptural precedent for this is in Isaiah:

Isaiah 6:9-10:

9 And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ 10 “Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.”

Matthew 13:14-16:

Jesus reminds His disciples the following;

14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; 15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' 16 But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;"

Proverbs 20:12:

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, The Lord has made them both.

(i.p) Jesus is teaching us that only the divine teacher, which is Jesus Himself, and **His Word**, can really open up our understanding these teachings. Many people, for sure, will be able to read the words, but few indeed will understand them. Your eyes are blessed, if you are one of the faithful for you can see and understand God's teachings. Many of the Old Testament prophets, longed to hear the Word of the Lord. Post the incarnation of God in Jesus, we are all truly privileged to be able to bear witness to this. The Old Testament prophets predicted this would happen, and so it did. It is Satan that comes to nip that little bit of faith that you may have, out of your hearts. Satan will try and obscure, and choke off any avenues for you to retain that faith

Matthew 13:17-23 (Mark 13:20):

17 for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. 18 "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. 20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. 22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he

becomes unfruitful. 23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

(vv.b) Jesus teaches that fruit can grow in various places, but only the really receptive and truly understanding person will produce the most spiritual fruit as opposed to the superficial, who will produce spiritual fruit, but only momentarily. Matthew specifically mentions the multiplier of benefits associated with the understanding of faith in his recollection of this event in the Ministry of Jesus.

Matthew 13:24-30 Parable of the Tares:

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' 29 But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

The parable of the tares reminds us that Jesus is teaching that He is the incarnate God. He knows some believers are mixed with unbelievers in the field, or the kingdom He has planted, and, for the harvest time, He will reap (give judgment) the good from the bad, which only God can do.

The parable of the mustard seed may well be akin to the story of Jesus himself. The Kingdom, is the whole world. As this plant grows, other nations, or other birds in this parable, will come and seek shelter, or protection under the branches of this Great Kingdom. We have the birth in very humble origins, we then have the 30 years before his ministry starts we then have 12 disciples sent out to convert the world. Christianity is then established and from the small seed its branches encompass the entire world.

Matthew 13:31-33 (Mark 4:30-32, Luke 13:8-19) Parable of the Mustard Seed:

(jjj) In the mustard seed parable, Jesus teaches that the Kingdom, although originally planted with the Jews is actually open to all. He also teaches that its not for us the believer to choose who is “in” His Kingdom and who is “out,” that’s God’s business alone. Jesus teaches in this parable where the tree in question is God’s all embracing Kingdom

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches. 33 Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”

Here Jesus uses the leaven bread, which is not negatively viewed, as is usual in the Bible, to teach how the work of heavenly forces can be hidden but certainly will grow into splendid things. Jesus uses the analogy with Nebuchadnezzar’s Kingdom, his dream, and Daniels interpretation to signify God’s Kingdom:

Daniel 4:10-12 , 20-22:

These were the visions of my head while on my bed: I was looking, and behold, A tree in the midst of the earth, And its height was great. The tree grew and became strong; Its height reached to the heavens, And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth. Its leaves were lovely, Its fruit abundant. And in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, And all flesh was fed from it.

Daniel 4:20-22:

The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home— it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.

Matthew 13:37-43:

Concerning the Parable of the Tares, the disciples ask Jesus to explain it:

He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

(i.a) Now, the Son of Man is the Daniel messianic reference we have seen before. (zzz) Jesus teaches that believers shine. It is most common for people to comment, when someone converts to Christianity, how their faces have changed and how they look so joyful. Again this is taken from:

Daniel 12:3:

Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

(i.a) The sower of the seeds is in fact God. He alone can deliver salvation. The seeds are the lives of mankind, and to work with them is God's job and no-one else's. Therefore, I suggest that we can only conclude once more Jesus revealing that He is the same, in essence, as God. He, Jesus, commands angels, which only God does. He passes judgment, which is the sole preserve of God, so surely Jesus is saying, in effect, that He is God.

The parable of the dragnet reminds us that we need to be patient and hopeful even though the ungodly faithless are around us. And that even if we get to the kingdom, some of us are waivers who will be thrown out. We must be constantly watchful of matters that would in danger or place in the Kingdom. The dragnet is the

Church, fishing and casting out what is not fitting for itself and the Kingdom. The householder analogy is of Jesus Himself, coming to fulfil the old via the new, constantly.

Matthew 13:44-52:

44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. 47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, 48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." 51 Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 52 Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

(zzz.a) Jesus teaches that we shine like treasure if we are believers already. At the point of salvation it is easy for God to pick the treasure from the dross. Also, His churchmen, the scribes who will teach both the Old and the New Testament, to the older Jews and the newer Gentiles, will make this process more transparent. The kingdom of heaven is like looking for the pearl. The key thing is it is not the pearl itself. The Pearl, or the greatest prize itself, is the salvation of human souls and to this effect He gave his only son.

Matthew 13:57 (Mark 6:1-6):

Jesus is rejected in His home town of Nazareth. The modern phrase 'familiarity breeds contempt' springs to mind, but this applies also to His own family as well as to his country.

57 So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house."

Matthew 14:13-21:

Jesus feeds the 5,000. From “five loaves and fish” He feed 5,000.

*When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.” But Jesus said to them, **“They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.”** And they said to Him, “We have here only five loaves and two fish.” He said, **“Bring them here to Me.”** Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.*

The disciples initially tried to send a multitude away. Jesus makes it clear that there is never a separate set of circumstances where anyone should depart from Him. Even if we have things that are impossible, the Lord can do anything, from nothing, or next to nothing, so we need to hold firm in our faith. The disciples show great faith knowing there is little food, by automatically bringing the multitude to Jesus. Incidents like this have happened before in Jewish history and the symbolism would be significant for the audience. The first records Elisha, God’s prophet feeding 100 men on meagre supplies. The second Elijah’s (God’s prophet) feeding of himself and the widow and her family. The third scriptural reference is to Moses, faced with needing to feed 600,000 people, in the wilderness, ending with the miracle of God sending the quail to eat. The whole of Numbers Chapter 11 is the scriptural reference, but I reproduce 3 x verses here.

2 Kings 4:42-44:

Then a man came from Baal Shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, “Give it to the people, that they may eat.” But his servant said, “What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?” He said again, “Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the Lord: “They shall eat and have some left over.”” So he set it before them; and they ate and had some

left over, according to the word of the Lord.”

1 Kings 17:12-16:

And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.’” So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.”

Numbers 11:21-22:

And Moses said, “The people whom I am among are six hundred thousand men on foot; yet You have said, ‘I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month.’ Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to provide enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to provide enough for them?”

In all of the above scriptural reference points, it is hard not to observe the abundance of food that is always supplied. In the report of Matthew, we note:

and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained.

This report of abundance surely references the provision of abundance by God for His people in Deuteronomy 8:6-10:

6 Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. 7 For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; 9 a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 10 When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.

In many respects, the wider and more general scriptural reference could be the whole of the Exodus (Exodus 16:13-35) story, with God sustaining Israel with the

Bread of Heaven. This must also be seen as a precursor to the Last Supper narrative, with Jesus feeding people both physically and as a symbol for the spiritual heavenly banquet that awaits all believers. This story is also in essence what the Eucharist Feast is also inspired from.

The Lord, alone in prayer, knows His disciples are in distress, so as with all when we are so distressed, He comes. Thinking this is but an apparition, the disciples are scared. Jesus knows this and greets them cheerfully. He counsels them not to be afraid.

The teaching here is clear. Peter, the greatest of disciples, has doubts, he loses his faith, in Jesus as the Lord. He takes his eyes off the Lord, he starts to sink. Jesus remonstrates with Peter about his little faith, but reaches out and then saves him. If Peter had kept his faith and his eye always on Jesus, of course none of this would've happened.

Matthew 14:25-31 Jesus Walks on Water:

*Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "**Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.**" 28 And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" 31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "**O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"***

(i.k) When Jesus walks on water in He uses the words that the NKJV translates as "It is I" However, in the Greek the words are "I Am¹⁴." This is the same "I Am" as

¹⁴ From the Septuagint we have εγω εμι or ego eimi, which is the phrase used in the Greek specifically to name God. in the sense of Exodus 3:14, Deuteronomy 32:39, Isaiah 41:4, and Isaiah 43:10. Each time I will not hence forth repeat the scriptural references This is also used in the same context in the all of the Gospel writers to assert that Jesus is God in His own words. Also, Matthew 18:20, 20:15, 28:20, Mark 14:62, Luke 22:27, 22:70, 24:39, John 4:26, 6:20, 6:35, 6:41, 6:48, 6:51,

Exodus 3:14 (the famous burning bush incident) and Deuteronomy 32:39 (Part of the Song of Moses in which it attests the One True God of Israel, judge and protector). Jesus is teaching us that He is God.

Exodus 3:14:

And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'

Deuteronomy 32:39:

Now see that I, even I, am He, And there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; Nor is there any who can deliver from My hand.

The use of "I Am" by God/Jesus is often as a sign of divine hope to prevail against fear.

Isaiah 41:4:

Who has performed and done it, Calling the generations from the beginning? 'I, the Lord, am the first; And with the last I am He.

This in turn is observed in Isaiah 43:5 and other places:

Isaiah 43:5:

Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west;

7:28, 7:29, 7:33, 7:34, 7:36, 8:12, 8:16, 8:23, 8:24, 8:28, 8:58, 9:5, 10:7, 10:9, 10:11, 10:14, 10:36, 11:25, 12:26, 13:13, 13:19, 14:3, 14:6, 14:9, 15:1, 15:5, 16:32, 17:11, 17:14, 17:16, 17:24, 18:5, 18:6, 18:8, 18:37

The closing of chapter 14 tells us how the sick begged Jesus to only touch His hemline in order to be healed.

The Pharisees challenged Jesus concerning some rules and regulations governing eating and washing hands. As common with Jesus, being presented with a question, He often answers it with another question.

Matthew 15:3-11:

3 He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' 5 But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God"— 6 then he need not honor his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. 7 Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 8 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' 10 When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand. Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

Jesus reinforces that there were clear commandments to obey and respect your parents. This also meant looking after them. Ultimately this stems from the need to be respecting the Father Himself as the creator of us all. Some people at the time, with the approval of some Rabbis, had circumvented this by paying a tribute to God, who is greater than our parents and thus were relieved of honouring their parents. Jesus contrasts the triviality of minor procedures that His disciples may or may not have been infringing with a rather large infringement taking place under the Pharisees watch, the ridding yourselves from any responsibility for your parents. Interspersed with in this, Jesus remind all that it is not ceremonial unclean meats going into your body foul that create foul outpourings from your mouth, but a corrupt and diabolical heart.

Exodus 20:12

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”

Deuteronomy 5:16

“Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”

Exodus 21:17

“And he who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.”

Isaiah 29:13

“Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men,”

(y.a) Jesus is teaching that no amount of food laws could prevent the corruption of the soul.

The disciples then feed back to Jesus the Pharisees’ displeasure at His comments:

Matthew 15:12-14:

*12 Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” 13 But He answered and said, “**Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. 14 Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.**”*

The phrase “Let them alone” was used by the prophet Hosea, where Ephraim is a name used for Israel. In this passage, as they had rejected God, (rr.b) Jesus is teaching they will have the restraining grace of God removed and be exposed to the consequences of their own actions.

Hosea 4:17

Ephraim is joined to idols, Let him alone.

As the Old Testament is full of this kind of example, suffice it to say that you could cross reference this to many scriptural passages, notably Judges 10:13, 2 Chronicles 15:2, 24:20 and Psalms 81:11,12.

Matthew 15:15-20

15 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us." 16 So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? 17 Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? 18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. 20 These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

(y.a) Jesus is teaching once more that no food stuff entering into our system can make profane words spew forth from your mouth, that is down to us and our polluted heart.

Jesus is then approached by a woman from Canaan asking to be healed.

Matthew 15:24-28:

But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" 26 But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." 27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour."

(nnn.a) Her tremendous faith whilst not being an Israelite causes Jesus to heal her immediately, even though she is not priority in His ministry. His sheep are Israel

and the little pet dogs - the non-Israelites – who, in this pet analogy, eat the crumbs from under the table and via their faith are healed. Matthew 15:21-28 tells the whole event and it gives a clear message to all that (jjj) Jesus comes for the Gentiles also. The personal mission of Jesus was entirely to the Israelites. His message and teachings were to the world. Saint Paul had the glorious mission to convert the Gentiles, post the death and resurrection of Jesus. The sheep reference is from Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 50:6:

“My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray; They have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; They have forgotten their resting place.”

Jesus ended His ministry in Galilee with the feeding of the 5,000, as we saw above in Matthew 14:13-21. Now He ends His ministry to the Gentiles, as recorded in Matthew 15:32-39, with the feeding of the 4,000 in similar circumstances. The same scriptural references to the feeding of the 5,000 apply here. There is a build-up in the symbolism in these passages as He ends His earthly Ministry at the Last Supper, later, with feeding His disciples here and now. (jjj.a) Jesus is teaching that He feeds both the Jew and the Gentile spiritually.

Matthew 15:32-34 (Mark 8:1-10): Feeding the 4,000:

32 Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.” 33 Then His disciples said to Him, “Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?” 34 Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?” And they said, “Seven, and a few little fish.”

(jjj.a) Jesus wants to feed them, and as in the story of the feeding of the 5000, He does so miraculously. The bread doubles up as the spiritual food that Jesus, as the bread of life, gives to all who feeds or learns with Him. At the feeding of the 4,000, the disciples seem more confident that Jesus would do something this time, i.e. a miracle, it is almost expected.

In Matthew chapter 16, the Pharisees, after seeing multiple miracle cures/healings still ask for a sign from heaven.

Matthew 16:2-4:

2 He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; 3 and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times."

He rebukes them for being concerned with heavenly signs when they can't even read the sign of the current time.

Jesus then says he will give one sign.

Matthew 16:4:

"A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed.

The reference is to Jonah 1:17

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."

(qqq.b) And not only a sign, but of course a prophesy of the Crucifixion and Resurrection to come over a three-day period, is inherent in this teaching of Jesus.

Matthew 16:5-12:

Jesus departs from the company of the Pharisees and takes His disciples away. They mutter about not having enough bread for the next part of the journey. (ddd.f.i) Jesus warns them concerning the leaven of both the Pharisees and

Sadducees. Leaven (yeast) is that which transforms bread and raises it from flat to puffed up, the inference being: watch out for the words of the priests as they can transform meaning, and actually do so for the worst. Jesus also reminds them of the plentiful bread and leftovers when the 5,000 and 4,000 were fed.

*5 Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. 6 Then Jesus said to them, **“Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.”** 7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “It is because we have taken no bread.” 8 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, **“O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread? 9 Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? 10 Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? 11 How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”** 12 Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

The leaven bread scriptural reference is in Exodus 12:15

Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.”

Jesus continues to teach:

Matthew 16:13-17 (Mark 8:27-30, Luke 9:18-21):

*13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, **“Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”** 14 So they said, **“Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”** 15 He said to them, **“But who do you say that I am?”** 16 Simon Peter answered and said, **“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** 17 Jesus answered and said to him, **“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.”***

Jeremiah was expected to come as a precursor to the Messiah. This was all set out in **Esdras 2:18**

“For thy help will I send my servants Esau and Jeremy, after whose counsel I have sanctified

and prepared for thee twelve trees laden with divers fruits," KJV

Jeremiah order also reveal the tabernacle park and the altar of incense. To Maccabees 2:4-7 laid this out and said it was hidden all at Mount Nebo.

2 Maccabees 2:4-7

4 It was also in the writing that the prophet, having received an oracle, ordered that the tent and the ark should follow with him, and that he went out to the mountain where Moses had gone up and had seen the inheritance of God. 5 And Jeremiah came and found a cave, and he brought there the tent and the ark and the altar of incense, and he sealed up the entrance. 6 Some of those who followed him came up to mark the way, but could not find it. 7 When Jeremiah learned of it, he rebuked them and declared: "The place shall be unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy. RSVCE

Jesus was clearly very well known for what he was doing, miracles and teachings et cetera, that people will already relating him to these prophecies. Jesus declares Peter as Blessed. Upon this rock of Peter's confession of Faith, was built the Church of Jesus Christ. (i.q) In this section, Jesus draws out Peter as to Peter's understanding as to who He is. Peter clearly concludes Jesus is God. The scriptural quote here is "the living God." This is the Old Testament name of Jehovah. There are multiple scriptural points of reference here, but I demonstrate the first reference Deuteronomy in 5:26, which should suffice:

For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

And the last reference in the Old Testament at Hosea 1:10:

Yet the number of the children of Israel Shall be as the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There it shall be said to them, 'You are sons of the living God.

Peter, in answer to Jesus' question also says:

You are the Christ

(i.g) Here he is identifying Jesus not only as the living God, but also as the Messiah, all in one verse. From the Davidic times, it had been foretold that there would be a Messiah who was both a man and a God.

Psalm 110:

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.

2 Samuel 7:14:

I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.

(i.r) Jesus grants a name change from Simon to Peter, the rock. The renaming of Abraham was significant as it was at this point that Abraham received the covenant from God, and it is at precisely this point that Peter gets his commission to be the foundation of His church. Jesus is giving Peter his commission in the same way that God gave Abraham his.

Genesis 17:5:

No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations.

Matthew 16:18-19: The Promise to Peter

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

This is a scriptural reference from Isaiah 22:22:

The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut;

And he shall shut, and no one shall open.

Jesus is also teaching that His followers to be, what becomes to us today His ordained ministers, in His Church (the first time in the Bible this institution is mentioned), have the power to listen to your confession and when you are deemed truly penitent, to forgive you of your sins. Jesus, in this respect is using the power of delegation to empower His ministers establish confession as a key part of church activities. Jesus is also teaching that His Church, or our Church that we are members of, will prevail against the doors of Hades or evil. This means we are empowered to proactively take the battle of righteousness over evil, right to the heart of evil itself and we will prevail over it.

Jesus now starts teaching His disciples the fact that He will be approaching His death shortly and that this must happen. Peter does not accept this teaching – he is horrified by it.

Matthew 16:23 (Mark 8:31-33, Luke 9:22):

23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

(bbbb) Startlingly for Peter, to attempt to deny His death, Jesus rebukes Him of being Satanic and too make His point that *if it did not* happen, that would indeed be Satanic.

Matthew 16:24-28 (Mark 8:34-37, Luke 9:23-25):

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. 28 "Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

(cc) Here we see Jesus teaching us all, a reminder that we too, as followers of (rrr.a) Jesus will also have to suffer and deny ourselves, and we will all have to live to be saved. If we don't, we can gain a nice life in this temporal world, but lose our souls to an eternity of suffering.

Psalm 48:8 tells of the Heavenly Kingdom:

As we have heard, So we have seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, In the city of our God: God will establish it forever.

(yy.a) Jesus is teaching of the arrival of the heavenly physical kingdom which is not yet manifest. John was a witness what Jesus was saying and He did get a glimpse of this heavenly kingdom as we shall see when looking at the Book of Revelation.

So, we leave verse 28 and go straight into the Transfiguration narrative, as this is when Peter, James and John (yy.b) get a foretaste as to what this may look like as then they *do see* the Son of Man, appearing in His Kingdom, as Jesus had just predicted. However, I suspect this is just a hint as to how the Son of Man will appear and not, of course, the full delivery of the kingdom, which will not happen until the end of times. The Transfiguration. Jesus's face shone like the Sun, this is how all God's people will look like when Heaven is established on earth. But when we become Christians, we receive Jesus, in this respect we are transfigured, to the image of Jesus Christ. From this moment on, our face also changes and shines like the sun. Moses had avail to disguise his glory emanating from his face, it is incumbent upon us, once we have become Christian to shine with all its glory.

Exodus 34:29-35

29 Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. 30 So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. 31 Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation

returned to him; and Moses talked with them. 32 Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. 33 And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. 34 But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. 35 And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.

The command of Jesus, not to tell anyone about this event, yet, shows Jesus teachings concerning reticence and saying nothing at times being a virtue.

Matthew 17:7-9 (Mark 9:2-13, Luke 9:28-36):

7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." 8 When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. 9 Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

(i.s) At His Transfiguration¹⁵, Jesus is questioned by Peter about Moses and Elijah. God bursts into the frame and announces His Presence and His pleasure at His Son's works to date. The feast of the Tabernacles is also taking place. The images of God saving the Jews in history and their redemption from terrible circumstances would have been prevalent in their minds. Jesus is pitching His tent very much in terms of being with us, so the Transfiguration is also focusing our minds on the Incarnation.

Jesus is then questioned as to why the scribes teach that Elijah must come first. Jesus then answers as follows:

¹⁵ Although these are not sayings of Jesus, taken from scriptural sources, undoubtedly the setting of this Gospel story known as the Transfiguration, draws the audience to the scriptural parallel of Moses receiving God on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19-24. Moses to waited 6 days, just as the synoptic gospels record a six-day wait before this event happened . As with Moses, Jesus has three companions. Moses' face shone bright as Jesus glowed bright.

Matthew 17:11-13

Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist."

The scriptural reference is Malachi 4:5-6:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

The "*suffering at their hands*" were scriptural references to:

Psalm 22:1-2 (the whole Psalm is relevant, though):

1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? 2 O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent.

Psalm 69:26:

26 For they persecute the ones You have struck, And talk of the grief of those You have wounded.

(All of Isaiah 53 and other parts of Isaiah are about the suffering servant, but they are simply too numerous to quote.)

Matthew 17:14-20:

(nnn.b) Jesus is instructing His disciples on faith. This came about as a man brought his sick son to be healed by the disciples, but they could not cure him. The scriptural reference is when Gehazi can't raise a child from the dead without the

presence of his master, Elisha. The inference is: lose our belief in Jesus, or if we let it weaken our powers granted by Jesus will go. 2 Kings 4:31-34 records this as follows:

Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has not awakened." When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord. And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm.

This train of thought continues.

Matthew 17:17:

Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me."

See my notes on Matthew 11:16-17 and the scriptural references.

And:

Psalm 95:10:

For forty years I was grieved with that generation, And said, 'It is a people who go astray in their hearts, And they do not know My ways.

The dialogue continues:

Matthew 17:18-23:

18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" 20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing

will be impossible for you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”
22 Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be
betrayed into the hands of men, 23 and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised
up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

Clearly, some of the disciples’ faith had been left floundering, leading to a loss of the divine powers granted to them by Jesus. As the creator of the universe the Lord could undoubtedly move mountains in fact do what-ever He pleases. The disciples were given powers, specifically to achieve miracles. Without God, we may not be able to do miracles, ourselves, but we can certainly do wonderful things with, our values rooted in our faith. Even faith as small as a mustard seed.

Matthew 17:25-27

Unique to Matthew, the tax mentioned in this passage is the Temple Tax (half a Shekel), levied on all males over 20 years old, to pay for the upkeep of the Temple. Unlike Matthew, the tax collector, author of this gospel, who was working for the Roman authorities, this was a tax levied and collected specifically by the Jewish authorities. It would seem that it could have been a voluntary tax, or certainly a tax that some could decline or avoid paying at all. Peter answers to his questioners concerning does Jesus pay this tax in the affirmative as he must have observed this being paid before. Jesus is teaching that the payment being made is a Divine one. If the Jewish sons are free to pay or not to pay, then the Son of Man, or Son of God is also free to pay or not to pay, just as the King who levied the tax exempt his son, so does the Divine King! Especially as it was levied for His glory! Anyway, Jesus, not yet ready to cause offence in this matter with the authorities, who would view His teachings in this matter as blasphemous, as He was using it to declare His Divinity, choose to offer a miraculous solution to Peter.

²⁵ He said, “Yes.” And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?” ²⁶ Peter said to Him, “From strangers.” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. ²⁷ Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that

comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

Exodus 30:13

¹³ This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is twenty gerahs). The half-shekel shall be an offering to the Lord.

2 Kings 12:4

⁴ And Jehoash said to the priests, “All the money of the dedicated gifts that are brought into the house of the Lord—each man’s census money, each man’s assessment money—and all the money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the Lord,

Matthew 18:3-9:

³ and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. ⁶ “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. ⁷ Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes! ⁸ “If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. ⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.”

(ttt) Jesus teaches us that faith is innocent, like the little children. He also teaches that unless we come to Him humbled, like the little children, we won’t get the salvation desired. (k.a) Jesus also teaches here that the world will always be putting on pressure for us to sin. (hhh.b) He is also pressing home the point, that the powerful can look out for themselves, but children, and those who are marginalized, can’t. (cccc) It is only when we realise that this is us, spiritually adrift, will we then be able to come back to Him. Any prevention of any of us, His children, finding a way back to Him, by sinning, will result in being “cast into hell

fire.” This is one of the first mentions of Hell Fire in the New Testament and as of yet, it does not give us many clues as to what this actually could look like, other than there being fire. If we look at the Greek word it is γέενναν or “Gehenna of Fire.” This I will look at more closely later in this Gospel.

Jesus then teaches another parable, setting Himself up as the Shepherd.

Matthew 18:10-14 The Parable of the Lost Sheep:

10 “Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. 11 For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

(dddd) Jesus is teaching that He is the Shepherd and we the flock, as was foretold in the scriptures. There is a rich history in the Old Testament of foretelling that the Messiah will be the great Shepherd of His flock. There are so many references, in fact, that I think it would be tedious to cite them all in their full glory. If the reader has greater interest, then they should delve into further (see below):

The Messiah will be seen as a Shepherd (as frequently attributed to Jesus in the New Testament:

Psalm 23:1 *(there is also an*

extant copy of this in the DSS)¹⁶

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 28:9

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 74:1

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 77:20

(there is also an extant copy of this in the DSS)

Messiah would speak in parables.

Psalm 78:2-4

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 78:52

<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i>	Psalm 79:13
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i>	Psalm 80:1
<i>Messiah is the firstborn of all creation</i>	Psalm 89:27
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i> <i>(there is also an extant copy of this in the DSS)</i>	Psalm 95:7
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i>	Psalm 100:3
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i> <i>(there is also an extant copy of this in the DSS)</i>	Isaiah 40:11
<i>Messiah will come, and be the Shepherd</i>	Jeremiah 23:24
<i>The Messiah as God acts as the shepherd for his sheep</i>	Ezekiel 34:11
<i>The Messiah will be the King-Shepherd of the Davidic line</i>	Ezekiel 37:22-25
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd to tend His lamb</i> <i>(extant copy of this in the DSS)</i>	Hosea 4:16 <i>(there is also an</i>
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i> <i>extant copy of this in the DSS)</i>	Micah 5:4 <i>(there is also an</i>
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i> <i>(there is also an extant copy of this in the DSS)</i>	Micah 7:14
<i>The Messiah will come as a Shepherd</i>	Zechariah 9:16

Jesus is then asked to set some rules concerning how each of His followers should interact within their new emerging community. (b.a) Jesus reminds them of the Mosaic Law that already applies to them:

Matthew 18:15-16:

15 Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

This is a direct pick-up from Deuteronomy 19:15:

One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

Matthew 18:17-20:

17 "And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. 18 "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 19 "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

(i.t) This is a declaration of the divinity of Jesus as He gives Peter and the Church authority to determine sinful behaviour or not - which only the Deity can. (i.k) He also uses the "I am" name of God used by God in Exodus 3:14 to state that He will be present (immaterially), as only God can, when Christians meet.

Matthew 18:21-22:

Jesus is then approached by Peter in and asked the following:

Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."

Jesus builds on what was said in Psalm 119:164:

Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous judgments.

Proverbs 24:16:

For a righteous man may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity.

And the older Genesis 4:24:

If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.

(eeee) The unlimited blood-letting, even if initiated in self-defence - as was the case of Lamech in the above example - is transformed by Christ into unlimited

forgiveness.

Matthew 18:23-35 The Parable of the Unforgiving & Dishonest Servant:

23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. 28 "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' 29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 30 And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. 32 Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. 35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

(eeee) In this parable concerning the instruction for forgiveness, Jesus uses the example of a King who is owed money by his servant. So, as was customary, the servant would be sold to re-recoup the debt. This practice was enshrined in Exodus 22:3:

If the sun has risen on him, there shall be guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

And the children would be sold, was similarly enshrined in 2 Kings 4:1:

A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves.

(eeee.a) In this parable, Jesus is of course the King. He then forgives the servant

who promises to pay Him over time. The servant then tries to exact money by force from other servants and mistreats in opposition to the good grace he has just received. At this point the King remonstrates with the servant for his double standards and says He will torture the servant until the debt is paid. The imagery is punishment for an unrepentant sinner forever in hell.

The Pharisees ask Jesus can you just divorce your wife for any reason? They knew there was a potential conflict as Mosaic Law would allow it and Malachi seems to suggest it is forbidden. Firstly, Jesus reinstates the original rules concerning marriage and overturns any belief in polygamy as being legitimate. The answer and, following questions, are as follows:

Matthew 19:4-12:

And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry." But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it."

(ffff) The scriptural references that Jesus makes show the sanctity of marriage established in the Old Testament from the beginning ie, at the time of Genesis. Only the practical procedure set by Moses to initiate a divorce came later. Malachi was right to point out that God hates divorce. The Pharisees had forgotten that the Mosaic command is not to be issued willy-nilly, but was in fact subject to what Jesus said, so that the woman was protected, unless guilty of immorality. The

divorce on demand laws, coupled with the fact that women did not work or rarely worked, meant that women were next to destitute if they were divorced. Jesus' strict concept of monogamy, as taught from the days of Genesis, was truly liberating for women.

Genesis 1:27:

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 2:24:

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 5:2:

He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, 2 when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife, 3 if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, 4 then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance."

Malachi 2:15:

But did He not make them one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of

his youth.

Genesis 2:24:

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife, if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Malachi 2:16:

For the Lord God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the Lord of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

Proverbs 21:19:

Better to dwell in the wilderness, Than with a contentious and angry woman.

Matthew 19:14:

14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

(ttt) Here Jesus teaches us that children arrive in all innocence, in the same way as we all need to come to Jesus if we want to to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. (ooo.b) He is also teaching that as these young ones can't yet exercise their own choice in faith, as with the mentally impaired, they are in effect granted salvation via His free gift of Grace.

A rich young man then asks Jesus, who he calls a 'Good Teacher', what he needs to do to achieve eternal life. The answer is quite simply keep the commandments. Now, we all know, even with our best intentions constantly kept to, we fail to keep those commandments, 100% all the time. So we should recognise that we are all sinners are varying degrees of seriousness. To this effect, we are entirely reliant upon the judgement of Jesus for our salvation. The rich man questioning Jesus concerning what could he do to get salvation, is answered in the first place, by noting that you just need to obey the commandments. In the second place, Jesus clearly knew that this man was more in love with his possessions than he was with the true spirit of the law and the Godhead, that has brought creation itself into existence. So, Jesus sent him packing. You can be rich, and obey the commandments, as best you can, acknowledge that you are a sinner, and repent, and you may well achieve salvation.

Matthew 19:17-21:

17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

(i.u) Jesus does not deny His deity, but just reinforces it. In fact, He teaches once more His status as God. Indeed, only He can be fully good, therefore for any mere human, it is impossible to be fully good, a point maybe lost on this man as he departs, later, dejected.

Exodus 20:12-16:

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. "You shall not murder. "You shall not commit adultery. "You shall not steal. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Deuteronomy 5:16-20:

Honor your father and your mother, just as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you. 'You shall not commit murder. 'You shall not commit adultery. 'You shall not steal. 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Leviticus 19:18:

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

The dialog continues.

Matthew 19:22-30:

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. 23 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 25 When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" 26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." 27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" 28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

(tt.a) This man was in effect called out by Jesus, as when it came to it he valued his possessions more than he loved his fellow man. Jesus points out that we take no earthly possessions into the Kingdom, so we should not worship and value them more than our own salvation. These possessions give us a false sense of security and prevent us from realizing our total dependence on God. (tt.b) The disciples are shocked, because they were accustomed to equate the rich and wealthy with the successful - and thus the blessed and good. Jesus points out that this is not the case. He is more interested in the values residing in our heart and soul than our bank

balance. Jesus makes this teaching clear to Peter as He reassures Peter of his salvation.

The primary lesson of this parable of the labourers is that the reward of the kingdom is not of that earthly abode, but of His grace. The vine yard analogy is in effect The Church. The Lord is the householder. The Steward is the Jesus the Lord. The Steward coming in fetching you for work at various times in the day is analogous to the different times in our lives, when Jesus touches us. The Salvation, free gift, is the same if it is given in the youth, adult hood, middle-aged or old-age to part of our life. We should be humble to other and not jealous of them. God always has work for us. Even it comes late in life, and when it comes we should rejoice and willingly embrace that work.

Matthew 20:1-8 The Parable of the Labourers:

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' 7 They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.' 8 "So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first."

Jesus clearly knows of the Deuteronic requirement for wages to be paid before mid night on that day as the pressure was on to pay those who came to work on the 11th hour, by the end of the 12th hour. (b) Jesus reaffirms the Mosaic Law.

Deuteronomy 24:15:

Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the Lord, and it be sin to you.

The parable continues:

Matthew 20:9-12:

9 "And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. 11 And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, 12 saying, "These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day."

(ggg) Jesus is teaching us that the complaining workers who agreed to work for the full day at the same pay as the previous workers who came and did 1/12th of the work of the original workers is an evocation of the sanctity of contact in the first instance. But it also reaffirms God's contract, or covenant, with Israel. By this I mean that God, as the symbolic employer, gives the same reward for the labour of all of the workers, despite their different efforts. (ooo) This 'reward,' or free gift, is salvation, and it is given to all who repent and believe - unconditionally. Note also that this is a very personal God, coming to engage with you in a one to one fashion.

Jeremiah 31:33:

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

In the closing part of the parable, Jesus reminds us of this:

Matthew 20:13-14:

13 But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.'

(gggg) Jesus is affirming that this contract will always be observed from His side.

(hhhh) He then warns against having an evil eye, or the 'cloven hoof' of envy towards others when we think we have been unfairly treated.

Matthew 20:15-16:

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?" 16 So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."

(i.k) Jesus is teaching that he, as the landowner, is God in heaven in this parable. Jesus uses the "I am" name for God in Exodus 3:14, juxtaposing His goodness with the evil of the complainant. The divinity declaration is made twice.

Proverbs 23:6:

Do not eat the bread of a miser, (one who has the evil eye) Nor desire his delicacies;

Deuteronomy 15:9:

Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the Lord against you, and it become sin among you.

(mmm.a) Jesus is teaching that the Covenant will be upheld. Certainly it is one-sided - from God's way to the covenanted people - as they were all offered salvation, which they can choose either to take up, or face eternal damnation. God's offer never changes, only who decides to take it up.

Matthew 20:17-19:

17 Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, 18 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, 19 and deliver Him to the

Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."

(qqq) Jesus is foretelling of His death on the Cross again.

Matthew 20:20-21:

20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. 21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."

The mother of two of the disciples comes to Jesus to ask Him to place both of her sons at His right and left hand in heaven.

Matthew 20:22:

But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able."

Here, in the next quote from Isaiah, Jerusalem experienced God's anger. It would be forgiven, but that which Babylon had to suffer never would be forgiven. (bb.b) The significance was that Jesus was really pointing out the absolute level of suffering they must endure, in order to follow Him truly and earn their places beside Him.

Isaiah 51:17:

Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, You who have drunk at the hand of the Lord The cup of His fury; You have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, And drained it out.

(bb.c) The imagery of the cup is used in other places in Holy Scripture to signify either sorrow or happiness; more in the case of the former. It signifies the final destiny of the person and the suffering they will need to get there. Jesus is clearly signalling the price they will have to pay to be with Him in heaven.

Psalm 23:5:

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over.

Psalm 116:113:

I will take up the cup of salvation, And call upon the name of the Lord.

Psalm 11:6:

Upon the wicked He will rain coals; Fire and brimstone and a burning wind Shall be the portion of their cup.

Psalm 75:8:

For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, And the wine is red; It is fully mixed, and He pours it out; Surely its dregs shall all the wicked "of the earth Drain and drink down.

The dialogue unfolds.

Matthew 20:23-27:

23 So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." 24 And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave"

(i.a) In concluding this conversation, Jesus is reminding His disciples that the Son and Man (r) came to serve and they need to serve in order to lead. Jesus then finishes with the ominous foretelling of His own role in being a ransom for all our iniquities, as foretold by Isaiah. Salome's lesson is that don't seek excessively or too hard for you children's success or advancement. Pray for humility and qualities of servant leadership.

Matthew 20:28:

just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Isaiah 53:11

He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, "For He shall bear their iniquities.

On their way to Jerusalem, they pass by Jericho and have an interaction with the blind men who request a healing.

Matthew 20:32

32 So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

(i.d) (nnn) As they had such faith, Jesus duly grants it and heals them. Our eyes will be open by having faith like the blind man just healed. As with the blind man, the Lord is always passing by waiting to heal you.

Jesus then moves on towards Jerusalem and announces his arrival¹⁷ in Jerusalem, with a nod to the prophet Zachariah.

Matthew 21:1-3:

Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a

¹⁷ The point of choosing or visualising the entry via the Mount of Olives is significant, as it is where Jesus will stand when he appears as King of the earth. See Zachariah 14:4-9

donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."

The relevant scripture quote is Zechariah 9:9. (i.g) (i.i) Jesus is teaching that the restoration of the throne of the Davidic line, and all that entailed, had now come.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

We next find Jesus in the Temple.

Matthew 21:13:

Jesus is horrified at what He finds and He quotes two parts of scripture in one outburst:

And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'

Isaiah 56:7:

Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.

Jeremiah 7:11:

Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the Lord.

These should both be read against a backdrop of the prophecies that the Messiah would indeed cleanse the Temple.

Zechariah 14:21:

Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.

Malachi 3:1-5:

Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the Lord of hosts. "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord An offering in righteousness. "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the Lord, As in the days of old, As in former years. And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien— Because they do not fear Me," Says the Lord of hosts.

We know that whilst in the Temple Jesus drove out the money changers. And the dove sellers. (i.i) Jesus claims this most holy sanctuary as His own by conducting a (i.d) healing and was, in praise, (i.j) declared Son of David to which the priests took offense. The money changing was done as Roman coins were not acceptable because they had the face of the Emperor/God on them. (gggg.a) The offence which wound Jesus up so much was not the changing of the money but the excessive rates they were charging to execute the change (sounds like a modern bank.). (iiii) The animals were not to be bought and sold there, like in a normal market: the Temple was a place for prayer.

Matthew 21:16-17:

To which they authorities say the following to Jesus.

*and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. **Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise'?"** Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.*

... which is taken directly from, Psalm 8:2:

Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

(i.v) The praise Jesus was getting for doing His good works was the same praise that God was being given. Jesus was declaring His divinity and therefore the right to receive these praises.

Matthew 21:19-22:

19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away. 20 And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?" 21 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. 22 And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

(sss) Jesus is teaching us that the Jewish people are the fig tree, and we grower¹⁸ say, vegetative, but not fruitful. (pp.e) Jesus is stressing their hypocritical nature. He condemns the tree and emphasizes the importance of faith and prayer and the sheer power of prayer.

There now follows a series of parables aimed at members of the Sanhedrin to underscore the Lord Jesus as God, so that if anyone would doubt His authority before, they would certainly struggle with it afterwards.

Matthew 21:24-27:

24 But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: 25 The baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?" And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 26 But if we say, 'From men,' we fear

¹⁸ In one of my businesses we grow peppers for a UK supermarket.

*the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.” 27 So they answered Jesus and said, “We do not know.” And He said to them, **“Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”***

(jjjj) Jesus is reminding us all that John the Baptist had acknowledged he was to prepare the way for Christ Jesus, and that his mission was from heaven, as evidenced by the descent of the Holy Spirit. Denying this would be difficult for the Sanhedrim as they would have to there and then accept His divinity.

Matthew 21:28-32

The parable of the two sons

28 “But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ 29 He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went. 30 Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said to Him, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

Jesus sets out to demonstrate that His listeners, the Pharisees, are truly condemned, if they don't acknowledge their sinfulness and repentance. The second son in the parable is the Pharisee, who keeps the letter of the law but has no awareness of the spirit of the law. The second represent the publicans and the harlots, they realise the errors of their way, and do have belief and repent.

(kkkk) The next parable told by Jesus is loaded with scriptural references. The parable of the vine yard let out to husbandmen. Husbandmen and servant, are the prophets of old. God is the householder. The vine yard is God's kingdom on earth (Christians can have no objection to the traditional commercial landlord-tenant relationships). The hedge fence around the plot is the Jewish law. This separate the Jew from the Gentile God has a right to the fruit of the vine yard.

Matthew 21:33-40 The Parable of the Landowner:

“Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?”

1 Kings 22:24:

Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the spirit from the Lord go from me to speak to you?”

2 Chronicles 24:20-21:

Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, “Thus says God: ‘Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, He also has forsaken you.’” So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 36:15-16:

And the Lord God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy.

Nehemiah 9:26:

Nevertheless they were disobedient And rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets, who testified against them To turn them to Yourself; And they worked great provocations.

Jeremiah 2:30:

In vain I have chastened your children; They received no correction. Your sword has devoured your prophets Like a destroying lion.

(qqq) The son of the landowner (Jesus) is then said by Jesus to be rejected (they want to kill Him and then they did so, thus foretelling the Crucifixion event) by the tenant, representing the general Jewish population. (i.j.i) This is, of course, just as the chief Cornerstone had been rejected at Calvary, which Jesus references in the next dialogue.

Matthew 21:42:

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

... which is taken from Psalm 118:22-23:

The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.

And:

Isaiah 28:16:

"A Cornerstone in Zion Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily."

Jesus is the cornerstone the living stone of the spiritual temple. You must build our temple on Jesus. What is more, the Lord as the cornerstone as predicted in Psalm 118:22-23, Will choose to reject those who reject him, which indicates his rejection of the Jewish religion in favour of the Christian new religion.

Jesus continues.

Matthew 21:43-44:

“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

Jesus reminds them what punishment will befall them. Undoubtedly, He has this part of scripture in mind.

Isaiah 5:5:

And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

(i.m) In the next parable Jesus tells of a King (God) who invites his guests to his son’s wedding (Jesus). The servants (the disciples) deliver the invitations ((llll) the Gospel Good News) and they either laugh or kill the servants - the fate that befell all but one of the disciples: John. (rr.a) The King, in turn - as He did in AD 70 - let Titus bring about the total destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem itself. The King then invites in all the people on the “Highways” (perhaps the wider gentile world) to come to His banquet. As we know, the Gentiles converted in hordes over the next few hundred years to the message and teachings of Jesus.

(i.n.i) The host needed to be supplying the dresses as all were invited in haste in the course of this parable. It was often the custom for such dresses to be provided. All guests do dress in wedding garments (provided by the King being a hat tip to His Knowledge of His glory), but one guest alone does not put (knows about God/Jesus, but chooses to be indifferent) on these garments. This casual guest is cast into hell. The Glory spurned, was the righteousness of Jesus.

Matthew 22:1-3 Parable of the Marriage Feast:

1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.”

The feast, open to a broad sweep of people is maybe a reference to when the King dethrones his Queen Vashti and replaces his bride with another.

Esther 1:5:

And when these days were completed, the king made a feast lasting seven days for all the people who were present in Shushan the citadel, from great to small, in the court of the garden of the king’s palace.

Isaiah 61:10:

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

The next part of the parable takes a turn for the worse.

Matthew 22:4-8:

“Again, he sent out other servants, saying, “Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.”” But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.”

(rr.a) Jesus is reminding us that the total destruction of the city of the invited guests who killed the messenger servants was foretold in Isaiah 5:5, Joel 2:25

Isaiah 5:5:

And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

Joel 2:25:

So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you.

The element concerning the garments is then explained. The invitation of wisdom in the old Testament in Proverbs 9, is now repackaged in the parable of the marriage of the King son. The invitation is for the church to form on earth and one great big feast. The most likely meaning of the wedding garments, is something akin to how we take holy communion, to purify us. These garments demonstrate our faith and commitment to the King.

Matthew 22:9:14:

8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "For many are called, but few are chosen."

... which in turn is a scriptural reference to Isaiah 61:10:

I shall greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul will delight in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

... and to

Zephaniah 1:7-8:

Be silent in the presence of the Lord God; For the day of the Lord is at hand, For the Lord has prepared a sacrifice; He has invited His guests. "And it shall be, In the day of the Lord's sacrifice, That I will punish the princes and the king's children, And all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.

The king actually providing the garments is taken from scripture.

Genesis 45:22:

He gave to all of them, to each man, changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments.

And Judges 14:12:

Then Samson said to them, "Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.

Here, the garment signifies the purity of Jesus.

Matthew 22:18-21:

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? 19 Show Me the tax money." So they brought Him a denarius. 20 And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" 21 They said to Him, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

(yy) Jesus is very much teaching us that the temporal kingdoms of the world are here with us and that the spiritual world of God is also with us but not in conflict with our earthly governments, unless, of course, they stray into each others' areas. Jesus is not teaching physical liberation, but spiritual liberation. (jjj.b) Clearly, there is no doctrine of Liberation Theology or (mmmm) pure self-government in this teaching. (mmmm.a) He also teaches that it is justified to pay taxes for the services provided. Jesus is also teaching us to hate flattery, and speak the truth. Render to the appropriate party always what they are owed. We owe the Lord a

whole heart. In the earthly realm the coin is stamped with the head of Caesar. This is his property. Jesus wants God stamped on your heart and soul. That is God's property. Jesus is also teaching us to hate flattery, and speak the truth. Render to the appropriate party always what they are owed. We owe the Lord a whole heart. We must also remember, Jesus is in effect condemning the Herodian's who should not have an adulterous coin in the Temple in the first place and the Pharisees for instigating this plan of entrapment by pointing out that their own theology was shallow for not even recognising that He was the true image they should have stamped on their hearts.

The Sadducees, who deny the resurrection, come to Jesus and put a situation to Him. This is where, following the Deuteronic Law (Deuteronomy 25:5-10), if a man dies, his wife can remarry his brother and the brother will also become the lawful guardian of the children. They suggest to Jesus that seven brothers each having the same wife in succession after the death of the brother before (as was the custom of the day) - which husband will she then have in heaven? The key teaching is that once dead, you are fully released from the laws of marriage. Verse 32 has the "I am" Divinity declaration.

This would also appear to be teaching, that the souls, immaterial though they are, exist post the bodily death. This is why Jesus is the God of Abraham et cetera. The resurrection of the body, seems to be something committed to the end of times.

Matthew 22:29-33:

29 Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, 31 but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." 33 And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

(qqq.c) Jesus clearly teaches that there is an immediate angelic or spiritual resurrection upon death, if we have gained salvation. If chosen, we are likened unto the angels, immortal, sexless and therefore devoid of physical needs. This teaching contrasts with that of Islam, where paradise is a very physical thing, especially for man, who has endless sexual gratification with servant women with endless food and drink. Jesus teaches we will attain perfect purity. It will be a life elevated well above and beyond the confines of our mere physical attributes.

The scriptural references are as follows for precedents of the resurrection of the dead that Jesus could have had in mind.

Daniel 12:1-2:

At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

... and on being the God of those already dead on earth.

Exodus 3:6:

Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

Exodus 3:15:

Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.

After silencing the Sadducees, the Pharisees now have a chance to question Jesus by asking "which is the great commandment in the Law?"

Matthew 22: 37-40:

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

This is the Shema, recited by all pious Jews of Deuteronomy 6:4-5 with the opening words:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:5:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Leviticus 19:18:

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

The above was a restatement of the 'Golden Rule'. This is just the negative Golden Rule, that Jesus would completely overhaul in the Gospel of John.

Jesus then invites a controversy to prove a scriptural point

Matthew 22:41-46:

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore."

This is the scripture that is quoted from:

Psalm 110:1:

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.

The opening of the Psalm is from Jehovah to Adonai. So Jehovah is acknowledging Adonai to be His sovereign Lord. This is clearly no earthly leader. A promise made by Nathan to David is fulfilled.

2 Samuel 7:12

12 "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

(i.g) (i.i) Here, King David refers to God enthroning David's Lord at God's right hand. If it is not David and or David's son, it must be someone greater than David. If David is not the father, then God is. The Messiah, or David's 'son', really does have higher authority from God. As the crowds were referring to Jesus as just this, the authorities became even more unsettled. This is because we can only deduce that Jesus is teaching us once again that He is God.

In **Matthew 23-1-8** Jesus says:

1 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: 2 "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. 4 For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. 5 But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. 6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' 8 But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. 9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. 11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

(hh.b) Jesus acknowledges that the heirs to Moses had a right to teach the Law, (but not their tedious works).

Deuteronomy 17:9:

And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge there in those days, and inquire of them; they shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment.

The practice of wearing phylacteries was established in Exodus 13:8-10 as a way of making the Jews never forget the Passover day.

And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.' It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the Lord's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the Lord has brought you out of Egypt. You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.

Exodus 13:16:

It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9:

And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 11:18-20:

Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house

and on your gates,

(v) Jesus criticises them for excessively enlarging them in an attempt to magnify their own piety, a piety they did not really have in their hearts. The key teaching is to not be self-righteous.

Concerning the tassels on the garments, the scriptural reference is in Numbers 15:38:

Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners.

(v) After Jesus made this extended attack on the pretension of the Jewish priestly leaders and their constant actions of being holier than thou as opposed to just being as holy as they could be in, and of, themselves, Jesus delivers the (r)final message of servant-leadership. It is from scripture and comes from Ezekiel 21:26-27:

thus says the Lord God: "Remove the turban, and take off the crown; Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted. Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer, Until He comes whose right it is, And I will give it to Him.

The yolk that the scribes and Pharisees placed on the people was heavy and intense concerning all the minute little practices they have created for everybody to do all the time. Jesus in Matthew 11:33 teaches my yoke is easy and my burden is light. This of course shows the contrast between the old Law interpretation and the New way of interpreting it, that Jesus champions. Jesus teaches the rabbi is that they should have humility, in the public arena they don't need to Titles. Only the Messiah, the Christ, or the anointed one is their master. (e) In the closing section of the last set of verses, and the opening of this one, very importantly here we have Jesus teaching the tri-unity, or Trinity, of Father, Master, and Teacher/Servant.

In Josephus's antiquities 18 3.5 and in Tacitus history is 5.5, gives contemporary evidence of how the Jews were determined to spread their religion cross the world. Jesus was pointing out that perhaps to concentrate more at home, on actually keeping in the Spirit of the law itself.

This is a long 'woe' discourse delivered by Jesus, exposing hypocritical aspects of the scribes and Pharisees.

Matthew 23:13-22:

13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. 14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. 15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. 16 "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' 17 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? 18 And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' 19 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20 Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. 21 He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. 22 And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it."

(nnnn) The religious authorities of the day were meant to aid widows (and orphans), not to extract money from them. Jesus reminds them of the scriptural precedents for this.

Exodus 22:22:

22 You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child.

Deuteronomy 10:18 (and in similar vein 14:29, 24:17, 19-21, 26:12-13, 27:19):

18 He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing.

(ddd.f.ii) Jesus teaches that false teachings close the door to heaven for both themselves and the people to whom they are ministering. He also teaches that taking indulgences, or money for prayers, would lead to condemnation. Making up superstitious rules on oath concerning the Temple and the Altar is also a foolish waste of time and we must be very careful as we are in effect swearing the oath under the witness of God alone.

Matthew 23:23-24:

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!"

Leviticus 27:30:

And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's. It is holy to the Lord.

Leviticus 11:23:

Leviticus 11:4:

Nevertheless these you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you;

(hh.b) Jesus is teaching that the Pharisees counting herbs and individual seeds was an extreme interpretation of the Law, whilst weightier matters of justice were neglected. The 'straining' reference is to avoid small insects, for example. Some would use a fine cloth to strain out the insect so as to preserve their purity. The

camel was the largest of the impure animals. We all know many petty officials today, but they seemed to be particularly irksome back then in the first century, (hh.b). Jesus warns us of the petty-minded. The central thrust of what He was teaching was known to the Jews of the day, as it was in their scripture. This is the type of passage that Jesus would be relying upon:

Micah 6:8:

He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

In this next part of the discourse, we have the following:

Matthew 23:25-28:

25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

This came from the practice described in Numbers 19:16:

Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

Once each year (on the 15th of Adar) the Jews would whitewash the tombs so that someone who went by them would not become unclean. (xxx.a) Jesus was teaching that if we whitewash our religion our religion is only skin deep. Jesus was addressing the scribes and the Pharisees what the Jewish religion of the day has become.

They also murdered the prophets:

Matthew 23:29-36:

29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30 and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation."

The first martyr occurred in Genesis 4:8:

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

2 Chronicles 24:20-21:

Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, "Thus says God: 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, He also has forsaken you.'" So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the Lord.

Chronicles was the closing book of the Jewish Canon, so the Zachariah death reported is the correct date of the death of the last prophet. Jesus is alluding to his own death, the completion of the death of the Lord Himself

Jesus then continues His attack against the scribes and Pharisees

Matthew 23:37-39:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ”

Psalm 17:8:

Keep me as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings,

Psalm 36:7:

How precious is Your loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

Psalm 57:1:

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, Until these calamities have passed by.

Psalm 63:7:

Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.

Isaiah 31:5:

Like birds flying about, So will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem. Defending, He will also deliver it; Passing over, He will preserve it.

Psalm 118:26:

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We have blessed you from the house of the Lord.”

Jesus talks about "your house," in the past tense, as he is declaring He has spiritually left the Temple. Gathering under the wings, was a very apt analogy as

the Roman eagle was secondary everywhere so hiding under the awning compassing wings of the Lord would be wise for the Jews. Jesus closes with acknowledgement that he would no longer see them again I had an allusion to his death , who is appointed time was coming. Jesus mention "I send you," the prophets. Of course only God could do this. Jesus is once again declaring his divinity.

Jesus discourses symbolically from the Mount of Olives at the start of Chapter 24.

**Matthew 24:1-51 The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Coming
(Mark 13:1-7, Luke 21:5-36):**

See notes also in Luke when you read the following in Matthew. These notes on Luke are more extensive and sight many historical reference points as the recorded words of Jesus on this terrible event, rendered by Luke in a much richer and deeper way.

2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

This is where the coming of the end of the world commences.

Zechariah 14:4:

And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south."

(rr) What we read here as a mixture of prophesies relating to immediate disaster, His second coming, and the end of times. In 70 AD, Titus complete destroyed the whole the Temple and the City itself, collapsing the Jewish polity, which has taken 1900 years for it to recover. In this way, for the Jews, it was the total destruction

of their nation for two millennia. As all the other Gospel writers covered the foretelling of the destruction of the Temple, I prefer to read it as Jesus foretelling of this event and the future event yet to come to pass.

In **Matthew 24:4-8** Jesus is predicting forthcoming strife or tribulation. In verse 4 Jesus says many shall come in my name saying I am Christ. Jesus make a clear declaration that He believed in his divinity.

4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences and earthquakes in various places.."

The scriptural reference is 2 Chronicles 15:5-7

And in those times there was no peace to the one who went out, nor to the one who came in, but great turmoil was on all the inhabitants of the lands. So nation was destroyed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every adversity. But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!

Tacitus Histories 1.2, shows us that just after Jesus's time, and indeed the destruction of Jerusalem, nations were to rise up against nation as described here, fulfilling the Lord's prediction.

"The history on which I am entering is that of a period rich in disasters, terrible with battles, torn by civil struggles, horrible even in peace. Four emperors fell by the sword; there were three civil wars, more foreign wars, and often both at the same time. There was success in the East, misfortune in the West. Illyricum was disturbed, the Gallic provinces wavering, Britain subdued and immediately let go. The Sarmatae and Suebi rose against us; the Dacians won fame by defeats inflicted and suffered; even the Parthians were almost roused to arms through the trickery of a pretended Nero. Moreover, Italy was distressed by disasters unknown before or returning after the lapse of ages. Cities on the rich fertile shores of Campania were swallowed up or overwhelmed; Rome was devastated by conflagrations, in which her most ancient shrines were consumed and the very Capitol fired by citizens' hands. Sacred rites were

defiled; there were adulteries in high places. The sea was filled with exiles, its cliffs made foul with the bodies of the dead. In Rome there was more awful cruelty. High birth, wealth, the refusal or acceptance of office — all gave ground for accusations, and virtues caused the surest ruin. The rewards of the informers were no less hateful than their crimes; for some, gaining priesthoods and consulships as spoils, others, obtaining positions as imperial agents and secret influence at court, made havoc and turmoil everywhere, inspiring hatred and terror. Slaves were corrupted against their masters, freedmen against their patrons; and those who had no enemy were crushed by their friends.”

The dialogue continues:

Matthew 24:8-12

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”

(rrr.c) Jesus then predicts the destruction of the Temple, in which no Christians suffered or died when happened in AD 70. The disciples ask how this cataclysmic event will happen.

Tacitus notes a number of incidents of cowardice from Christians in Annals 15.44¹⁹

CHRISTIANS ACCUSED OF INCENDIARISM

Such indeed were the precautions of human wisdom. The next thing was to seek means of propitiating the gods, and recourse was had to the Sibylline books, by the direction of which prayers were offered to Vulcanus, Ceres, and Proserpina. Juno, too, was entreated by the matrons, first, in the Capitol, then on the nearest part of the coast, whence water was procured to sprinkle the fane and image of the goddess. And there were sacred banquets and nightly vigils celebrated by married women. But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor, and the propitiations of the gods, did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was

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<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0078%3Abook%3D15%3Achapter%3D44>

the result of an order. Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judæa, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.

Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer or stood aloft on a car. Hence, even for criminals who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of compassion; for it was not, as it seemed, for the public good, but to glut one man's cruelty, that they were being destroyed.

After explaining the terrible happens at the coming tribulation:

Matthew 24:13

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

Which is a reminder of Jeremiah 32:40:

“And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.”

Jesus then elaborates further:

Matthew 24:14-16:

14 “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains:”

The scriptural references are

Daniel 9:27

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Daniel 11:31

And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.

Daniel 12:11

And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

If we interpret the prophecies concerning the “abominations of desolation” from Daniel as the Roman Army, then we can see another confirmation of a prophecy predicted by Jesus. Jesus foreknew that it would be the Jews themselves who would take part in the defiling the temple. Josephus in War of the Jews book 4.6, refers to this event.

The Jews did not like any form of symbolism as it was regarded as a potential idol. Josephus informs us in Jewish Antiquities Book 18 Chapter 5 that the Governor of Syria, Vitellius, was petitioned by the Jewish leadership to take his forces around Judea when he was setting out to fight the Arabian king, Aretas. The Governor complied with this request. In the War of the Jews, Book 6 Chapter 6, Josephus informs us that the Romans, post capture of the City, placed their ensigns above the eastern Temple gate and sacrificed to them. As in Mark 13:14, “standing where it ought not.”

Matthew 24:17-21:

17" Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be."

Several hundred years before, Daniel had prophesized this event. In 168 BC Antiochus Epiphanes, King of all Syria, had invaded Jerusalem and turned the Temple into a place of Zeus worship. Some speculate that this is what Jesus is referencing. I tend to think that Jesus overrides this as (rr.c) He places it in the future at the destruction of the Temple that he predicted at the start of this chapter. Of course this did come about. Eusebius reports in HE 3:32²⁰ that prior to 70 AD Christian residents of Jerusalem were packing their bags and moving to Pella. Christ was prophetic in this matter, as He was with the destruction of the Temple.

'But the people of the church in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation, vouchsafed to approved men there before the war, to leave the city and to dwell in a certain town of Perea called Pella. And when those that believed in Christ had come thither from Jerusalem, then, as if the royal city of the Jews and the whole land of Judea were entirely destitute of holy men, the judgment of God at length overtook those who had committed such outrages against Christ and his apostles, and totally destroyed that generation of impious men.'

Matthew 24:22:

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

This is a reference to Daniel 7:25:

²⁰ <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250103.htm>

And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Matthew 24:23-28:

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand. 26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. 27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

(oooo) Jesus is teaching that in this terrible time to come, no flesh would be saved but for the sake of the elect, as time would be shorted so that the elect can survive the rule of the beast. (rr.c) The Roman army symbol was the eagle and it was devouring its prey - this was the death of the Jewish nation. I would have thought this might have been a too good an opportunity to miss making the obvious connection with the prophetic nature of Christ. The carcass the Eagles gather round could well be Jesus signifying his own body, crucified at Calvary. Alternatively it could be the other way round. The carcass will be the antichrist or all the world powers and the Eagles Saints or angels who will attend Christ when he comes again in final judgement.

See notes on Luke concerning the Temple Destruction.

In **Matthew 24:29** Jesus predicts the darkening of the sun at His Second Coming. The fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens can signify the Sun & Satan as Lucifer who fell like lightning from heaven as reported in Luke 10:18. The stars in the heavens are the people who go on to exalt themselves. Alternatively the stars can be explained in a good sense and the Sun is prized for his truth, however it will be obscured in the final days. The moon being the church talking by heresy and unbelief. Stars can be seen as once people full of faith now dimming and failing in faith as the gross darkness of the evil of age comes to pass.

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken”

Isaiah 13:9-10:

Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

Jeremiah 4:28:

For this shall the earth mourn, And the heavens above be black, Because I have spoken. I have purposed and will not relent. Nor will I turn back from it.

Ezekiel 32:7-8:

And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.

Joel 2:10:

The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining

Joel 2:31:

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.

Joel 3:15:

The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

Amos 8:9:

And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord God, "That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight;

Micah 3:6:

Therefore you shall have night without vision, And you shall have darkness without divining; And the sun shall go down on the prophets, and the day shall be dark for them.

Jesus is very much setting Himself up as the light/sun that was prophesized in

Psalm 36:9:

For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.

Jesus then warns all about the false prophets who will come, in Matthew 24:23-24 quoted above, which in turn is taken from this part of scripture.

Deuteronomy 13:1-3:

If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

The final part of the prophesy:

Matthew 24:30-31:

30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

The scriptural quote relating to this is from Daniel 7:13:

I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

Matthew 24:32-34:

32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! 34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place."

In the parable of the fig tree, Jesus finishes it with the following words:

Matthew 24:35:

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

The scriptural references are recorded in Isaiah 40:8:

The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

Isaiah 51:6:

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, And look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, The earth will grow old like a garment, And those who dwell in it will die in like manner; But My salvation will be forever, And My righteousness will not be abolished.

Psalm 102:26:

"they will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed.

Psalm 119:89:

Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.

(0000) Jesus is teaching that the fig tree that is just sprouting is only a short step away from fruiting. This would seem to suggest that the time of the second coming is immanent. However, this can't be as the other prophecies need to have happened. Therefore, this is very much a future- orientated parable. In chapter 21:19, we see the withered fig-tree parable. The Jewish race in the New Testament was the withered fig-tree. Jesus would seem to be implying, that that Jewish race needs to be revived, for the End of Days to happen. It's interesting to think that for 2700 years, the Jews were not in charge of their own affairs, and it is only since 1948, that the Jewish people have had a nation state that a) they can rule and b) they can call their own home.

Jesus warns His disciples that no one will know the date, time or hour of when the Son of Man will come again, just as it was in the day of Noah.

Matthew 24:36-37:

*36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.
37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."*

This is taken from the following:

Genesis 6:5-9:

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

(0000.a) Jesus uses this example as all would be aware that at the time of Noah, people were more concerned with their own affairs to notice their impending doom. Christ, as the human, does not know the time or the hour of the second coming in the end of the age. Of course Jesus as God is equal with God, and one part

of the Trinity and does know. So it is clear, Jesus is speaking in only is earthly manifestation. It is clear, that Jesus is not prepared to be pushed on this point, as it is none of the disciples, and indeed our business to know the time in the hour, as it is meant to come to us as a complete surprise, something you could not prepare for. However, as a good Christian, you should be leading your life, always prepared, for the Day of Judgement.

Matthew 24:38-44:

38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.."

(0000.b) Jesus warns that just like a thief who comes in the night we will be unaware.

Obadiah 5:

If thieves had come to you, If robbers by night— Oh, how you will be cut off!— Would they not have stolen till they had enough? If grape-gatherers had come to you, Would they not have left some gleanings?

(0000.b) Jesus reaffirms this in the last book of the Bible as well.

Revelation 16:15:

15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

Matthew 24:45-50 (Luke 12:41-58) The Faithful Steward:

45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,

The good servant of his Masters household could be the example live in Eliezer to Abraham as told in Genesis 15:2

2 But Abram said, "Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"

Any Christian leader, be it a father or mother, up to the ruler of the land and anything in between need to endow mental physical spiritual and material gifts of God faithfully to those that are stewarded by themselves

(i.w) Jesus is teaching all of us, as (pppp) stewards of His creation, to look after it and avoid abusing it. Be also ever-prepared as He could come and lay claim to what is His at any time.

In the very final verse of Chapter 24, Jesus reminds us starkly what will happen to unbelievers: they will be punished.

Matthew 24:51:

"and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The scriptural reference comes from Daniel 3:29:

Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this.

(pppp.a) Faithful stewardship of God's world is what the thrust of this teaching is about. Jesus likes those who look after His estate, diligently. (pppp.b) Unfaithful stewardship will result in no salvation for the less diligent.

Matthew 25:1-13 Jesus Teaching About His Second Coming:

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

(pppp.c) Jesus is teaching us at the time of the day of judgement, it would be like the teachings in this paragraph. 10 is the number of perfection. Oil is the Holy Spirit, the oil of faith. The wise virgins keep this oil topped up, the foolish virgins don't. The foolish virgins, knowing that the time is coming, seem to think that there is an abundance of grace that they can get hold of been short notice. This is a great warning against trusting in a deathbed repentance, thinking you will gain salvation in heaven. Jesus is also teaching us that the day of judgement, if you suddenly embrace faith and want to have back door open to you, the door is already firmly shut and it is too late. Therefore, it is not just good enough to be a member of the church, we must grow in Grace every day. We must pray daily for the renewing of the Holy Spirit within us. There is no point in praying the moment you get sick or are approaching death. Lord can come at any time: be prepared.

Matthew 25:14-23 The Parable of the Talents:

14 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 22 He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' 23 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

(oooo) In the parable of the talents, we have God (the master) tasking three servants (the people) to have faith in Him, and to fulfil their potential in His absence. This absence is until Judgement day, when all will be judged. They have varying levels of faith, and thus various levels of potential for salvation. Two are deemed to have fulfilled their potential as they return back the original amount and the same again. The analogy running behind this is that they have not only performed with their money/talents, but they have also performed from a faith perspective. They have kept the faith and they have multiplied it. (oooo.c) The teaching here is that we all need to evangelise as well. Clearly, the message is that our faith will be matched with the same kind of input from Jesus to our life.

Matthew 25:24-30: The Parable of the Talents Continued:

"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him

who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

This fear, lack of faith and underperformance in the face of the grace given by God goes right back to Genesis 3:10:

So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.

(oooo.c) The third servant feigns that he is afraid of the master who he says is a harsh and unfair man and does nothing much with his talents. The reality is that he had no faith anyway - he turns out to be like those virgins who don't maintain their faith. He claims the master is harsh as He requires us to use our talents to create more things and convert more people to the faith and then He will claim, unfairly what He has not created. This servant misses the point: that none of it was his in the first place and all was indeed the Creator's. (qqqq) Jesus expressly reminds him that he could even have just earned interest by lending His money to the bank, but instead, the servant buried his money. Jesus is teaching that the servant did not even do the bare minimum that would have kept him from going to Hell. In a great act of capital allocation to the most profitable use, Jesus directs the money to go to the better performer, the man with more faith. In general, the unbeliever will be kept from entry to heaven. Jesus is teaching us that God distributes out our blessings and our skills exactly proportionally to what we are expected to deliver for the benefit of the Kingdom. In other words exactly according to our abilities. Jesus teaching that we have free will to then be able to implement these talents of ours to the best of our abilities.

The punishment is for what is emitted by the lonely servant

Jesus then uses the imagery of the sheep (the believers) and the Shepherd (God/Jesus) Jesus is showing how He will make the final judgement on all nations of the world. Jesus is declaring himself king and the person who determines what

goes on in the Kingdom. This is the ultimate Divinity declaration. The goats on the left hand are the worthless folk.

Matthew 25:31-33:

31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left."

There are numerous places from scripture where this is taken that are too long to list in the form of full quotes, but here are some: Psalm 23:1, Psalm 28:9, Psalm 74:1, Psalm 77:20, Psalm 78:52, Psalm 79:13, Psalm 80:1, Psalm 95:7, Psalm 100:3, Isaiah 40:11, Jeremiah 23:24, Ezekiel 34:11, Ezekiel 37:22-25, Hosea 4:16, Micah 5:4, Micah 7:14, Zechariah 9:16.

Matthew 25:34-43:

34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' 41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me."

(hhh.c) After teaching that if we look after the most lowly, the poorest and most marginalised, we are looking after God Himself, it is clear that there are no excuses (we are to blame) for not noticing these needy people. The onus is on us to

proactively help the poor. If we do this, we will more than likely gain our ticket to heaven and partake in the heavenly banquet.

Matthew 25:44-46:

44 "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' 45 Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

When reading this, we can't help but thinking about Abraham's encounter with the three men at Mamre, one of whom is God, the two others angels (traditionally to be viewed by the Church as the other parts of the Trinity. Of course, Abraham was unaware of this at first, but without hesitation he tends to their needs.

Genesis 18:1-5:

1 Then the Lord appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, 3 and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. 4 Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5 And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant."

(eeee.b) Jesus was in keeping fully with the ancient teachings of hell being everlasting for its inhabitants, with all its inhabitants knowing that their punishment is just.

Daniel 12:2:

2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Deuteronomy 32:3-5:

3 For I proclaim the name of the Lord: Ascribe greatness to our God.4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He. 5 "They have corrupted themselves; They are not His children, Because of their blemish: A perverse and crooked generation.

However, I should put this caveat on what “everlasting” means in this context. Αἰώνιος or aionios is usually translated as eternal. The problem is that it comes from the word *aion* or *aeon* which can mean just a long period of time, or an age. Jesus would have used the Hebrew *olam* meaning something that was beyond the horizon, or an age, a very long time. As the phrase “40 years” or “40 days” is used in the Bible to mean a long time, so would the word everlasting or eternal. This would appear to allow the condemned person a chance of redemption at some point in time. The all loving God does want to see each and every one of us redeemed, so there is always hope for redemption, even from Hell.

In support of the above reading of the controversial verse 46, the Greek word used for punishment is κόλασις. This usage was always as a corrective method of improving or redeeming the offender from his/her former ways. The benevolence of God cannot be restricted, so there is hope that you can get out of Hell, once correctively punished.

Matthew 26:2 (Mark 14:1, Luke 22:1):

2 "You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."

Jesus is teaching that there is no coincidence in the fact of His death and the Passover - it is divinely pre-planned to be that way.

Matthew 26:10-13 (Mark 14:3-9, Luke 7:36-50, John 12:1-8):

10 But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. 11 For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. 12 For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. 13 Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

(hhh.c) Jesus was not teaching something like: "to hell with the poor," but was pointing out that His time was actually only limited so that ministering to the poor would remain mankind's responsibility, always. (rrrr) He teaches, or hints, of His coming death and establishes the fame of this woman forever, which has surely come to pass as her story remains for all to savour in this Gospel (both written and orally). Her love for Jesus transcends everything and will be reported for ever, like the message of love that Jesus preached. This is the only time Jesus promises this of anyone. Luke and John make no mention of this latter point. Only Mark mentions it, in addition to Matthew. For an utterance so one-off, so memorable, if all of the first three Gospels had been copied from a common source, as is alleged by most of modern scholarship, then they seem to have committed a blunder in not copying Jesus' exhortation to honour a woman forever. Or perhaps these Gospels were just all written diligently by the three traditional Gospel writers, as the timeline from the earliest memory right up to the modern era of criticism tells us.

Deuteronomy 15:11

11 For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.'

The poor would always be with us until the end of times, we should look after them. Jesus' teachings were in this tradition. Jesus is teaching us that Mary has loving gift to give.

Matthew 26:18-29, (Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19-20, John 8:21 1 Corinthians 11:23-25):

18 *“And He said, **“Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.’”*** 19 *So the disciples did as* 20 *When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve.* 21 *Now as they were eating, He said, **“Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”*** 22 *And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, “Lord, is it I?”* 23 *He answered and said, **“He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me.*** 24 ***The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”*** 25 *Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, “Rabbi, is it I?”* He said to him, ***“You have said it.”*** 26 *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, **“Take, eat; this is My body.”*** 27 *Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, **“Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”***

At the Last Super (see Lukan account for more detail), Jesus compares Himself, as the bread that is broken at the Crucifixion, to the bread that we all share in in order to participate in the benefits of his Crucifixion. There are many scriptural references to this that we will see following this commentary. However, there is significant spade work to be done to clear up one of the controversies that exist in the Gospel accounts, that of the Easter time-line controversy. Christian tradition holds that Jesus was both the Passover Sacrifice (metaphorically the lamb sacrificed at the Passover Meal) and also attended the Passover Supper, or Last Supper. Bluntly put, He can't be in two places at once. These events are recorded as the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 12 and 13 lays out the history of the Passover:

In Exodus 12:5-6 Moses gives this instruction to the Israeli captives:

5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.”

This is the 14th day of Nisan, which starts after sunset and finishes at sunrise the following day. Now, it is not specified if this is an evening twilight or a morning

one. However, the setting is Moses advising to eat in haste that evening: don't hang around; make sure your doors are marked as God will be 'passing over' and will protect those inside doors which have been marked. Therefore we can only assume a twilight slaughter of the lambs at the end of the day of the 14th day of Nisan, which, in our calendar and that of the Romans at the time of Christ, would be on the following day, or the 15th of Nisan.

From the 14th Day of Nisan, Moses tells us in Exodus 12:14-15:

14 So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. 15 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel."

This 'first day' is the 14th Day of Nisan, the start of the Passover process. Note: you were also instructed to prepare your house for the Passover meal by clearing out anything which could be associated with leavened bread and its by-products. On that first day, you would only have been eating unleavened bread and preparing for the Passover meal the following day on the 15th of Nisan.

Exodus 12:17-18 tells us the following:

17 So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. 18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening."

It is slightly confusing here, for moderns such as we are used to a day starting at one minute past midnight. The Jewish day always starts at the start of night fall. As Moses says, the Feast of Unleavened Bread happened on the day the slaves were taken out of Egypt, which would have been the day following the Passover Feast - if taken literally when we look at this via our lens, or on the same day, in the daylight part of that day, if we look at it through a 1st century Jewish lense.

Another notable thing about this Passover Feast is that no bones of the lamb were to be broken (verse 46). If Jesus was the sacrificial lamb (an unblemished one, as was required for sacrifice), although the Jews asked for his bones to be broken to speed up his death as the Sabbath approached, this was not, in the event needed, because at that stage He was dead already.

Leviticus 23:5 would appear to slightly amend this tradition:

5 On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover" And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

Numbers 28:16-17 would seem to create a clear and separate date for the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

16 On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord. 17 And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days."

In Deuteronomy, we go back to the position of Exodus, that of the first day of Passover being a day when you must not eat leavened bread, and that at twilight on that day, you conduct the slaughter of the lamb in remembrance of the Passover liberation. Deuteronomy 16:4 is clear on this point:

4 And no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the meat which you sacrifice the first day at twilight remain overnight until morning.

As I have established, the end of the first day was marked by the slaughter of the lamb, and the evening of the second day was the Passover Feast. This would make the prohibition of not eating 'leaven' bread on the first day also. The Passover period and that of the Feast of Unleavened Bread may well start at the same time. The Passover meal is on the evening of the 2nd day. The Passover's first day is the 14th day of Nisan - and on that day, you would spend the day preparing for the Passover meal by cleaning out your house of all the leaven products and only eating the unleavened products.

In 2 Chronicles 30:13-15 we see King Hezekiah and his people, after 200-odd years of the Jews non-observance of the Passover and worshipping false idols, now keeping both the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This was done according to the commands of Moses during the Exodus period and in accordance with the Deuteronomic time line (albeit it one month late!):

13 Now many people, a very great assembly, gathered at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month. 14 They arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and they took away all the incense altars and cast them into the Brook Kidron. 15 Then they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought the burnt offerings to the house of the Lord.

This implies that the feast of Unleavened bread, in accordance with both Exodus and Deuteronomy, had started, so that at the end of the first day, which would be into the second day on our modern calendar (*from midnight to midnight, as opposed to the Jewish evening twilight to twilight*), the lambs are sacrificed.

King Josiah in 2 Chronicles 35: 16-17, some 400 years after the last proper (month 1, 14th day of the month) Passover celebrations, also confirms that there is a preparation day for the Passover, the sacrifice of the lambs happening at the end of that day, and the eating on the evening of the new day:

17 So all the service of the Lord was prepared the same day, to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the Lord, according to the command of King Josiah. 17 And the children of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days."

So: if we understand the Feast of Unleavened Bread takes place on the 15th of Nisan, after sunset or on the Friday evening, thus pushing the execution onto the Sabbath day, this would render this verse of Matthew as wrong. It's an incorrect interpretation, though, as we know the Jews were involved with the death of Jesus and that they would not have worked on the Sabbath. All the Gospel accounts cite the involvement of the Jews. The preparation day is the 14th when the Passover

period had started, and this Gospel writer suggests they are making preparation for the Passover itself, one day in the future, on the 15th Nisan, which would be in accordance with their tradition stemming from the events originally reported by Moses in Exodus and reconfirmed in Deuteronomy. But in the two books of the Bible between Leviticus and Numbers, a day is clearly demarcated for the Feast of the Unleavened Bread to start on the 15th of Nisan, which would run alongside the eating of the Passover meal itself. Jesus says he will **“Keep the Passover at your house”** which is consistent with being there on the 14th. He does not commit to having the Passover meal, but He does eat what they are preparing, with the unleavened bread (representing sinlessness, or purity), at the Last Super. This Last Super was the first meal of the day, dinner, for the Jewish people, as opposed to westerners who have breakfast as their first meal of the day. The Galileans called this the *seudah maphseket*²¹ which translates as the Last Super. It was to celebrate the first born who were saved by the Lord as he passed-over their properties, not spreading disease for them as He did for the Egyptians. The meal would be of unleavened bread (as was recorded in the Gospels), as at the Last Super of Christ. The fast would last until the Passover meal the next day. This meal that Christ had at the Last Super was never the Passover meal - that was 24 hours later, the first meal of the new day, when he was dead. Just as He had predicted.

It should also be noted that Mark, in 15:42-47, also reports that Joseph of Arimathea, *on Preparation Day, on the eve of the Sabbath*, goes to Pilate to ask permission to collect the body, *before the Passover meal itself starts*.

Luke 22:7-9,13:

7 Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. 8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat’. 9 So they said to Him,

²¹ "Mishnah", Tractate Pesachim Chapter 4 Mishnah 5: "The sages say in Judah they use to do work on the eve of Passover until noon (work would be permitted until noon on the fourteenth of Nisan), **but in Galilee (among Galileans) they would not work at all (on the fourteenth of Nisan)**. On the evening (after sundown on the thirteenth), the school of Shammai forbade (work), but the school of Hillel permitted it until sunrise."

'Where do You want us to prepare?' 13 So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover."

Luke would also be consistent with this timeline if the Feast of Unleavened Bread were the first day when they were commanded not to eat the leaven, so they could be ritually free of sin, which of course the unleavened bread symbolised. The Passover lamb was killed, according to Matthew and Mark, on that same, very first day of the Passover: the 14th of Nisan.

John, a witness and participant in the Last Supper, is very specific and says Jesus was crucified on the 14th day, preceding the legal time of the Jewish Paschal supper. For John, the Passover celebration was still to come, ie, on the Friday night.

John 13:1-2:

1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him

The Passover Meal, was held on the evening of the 15th Nisan. It is the date according to John, and indeed all the Gospel writers.

John 19:13-14:

13 When Pilate²² therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, 'Behold your King!'"

²² We also know from Luke 23:7, that Jesus also needed to be seen by Herod at the time, who was fortunately in Jerusalem. I mention this here as it is often said this is fiction, because Herod was stationed nearly a day's travel away - which would blow apart any of the Easter timing. Luke is the only Gospel writer to mention this.

Our other witness and attendee at the Last Super was Peter, who records as follows (1 Peter 1:18-19):

“... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

It was predicted 800 years before this, and in accordance with the scripture:

Isaiah 53:7-9

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. 9 And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

He also clearly viewed Christ to be the paschal lamb, slaughtered at the same time, at the end of the first day, twilight, Nisan 14, as all the Gospel writers attest to.

The next day (by our reckoning) is the trial at mid-day on the 14th day of Nisan still (we are now into our Friday, but this is still the Jewish 1st day of this process). By 3 pm, Jesus has been crucified and is dead. This is three hours before the start of the Passover Meal at 6 pm on the 15th, going into the Sabbath day itself: from Friday night through all of Saturday to 6 pm. After His burial the women then rest and do not attend the tomb, as it is unlawful to work on that day. So 14th Nisan would correspond to the Thursday night from 6pm to the Friday evening of 6 pm. This places Thursday night as the night of the Last Supper, or Paschal preparation feast. Friday night, then, going into Saturday, is the Passover Feast and Sabbath, a doubly important day. Jesus, unblemished and with no bones broken, is slaughtered as the sun was going down, before twilight, as the unbroken tradition of Passover tells us the Passover Lambs were. The Passover Meal is then celebrated on the Friday evening of the 15th. Jesus is in the tomb until the Resurrection on the Sunday. This is also the Day of First Fruits - Resurrection Day

- before our sunrise on the Sunday morning. Paul, a well- trained Pharisee, picks up on this point 1 Corinthians 15:20:

But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep

Leviticus 23:11 tells us the First Fruits was always *after* the Sabbath. Paul would have well understood the meaning of this:

He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it"

In this particular year, the Sabbath was held on the 15th Nisan - the Resurrection of Jesus, the first fruits, happened on 16th Nisan the day after the double, or high, Sabbath, on the first day of the new week: Sunday. This is the fulfilment of scripture. All the Gospel writers are correct on this time line.

The minimum size of the Passover Super was 10 people and it was not unusual to have it in other peoples' houses. Jesus' opening words are recorded in all the Gospels, bar Luke. In Luke and John, it is John and not all of them, as reported here, who seeks to find out who the betrayer among them is. (i.e) Jesus shows us, via His omniscience, that He knows all who hold evil in their hearts as he revealed to Judas, that He did indeed know what Judas was about to do. I can only assume this must have taken place in some degree of privacy, otherwise the plot would have been blown apart. (ssss) He breaks bread to symbolize His body being broken on the Cross. He drinks from the cup that symbolizes the wrath of God. He drinks the wine which symbolizes (ssss.a) His blood shed for us in exchange for our sins - the greatest single act of forgiveness ever. (ssss.b) Then, all drink and seal the New Covenant with the blood of the lamb: Jesus Himself. The Old Covenant was sealed in Exodus with the blood of the unblemished first born lamb, so it is fitting that the (ssss.c) New Covenant is sealed with the blood of the Paschal lamb itself. (ssss.d) The gateway to reconciliation with the Father is now open to all of us. Indeed, this

Last Super also takes us forward to the end of times when we can all partake in the Marriage Supper with the Father.

Isaiah 58:7:

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

Lamentations 4:4:

4 The tongue of the infant clings To the roof of its mouth for thirst; The young children ask for bread, But no one breaks it for them."

NB: in scripture, covenants were always ratified by blood.

Genesis 8:20:

20 Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Exodus 24:8:

8 And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words."

(ssss.a) (ssss.d) The blood of the New Covenant is Christ's own blood. There is of course a double meaning as Jesus is associating Himself very specifically as the Pascal sacrifice of Exodus 12:1-13, specifically verses 5-8

5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. 7 And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. 8 Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

That someone would betray Jesus, was predicted, 1000 years before.

Psalm 41:9

Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

The Holy Communion, inaugurated at this meal, is food for the soul. (ssss.e) Jesus was without blemish, sinless. The Crucifixion takes place on the 14th day at twilight. We are all guilty of this.

Matthew 26:30-34 (Mark 14:26-31, Luke 22:31-38, John 8:36-38):

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. 31 Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' 32 But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." 33 Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble." 34 Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

The Jesus Party went out that night. For sure this means that the Last Supper was not the Passover Feast, but the of Day of Preparation. (qqq) Jesus knows that in the Garden of Gethsemane each and every one of the disciples would let him down by falling asleep and not keeping watch with him. He once again predicts his death and his Resurrection. (tttt) Jesus also foretells of Peter's infamous thrice denial of any association with Jesus whatsoever. That, of course, came to pass.

The following passages from Zechariah gives the build up to what Jesus was quoting from in Zechariah 13:7. This is another clear description of His Messianic nature.

Zechariah 11:7-14:

7 So I fed the flock for slaughter, in particular the poor of the flock. I took for myself two staves: the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds; and I fed the flock. 8 I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. 9 Then I said, "I will not feed you. Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other's flesh." 10 And I took my staff, Beauty, and cut it in two, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples. 11 So it was broken on that day. Thus the poor of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the Lord. 12 Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. 13 And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter. 14 Then I cut in two my other staff, Bonds, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel."

Zechariah 12:10:

10 And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

Zechariah 13:7:

7 Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion," Says the Lord of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prays.

Matthew 26:36-46 (Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:39-46, John 18:1):

*36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "**Sit here while I go and pray over there.**" 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38 Then He said to them, "**My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.**" 39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "**O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.**" 40 Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "**What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**" 42 Again, a second time, He went*

away and prayed, saying, ***“O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.”*** 43 ***And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.***44 ***So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.*** 45 ***Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.***

(uuuu) The teaching during this momentous time in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the disciples so bitterly let Jesus down by failing to keep watch with Him and instead falling asleep, is to show how, despite Jesus knowing He was about to die for the sins of the whole of mankind, His disciples, very much like all of we humans, were weak and subject to the frailty of the flesh. But that was, and is, perfectly understood by the all-merciful Christ. The teaching is one of overwhelming forgiveness, the very signature theme of the Gospel.

The juxtaposition of Peter, weak and prepared to deny, and Jesus, preparing to drink away all the sins of mankind for now and forever, and to suffer an extremely painful death, is the point of the Gospel here: our weakness, His total, loving, strength, and the ensuing hope we all have of share in that divine grace.

(i.x) In keeping with His earthly manifestation as a man (Jesus), God was being fully consistent in what He said, and this can't be viewed to suggest Jesus is *only* a servant of God, as some allege. This was the cup of divine wrath (bitter death) and is about how Jesus jettisons all this frail humanity to make sure He is in full unity with the Father at this time of His passion.

The cup of divine wrath is often used in scripture that Jesus would have been aware of, as is evidenced by:

Isaiah 51:17:

17 Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, You who have drunk at the hand of the Lord The cup of His fury; You have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, And drained it out.

Isaiah 51:22:

22 Thus says your Lord, The Lord and your God, Who pleads the cause of His people: "See, I have taken out of your hand The cup of trembling, The dregs of the cup of My fury; You shall no longer drink it.

Jeremiah 25:15-16:

15 For thus says the Lord God of Israel to me: "Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. 16 And

Jeremiah 25:27-29:

27 Therefore you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Drink, be drunk, and vomit! Fall and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you." 28 And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord of hosts: "You shall certainly drink! 29 For behold, I begin to bring calamity on the city which is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth," says the Lord of hosts.'

Lamentations 4:21-22:

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, You who dwell in the land of Uz! The cup shall also pass over to you And you shall become drunk and make yourself naked. 22 The punishment of your iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; He will no longer send you into captivity. He will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom; He will uncover your sins!"

Ezekiel 23:31-34:

31 You have walked in the way of your sister; therefore I will put her cup in your hand.' 32 "Thus says the Lord God: 'You shall drink of your sister's cup, The deep and wide one; You shall be laughed to scorn And held in derision; It contains much. 33 You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, The cup of horror and desolation, The cup of your sister Samaria. 34 You shall drink and drain it, You shall break its shards, And tear at your own breasts; For I have spoken,' Says the Lord God."

Habakuk 2:16

16 You are filled with shame instead of glory. You also—drink! And be exposed as uncircumcised! The cup of the Lord's right hand will be turned against you, And utter shame will be on your glory.

Jesus knew the divine wrath would fall upon Him the next day.

Isaiah 53:10-11:

10 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You 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. 11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities."

What amazing strength Jesus shows us in the face of a horrible death. The two wills of Jesus are plain to see. The one questioning the terror that is about to unfold to Him. The other at union with the will of God.

At His arrest, Jesus remonstrates with Peter:

Matthew 26:50-56 (Mark 14:43-52, Luke 22:47-53, John 18:2-12)

50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. 51 And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. 52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" 55 In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. 56 But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Peter was taking vengeance in his own hands by cutting off the ear of one of the troop coming to arrest Jesus, this was even if his motivation was to warn off the

arresting party as the Temple servant, ex one ear, would be viewed to be unclean and not able to make his living in the Temple again. (vvvv) Jesus rebukes Him for this because vengeance is always solely in the Lord's hands. (bbbb) Also, Jesus was reminding Peter not to interrupt the flow of the divine will, so that all the prophecies of His death could be fulfilled.

Genesis 9:6 enshrined this long ago:

6Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

The scriptural prediction is found in Isaiah 53:7-9,12 (and also in many other places):

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. 9 And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. 12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors."

At His trial, supervised by Caiaphas, Jesus says one thing only, which happens to references the Book of Daniel.

Matthew 26:64 (Mark 14:53-65, Luke 22:54, 63-65, John 18:24):

64 Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

As Jesus is being delivered to Pontius Pilate, Peter recalls the words of Jesus and, as night follows day, what was said came to pass.

Matthew 26:75 (Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:56-62, John 18:17-18, 25-27):

75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, **"Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."** So he went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus is questioned by Pilate, and as with Caiaphas before, He is only recorded as saying one thing, this time affirming that He is the Messiah.

Matthew 27:11 (Mark 15:1, Luke 22:66, 23:1, John 18:28):

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus said to him, **"It is as you say."**

Pilate is actually only interested in Jesus if He is a threat to Rome. If Jesus says He is 'King' then Pilate will interpret this is a challenge to Rome. But as He is clearly causing angst amongst His fellow Jews, Pilate would have to take a firm line with Jesus.

The next words Jesus speaks - His last, prior to His Resurrection - are then memorably uttered.

In **Matthew 27:46 (Mark 15:33-37, Luke 23:44-46, John 19:28-30)** we have the following:

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?"** that is to say, **"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"**

Jesus was abandoned as the divine wrath was pouring into Jesus as the sin-bearer for us all. This was said in fulfilment of Psalm 22:1:

1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?

(i.x) Once again, we have Jesus completely overriding his human person and keeping to the wishes of the other part of the Godhead, the Father. "My God" are the words describing this inseparable unity. The outpouring of God's wrath upon

Jesus as the sin bearer for all was truly immense. Let's be clear, *the bodily, human only pain was dwarfed by this*. Then in verse 50, Jesus chooses to "yield up His spirit," which does suggest He is in control of this situation.

At dawn, Mary Magdalene is specifically named as visiting the tomb, along with the "other Mary." They witness a startling event, that could only have been supernaturally caused, that of an earthquake rolling back the stone blocking the entrance to the tomb. (www) The angel then sits there and talks to both Marys' and commissions the first new apostolic commission to tell the disciples of the fact of the risen Lord. Running to Bethany to the disciples, they encounter the risen Lord.

Matthew 28:9-10 (Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-11):

9 And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

After the Resurrection, we have the words (www.a) "rejoice." Well, yes! The teaching is that this is extremely good news! Jesus is alive, as He still is today. This would of course be totally startling to anyone (to see a dead man alive again) so He counsels comfort. The very command for the lady apostles to rejoice, is equally applicable to us to rejoice in the Good News of Jesus' conquering of death.

Matthew 28:18-20:

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen."

(i.y) Jesus confirms He has absolute sovereignty over the universe, again reaffirming His deity. (i.x) He also uses the "I am" name for God of Exodus 3:14. Jesus clarifies that His Gospel is for all of humanity. (xxxx) He affirms the cleansing

process of baptism and teaches the (e) Trinity. (i.h) Just as the wisdom mentioned in the Proverbs that permeates all of the universe, so Jesus attests that He does as well, and will therefore always be with us.

The Gospel of St. Mark

As the four Gospel accounts are all giving their various witness testimonies concerning the life of Jesus, there is much repetition of His sayings. I now move to the second Gospel, that of Mark and highlight anything said by Jesus that is not said in Matthew that relates to his teachings knowledge of scripture.

Jesus is teaching in Galilee and his first words in this Gospel are in:

Mark 1:15 (Matthew 4:12-17, Luke 4:14-15)

15 "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

The teaching is that the (1) end of the Old Covenant has come to pass in the actual arrival of Jesus. The New Covenant is beginning now. Changing from rebellion and disobedience is the cornerstone of the new beginning. (2) Forgiveness is to be His core message. Believe, or have faith in the Gospel, is the start of Jesus putting all of posterity on notice that it will need to have faith in Himself, at the centre of His mission. We need to have faith in Jesus, this is the key to our salvation. And we need to repent and be penitent in the eyes of God, as a result of our faith.

Still in Galilee, but by the waterside, Jesus then casts His net and picks up His first disciples.

Isaiah 52:7:

How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Mark 1:17 (Matthew 4:18-22):

17 Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

(3) Jesus is telling us that instead of catching fish, they will be catching the souls of us all by preaching the Gospel. The "fisher of men" descriptive is unique to Matthew and Mark.

Now in Capernaum, Jesus is preaching in the synagogue, where He taught with such authority, and in the background, a demon possessed man is present. This is His first encounter in this Gospel with unclean spirits. This spirit recognizes Jesus and questions why He is going to destroy them all now, as I expect the demon does not recognize this as possible until Judgment Day.

Mark 1:25 (Luke 4:33-37):

25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!"

Jesus did not actively encourage publicity about Himself; he was not seeking self-aggrandizement. The supernatural demons knew who He was when He commanded them to get out, (i.l) showing total control over evil spirits and indeed displaying His divinity. The evil spirits were in no doubt who He was.

After a prolonged period in this area healing the sick and expelling demons, Jesus moves on.

Mark 1:38 (Luke 4:42-43):

38 But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth."

His teaching was to be done by preaching across as wide an area as possible. (4)

He sets the example of evangelism. He also teaches us that this is why He has “come forth” from God, to preach as both the human/God person that He was/is.

At the next stage of the journey, He is confronted by a leper.

Mark 1:41-44 (Matthew 8:2-4, Luke 5:12-14):

*41 Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “**I am willing; be cleansed.**” 42 As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. 43 And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, 44 and said to him, “**See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.**”*

I would add that Jesus is witnessed by Mark, (5) with compassion touching the leper. This would have been unheard of at the time, and no Rabbi would have done such a thing. See note to Matthew 8:1-4 for additional commentary.

Back now in Capernaum, many with ailments are brought to Jesus, including the paralytic man. This man is brought by four companions and delivered over the crowd and in to Jesus via the roof. Jesus is teaching us that if you need a healing or asking for in nature you need to turn to him in genuine faith if you want any help.

Mark 2:5-11 (Matthew 9:2-8, Luke 5:17-26):

*5 When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “**Son, your sins are forgiven you.**” 6 And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 8 But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “**Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins**”—He said to the paralytic, 11 “**I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.**”*

(nnn) The faith of the man in question is good enough for Jesus to be able to heal him. Here, (i.f) Jesus describes Himself as God, who can forgive sins. As this is an

invisible act, to the sceptic it is not proven as an *act* of divinity, just a *claim* to divinity. So in order to demonstrate His divinity, He commands the paralytic to get up. Which of course he does, which is the physical *demonstration* of His divinity. Just in case we did not believe, after seeing this with our own eyes, we may have been hard pressed *not* to believe.

Jesus now heads off back to the Sea area and signals to all that (6) His Mission is not for any elite class of people, but for everybody, especially the chief sinners in society.

Mark 2:14-17 (Matthew 9:9-17, Luke 5:27-39):

14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. 15 Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi's house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. 16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?" 17 When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

(m) Levi/Matthew the evangelist follows Jesus immediately he is called by Him, showing the Jesus' totally compelling nature when He wanted us to follow Him. Jesus is stating (6) His Ministry is for the sick, yet in reality we all need this master physician's attention - just some more than others. The tax collector and the prostitute were considered in the top ranks of sinners in the 1st Century, but the self-righteous did not see the irony that they were also sick and in need of the physician. Thus it remains today. See notes on Matthew.

Mark 2:19-22 (Matthew 9:14-17, Luke 5:33-39):

There is a dialogue concerning fasting, with the Pharisees pointing out that John the Baptist and his disciples did do the two day a week fast, yet Jesus and His disciples did not.

19 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days. 21 No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse. 22 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.

Jesus was clearly teaching that the New Gospel teachings take priority over the Old Testament teaching as applied by the Rabbi's. Patched new cloth to fix old garments, that where taught would eventually rip the garment more. Or putting new fermenting wine in old taught wine skins would lead to them bursting asunder. When Jesus mentioned that the disciples will not be celebrating at the wedding party all the time as He will be taken away, this is the first allusion to His death and resurrection in this gospel. (ss) Jesus was well aware that scripture only required one fast in the year for Mosaic Law, concerning the Day of Atonement. The other feasts were there by tradition, after the return from exile in Babylon. (7) Weddings feasts were always joyous occasions. Jesus is teaching: have fun on these occasions. The implication was also that this was a joyous occasion simply because Jesus himself was present.

Leviticus 16:29,31:

29 This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. 31 It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever.

In the Old Testament, there were fasts for repentance (Judges 20:26, 1 Samuel 7:6, 1 Kings 21:27, Ezra 8:21,23, Nehemiah 9:1, Jonah 3:5) for mourning (1 Samuel 31:13, 2 Samuel 1:12, Nehemiah 1:4) and distress (2 Samuel 12:16, 21-23 and Esther 4:3) and for special missions (Esther 4:16, Daniel 9:3). The parable of Jesus being the Bridegroom and his friends the disciples, who not fasting, was because this was a happy occasion and there was no need to fast. The Pharisees had taken

the Law further than it was ever intended. For the rest of my notes, see Matthew comments.

Mark 2:25-28 (Matthew 12:1-8, Luke 6:1-5):

25 But He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: 26 how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?" 27 And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. 28 Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

See notes to Matthew 12:1-8. In addition to those comments, Mark specifically names the time period as being "in the days of Abiathar the high priest." 1 Samuel 21 says that high priest was Ahimelech. A potential resolution could be that Abiathar was the more famous High Priest, with the even more famous Zadok. He was Ahimelech's son and working with him the same time. We know this as post the killing of his father by Saul (with 85 priests), he flees, as the new high priest (Samuel 23:6 mentions his priestly garments) with David. Mark could have referred to the "in the days" meaning in the life time of Abiathar, although it does seem to specifically refer to him as the High Priest, which he was not at the time. Also, it would be a logical thing to assert if you were a Pharisee listening to this, to say "A-ha, see, Ahimelech lost his life because he abused the Sabbath!" Mark, putting in Ahimelech's son, Abiathar, delicately swerves this potentially explosive issue. That Abiathar was, high priest, very shortly (days) after this time is certain, and 1 Samuel 22:19-20 confirms the death of Ahimelech. There is much naming confusion in this story, as Ahimelech in 1 Samuel 14:3 is called Ahijah, son of Ahitub. We see this in 1 Samuel 22:9:

*9 Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who was set over the servants of Saul, and said, "I saw the son of Jesse going to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of **Ahitub**"*

In 1 Samuel 22:20 Ahimelech has a son Abiathar:

*20 Now one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of **Ahitub**, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David*

And in 2 Samuel 8:17, Ahimelech is the son of Abiathar.

*17 Zadok the son of **Ahitub** and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; Seraiah was the scribe*

In 1 Chronicles 18:16 again Ahimelech is the son of Abiathar.

*16 Zadok the son of **Ahitub** and Abimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; Shavsha was the scribe;*

In the Dead Sea Scrolls (Abegg, 1999), the oldest surviving texts we have, dated some 200 years before Jesus, there are four Samuel scrolls. At the section now known as 1 Samuel 21:1, the crucial name Abimelech is omitted in the text as it is lost/too damaged to read. Theologically, this does not change the text one bit. However, there is clearly some naming confusion going on between the authors of these books.

(8) An additional point Mark reports is that the Sabbath was made during the creation of the Universe by God for humans to rest, i.e., it should not be a burden. Fasting and setting up elaborate rules on how to conduct yourself were some way away from what was originally established by God. Jesus is also teaching that on the Sabbath, notwithstanding the flexibility He gives us, they rest day should primarily be dedicated to the worship of God.

Genesis 2:1-3:

1 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Jesus is now back in His synagogue. The officials still seem fixated on watching to see if He works on the Sabbath. (vvv) An ill man is present. Jesus, as in the Matthew

section above, questions the letter (literal) of Mosaic Law as against its moral teachings and clearly demonstrates the need to do good even on the Sabbath. He is angered, which we rarely see in the Gospel accounts, at the stone cold silence of the teachers who should have known better.

Mark 3:3-5 (Matthew 12:9-14, Luke 6:6-11):

3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward." 4 Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent. 5 And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other."

Just like when Jesus cures the paralytic man to (i.d) physically demonstrate His divinity, so he does again with the man with the withered hand: in front of everybody. The seeming paradox in this account is that a withered hand does not constitute a life or death matter, so why does Jesus heal on the Sabbath? It can only be that (9.a) He demonstrates His divinity, that is, as Lord over the Sabbath. The juxtaposition in this passage is made when after this, the Jews then get together to plot His death - on the Sabbath. The account in Luke is more comprehensive, so my notes cover off this section then.

The scribes from Jerusalem then come to see Jesus and label Him as being possessed of the devil, as He has control over the demons.

Mark 3:23-27 (Matthew 12:24-22, Luke 11:17-23):

23 So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. 26 And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. 27 No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house."

See notes to Matthew 12:25-30. (10) Mark adds "but has an end." This refers to the end of the world - Judgment Day - that Jesus is master of when Satan is

disposed of for all eternity.

Mark 3:28-30:

28 "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; 29 but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation"— 30 because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

(11) Jesus teaches that to blaspheme against God, or to mistake the work of God for Satan, is an eternal sin.

Mark 3:33-35:

33 But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" 34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 35 For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

From the crowd that Jesus is preaching to, his immediate family are brought forward to Him. These words are not delivered as an insult to his earthly family, though,(12) but are rather making a much broader point that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus if we believe in Him.

Mark 4:1-34 The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9, Luke 8:4-8):

Jesus then moves to the seashore once more, to teach openly to the masses.

4 And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea. 2 Then He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in His teaching: 3 "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. 5 Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. 7 And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. 8 But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." 9 And He said to them, "He who has ears to hear,

let him hear!"

Parables are meant to be memorable ways of teaching. The three Synoptic writers have very similar renditions of this parable. See the comments on this parable in Matthew and in Luke's comments sections. One interesting difference, although the message is of course completely the same in these accounts, is that Mark reports Jesus as giving a specific measure of abundance over and above their usual crops yields of the day, to indicate the rewards that will flow to the faithful. In today's language, Jesus would no doubt use the numbers of the Lottery Rollover in many multiples of millions in order to make His point.

Jesus continues, and explains why He uses the parable format to explain Himself. But the Prophet Isaiah knew it would be this way.

Mark 4:10:12 (Matthew 13:10-17, Luke 8:9-10):

10 But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. 11 And He said to them, "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, 12 so that 'Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them.'

Isaiah 6:9-10:

9 And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' 10 "Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed."

Proverbs 20:12:

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, The Lord has made them both.

Matthew 4:13-20 (Matthew 13:18-23, Luke 8:9-15):

13 And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all

the parables? 14 The sower sows the word. 15 And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. 16 These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. 18 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

There is a climactic ending to this parable explanation, which is very similar to the Parable of the Sower that Jesus just taught and should be self-explanatory. (13) I would add with a weary smile that nothing seems to have changed in 2,000 years. I presume the "cares of this world" are the 1st Century AD celebrity culture - addicts/illicit lovers, readers of The Daily Mail be warned. In Luke's version it ends with an anti-climax. The teaching is the same, though the way it is explained is slightly different. Plant our values firmly in Christ Jesus and we will have a fruitful life, is the message.

Jesus Continues.

Mark 4:21-25 (Luke 8:16-18):

21 Also He said to them, "Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand? 22 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." 24 Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. 25 For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

The lamp is the divine light of truth and the shining person is Jesus. The lighting our own souls comes from Jesus, and not from ourselves. We are Jesus is light bearers, I.e. Jesus is teaching us to shine and proclaim His teachings. (14) Jesus teaches us that as the light of the world, He is there for all to see. Jesus goes on to

teach that the more light we let in, the more light we will receive, and vice versa.

Jesus continues.

26 And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, 27 and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. 28 For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. 29 But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

This parable is only related in Mark. It does look like the Parable of the Tares, but with the tares taken out. The growth here is engineered by God through the medium of the earth and the mechanism of the seed itself. (15) Jesus is teaching that the natural powers that God has ordained for the earth and the seed itself constitute the Laws that govern us. The kingdom of God is already implied in the scattered seeds, to a certain extent, (16) implying a doctrine of determinism at work here, but in a weak form in terms of we being constrained to operate within the great pre-set (by Him) Laws of the universe. We can't necessarily speed up this process beyond the natural systems set in nature. God then harvests (ie us) what He has sowed. We are redeemed at the time of our harvest.

Joel 13:3:

Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow— For their wickedness is great."

The above is part of a chapter in the Book of Joel in which the subject matter is the Lord's collection of His people in Palestine and their national restoration. Jesus references something the audience would be familiar with in this parable, that (3.a) God's harvest is us.

Mark 4:30-32 (Matthew 13:31-35, Luke 13:18-19):

30 Then He said, "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? 31 It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than

all the seeds on earth; 32 but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade."

See notes to Matthew 13:30-32. In this parable, the mustard seed was the smallest seed known to the Israelites of the time. It can then become a very large plant and even a home to animals, over time. (17) This is like the spreading of the Gospel, from small beginnings to the conversion of the largest parts of the populations of the world as we observe today.

Off now to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 4:35-40 (Matthew 8:18, 23-27, Luke 8:22-25):

35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."

36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. 38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" 39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. 40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

Mark tells us that this was on the evening of the day of the teachings of the parables. Luke's account, although slightly different, mentions the crowds they were seeking to avoid. (i.b) It seems certain that He is teaching His divinity here, as the sea itself responds immediately to His command to "be still.". Also: have faith and dispense with our fear. He chastises them for not having faith, whilst the obvious teaching is to have faith. A large number of the Jews would have known their scripture, for sure, so they would have known that this event was one which had been foretold. Jesus is also teaching, if you have faith, you will also gain this deep spiritual calm.

Psalm 93:3-4:

3 The floods have lifted up, O Lord, The floods have lifted up their voice; The floods lift up their waves. 4 The Lord on high is mightier Than the noise of many waters, Than the mighty waves of the sea.

Psalm 107:29:

29 He calms the storm, So that its waves are still.

Mark 5:8-9 (Matthew 8:28-34, Luke 8:26-39):

Here, we see a slight discrepancy between the Matthew and Luke accounts of demons being cast into the swine. In Mark, there is only one man and many demons, who Jesus expels from the possessed man. Jesus asks for the demon's name. 'Legion' is not a Jewish name, so perhaps he was getting it to signify that there was a legion, a 6,000 Roman military divisions worth of demons to amplify the fact that He had total control over all of them. Also, Legion, being a Roman word, signifies the occupying gentile power which would have been significant as we have Luke now introducing the wider Mission of the Church of Jesus, to Minister to the gentile world. In the ending of this narrative, Jesus is off to Decapolis, gentile-dominated towns, to preach.

Jesus asks the question to elicit an answer to the watching people, but there were a multiple of the demons inhabiting this poor wretched person.

8 For He said to him, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!" 9 Then He asked him, "What is your name?" And he answered, saying, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

Mark 5:19:

19 However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you."

Following the expulsion of the demons, it is clear (9.b) that Jesus is referring to Himself as Lord God. He was wanting this man to go into his own village, not

remaining with Jesus and His party, to spread the Word.

Jesus returns to the North West section of the Sea of Galilee where He is approached by the leaders of the local synagogue where a man named Jairus requests urgent help to heal his daughter. In the meantime, a woman breaks through the crowd and touches His garment.

Mark 5:30-41 (Matthew 9:18-36, Luke 8:41-56):

See notes on Matthew. The additional points Mark makes are firstly that Jesus calls her out of the crowd so she could praise the Lord, not because He did not know her name. He also writes as a direct witness, rather than reporting it. (18) Jesus “puts outside” those who ridicule Him: this is akin to casting them out of any heavenly realm.

*30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?” 31 But His disciples said to Him, “You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’” 32 And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. 33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And He said to her, “**Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.**” 35 While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue’s house who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?” 36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, “**Do not be afraid; only believe.**” 37 And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. 38 Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. 39 When He came in, He said to them, “**Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.**” 40 And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those who were with Him, and entered where the child was lying. 41 Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, “**Talitha, cumi,**” which is translated, “**Little girl, I say to you, arise.**”*

Mark is the only Gospel writer who record the Aramaic words.

Jesus now heads for Nazareth.

Mark 6:4 (Matthew 13:54-58):

"4 But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house."

See notes to Matthew.

After Jesus selects his disciples, before he sends them off to preach the Good News, He gives more instruction.

Mark 6:10-11 (Luke 9:1-6):

10 Also He said to them, "In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. 11 And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!"

(19) Jesus is using the symbolic shaking off the dust of those who had rejected Him. (rr.a) His reference to the total destruction of all who resided in the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah leaves us in no doubt that He was teaching that if we willingly rejected Him, then we were doomed, as in the fate of those two cities.

Mark 6:31 (Luke 9:10, John 6:1-13):

The disciples return to their Master and he says,

31 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat."

He knows well that after their trials and tribulations out there in the battle ground of life, they needed rest. Jesus shows the very human gift of compassion.

Mark 6:37-38:

(5.a) Departing from Capernaum, Mark, in the build up to the feeding of the 5,000, narrates to us how the multitudes ran barefoot to get ahead and arrive before

Jesus on the boat. Knowing they would have been exhausted, and again showing compassion, He says:

*"37 But He answered and said to them, **"You give them something to eat."** And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?" 38 But He said to them, **"How many loaves do you have? Go and see."** And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish."*

(20) Now Jesus moves His disciples, by boat, to Bethsaida and He goes to find a silent and peaceful place to pray. Part way through the journey, Jesus re-joins them, by waking on the water towards the boat. (21) He is testing their faith. Remembering the scriptural sayings would leave the disciples of the day in (i.b) no doubt that this was God Himself.

Job 9:8:

8 He alone spreads out the heavens, And treads on the waves of the sea

Psalm 77:19:

19 Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, And Your footsteps were not known.

Mark 6:50 (Matthew 14:22-23, John 6:16-21):

*50 for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, **"Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."***

(i.k) This is not the "I AM" phrase of Exodus 3:14, but similarities must be reflected upon as a large hat tip of encouragement and support as they should know He is divine. Jesus is teaching us to conquer our fear and temptations. In and have faith in Jesus and the fears and the temptations go away.

Jesus is visited by the Jerusalem Pharisees.

Mark in 7:6-23 (Matthew 15:1-20):

6 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 7 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men —the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do." 9 He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' 11 But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban"—' (that is, a gift to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, 13 making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do." 14 When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand: 15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. 16 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" 17 When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. 18 So He said to them, "Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, 19 because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?" 20 And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

See notes to Matthew. This section deals with the Pharisees' claims that the disciples of Jesus defile things and are therefore unclean, which is not in accordance with their Law. Much as in Matthew 15:1-20, (hh) Jesus disposes of this with a superior interpretation of the meaning and the spirit of the Law. To the list of negative things emanating from the human heart, Mark adds foolishness to the list created by Mathew.

Mark 7:11:

"But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban"—' (that is, a gift to God),"

A certain section of the Jewish population at the time were in effect dishonouring their parents, under the guise of performing a religious act. These gifts, mentioned by Jesus, would then become “property of God” and be offered in sacred service and not for any other use, such as for our parents. Once they had become property of God, there was no compulsion to actually give them to the Temple, so naturally there was abuse. (22) Jesus condemns this practice. God’s Word had been replaced with the tradition of the Pharisees.

Leviticus 1:2:

Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock.

So Jesus was showing that when the Pharisees would allow us to make a sacrifice to God in the Temple and then not look after our parents, we would in effect be falling foul of the commandment to honour your parents, quoted above and in Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 5:16, Exodus 21:17 and Leviticus 20:9.

Jesus next travels on to Tyre and Sidon. He enters the house of an unclean woman (both spiritually and physically).

Mark 7:27-29 (Matthew 15:21-28):

27 But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.” 28 And she answered and said to Him, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children’s crumbs.” 29 Then He said to her, “For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter.”

See notes to Matthew.

Moving, now, away from those two cities and back to the Sea of Galilee, he cures a deaf/mute man and says in the process of his healing (in the only Gospel where this is recorded):

Mark 7:34

34 Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, **“Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”**

Another supernatural miracle occurs.

Mark 8:1-5 (Matthew 15:32-38):

8 In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them, **2 “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. 3 And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar.” 4** Then His disciples answered Him, **“How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?” 5** He asked them, **“How many loaves do you have?”** And they said, **“Seven.”**

See notes on Matthew.

The Jesus Party then move to Dalmanutha.

Mark 8:12-21 (Matthew 15:39-16:4):

12 But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, **“Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation.” 13** And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side. 14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat. 15 Then He charged them, saying, **“Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.” 16** And they reasoned among themselves, saying, **“It is because we have no bread.” 17** But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, **“Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened? 18** Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?” They said to Him, **“Twelve.” 20** **“Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?”** And they said, **“Seven.” 21** So He said to them, **“How is it you do not understand?”**

See notes on Matthew. In Mark Jesus identifies the leaven of the Sadducees with Herod. In the gospel of Matthew, it is just associated with the Sadducees.

The Jesus party moves on and a blind man is healed on the way, another incident recorded only in Mark. The signalling is clear in this story, like the blind man, cured in two steps, the disciples were blind before they met Jesus and still partially sighted and only now moving to really full sightedness in their understanding of who the Messiah is.

Mark 8:26-29 (Matthew 14:13-20, Luke 9:18-21):

26 Then He sent him away to his house, saying, “Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.” 27 Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?” 28 So they answered, “John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” 29 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said to Him, “You are the Christ.”

It would seem that Jesus wanted this matter to be kept low key in order to focus on the next point, which was that He wanted them to tell Him who they believed He was. (i.g) Peter recognizes his kingly status and knows Him as the Christ: ‘Messiah’ in Hebrew or ‘Anointed’ in Greek.

Listening to Jesus telling them that He would die and be resurrected was too much for Peter, who could not stretch to believing such a thing, and Peter rebukes Jesus for saying that it would be so.

Mark 8:33-38 (Matthew 16:13-23, Luke 9:18-22):

33 But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, “Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” 34 When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. 36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? 37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this

adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

See notes to Matthew. Mark omits the Praise Jesus grants Peter for recognition of His status. Mark also equates the Life of Jesus with the actual Gospel itself: the two are the same.

Mark 9:1 (Matthew 16:28-17:3, Luke 9:27-36):

9 And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

See notes on Matthew 16:24-37:

(jjjj) At the Transfiguration²³, Jesus shows that who they think is Elijah is John the Baptist, who did come first as predicted by the prophet Malachi 3:1, 4:5, as quoted above.

Mark 9:12-13:

2 Then He answered and told them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and restores all things. And how is it written concerning the Son of Man, that He must suffer many things and be treated with contempt? 13 But I say to you that Elijah has also come, and they did to him whatever they wished, as it is written of him."

After the transfiguration, Jesus returns back to the multitudes. A man says his possessed boy was not cured by His disciples which generates a firm rebuke from Jesus.

Mark 9:16-31:

²³ As noted above, there is a good case to say the Exodus story of Moses on Mount Sinai has many parallels.

16 And He asked the scribes, **“What are you discussing with them?”** 17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, “Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. 18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.” 19 He answered him and said, **“O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.”** 20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. 21 So He asked his father, **“How long has this been happening to him?”** And he said, “From childhood. 22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” 23 Jesus said to him, **“If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”** 24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” 25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: **“Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!”** 26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.” 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. 28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” 29 So He said to them, **“This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.”** 30 Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. 31 For He taught His disciples and said to them, **“The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day.”**

See notes on Matthew section. (i.b) Mark adds the fact that Jesus has total control of the spirit and commands it to get out, which it does. (nnn.b) Jesus also suggests that if they had more faith, prayed more, and fasted i.e., truly believed, the spirit would have been removed by them. The father’s faith was tested and it was OK, thus the boy was healed. This was not because of the disciples floundering faith. (pppp.c) Jesus teaches us we must be firm in our faith.

The Jesus party move on once more.

Mark 9:33-41 (Matthew 18:1-5, Luke 9:46-50):

33 Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, **“What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?”** 34 But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. 35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, **“If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”** 36 Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them,

37 "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me." 38 Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." 39 But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. 40 For he who is not against us is on our side. 41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

(23) See notes on Matthew. Mark adds that in their shame about what they were thinking, they were silent on the road. Jesus is teaching tolerance for all types of people who don't speak evil of Him. If they do miracles, it can only be done via His power, so they will necessarily become a follower of Jesus. He also then bluntly says "For he who is not against us is on our side." This is a spectacular reminder to all in the Global Christian Church, that whatever badge we plant upon ourselves, we are all on the side of Jesus and should not bicker among ourselves. The message is clear for Christian Unity.

Mark 9:42-50:

On the matter of the potential and assurance of hell for certain types of people, these next verses are a build on Matthew 18:6-9 (see notes) replete with scriptural references.

42 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. 43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 44 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 46 where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire— 48 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' 49 "For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. 50 Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another."

In verse 43 we have the word γέενναν, of “Gehenna of Fire” which the NKJV translates as “the fire that never shall be quenched.” Positively stated in the Bible, there is **Hades**, a place of the dead which is the same as the Hebrew Sheol where departed souls reside.

This word comes from the Hebrew Ge-Hinnom or Valley of Hinnom’s Son. This is the place just outside Jerusalem where people sacrificed children to the Canaanite God, Molech / Baal and performed all sorts of distasteful rituals. Jesus seems to be suggesting more that you are punished or cleansed by the fire here, than annihilated. However, some of us (worms see verse 44 and the next Isaiah quote), will stay there forever.

The fire of Judgment and the Salt of Purity are all scriptural references.

Isaiah 66:24:

24 And they shall go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

Hell is eternal - Daniel 12:2:

2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

I should add, that this is eternal for those who never manage to redeem themselves fully and change their ways after receiving their punishment.

The ‘salt’ reference is in Leviticus 2:13:

13 And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.

As of old, salt is added to the sacrifice, the symbol of our atonement and hopeful

purification. Mark also add that fire will purify us, and salt is like seasoning and is our faith. If we lose that, we lose our favourable judgment for salvation on judgement day. On that Day, the fire does not purify, but destroys. This does mean that although, if we ended up in Hell, there is a chance of cleaning us up, purifying us, to a point, but if we choose to lose our faith entirely, then for sure we are damned.

Numbers 18:19:

19 All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to you and your sons and daughters with you as an ordinance forever; it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord with you and your descendants with you.

2 Chronicles 13:5:

5 Should you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of salt?

Ezekiel 43:24:

24 When you offer them before the Lord, the priests shall throw salt on them, and they will offer them up as a burnt offering to the Lord.

Jesus now moves into the area just outside Jerusalem, called Perea, with disciples in tow. He teaches to the masses again. The Pharisees ask Him: "is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

Mark 10:3-12 (Matthew 19:1-9):

3 And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?" 4 They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her." 5 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. 6 But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female.' 7 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." 10 In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter. 11 So He

said to them, ***“Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. 12 And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”*** 13 Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.”

See notes on Matthew above. The rights to divorce and not to divorce work both ways as shown clearly in verse 12. Jesus is very much asserting equality in the marital arrangements. He was a feminist, nearly a couple of millennia or so before anyone else.

The multitude then bring some little children to Him so that Jesus could touch them. The disciples rebuked the crowd for so doing, but Jesus responds:

Mark 10:14-15 (Matthew 19:13-15, Luke 18:15-17):

14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, ***“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. 15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”***

See notes on Matthew.

Walking on from here, Jesus is now approached by a rich man.

Mark 10:18-31 (Matthew 19:16-22, Luke 18:18-23):

18 So Jesus said to him, ***“Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. 19 You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’”*** 20 And he answered and said to Him, ***“Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.”*** 21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, ***“One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”*** 22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

See notes on Matthew. (24) Mark adds in the fact that Jesus “loved him”. Jesus recognised the sincerity of this truth seeker. Jesus was not issuing a command to

give away all their possessions, just needling out of this man the fact that when push came to shove, he loved his possessions more than his fellow man.

Mark 10:23-31 (Matthew 19:23-30, Luke 18:24-30):

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?" 27 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible." 28 Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You." 29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

(25) See notes on Matthew. Mark adds an amplifying multiple to the benefits accrued in heaven for those who truly follow Jesus in their heart and soul.

The Jesus Party now heads for Jerusalem and Jesus gives them a glimpse of the future.

Mark 10:33-34 (Matthew 20:19-17, Luke 18:31-34):

33 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; 34 and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

(qqq) The foretelling of His death on the Cross once more.

Shockingly, James and John come to Jesus and say: "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask."

Mark 10:36-45 (Matthew 20:20-28):

36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 37 They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." 38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" 39 They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; 40 but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared." 41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. 42 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

See notes on Matthew. Mark omits the involvement of the mother of James and John.

They all move into the Jericho area and encounter Bartimaeus, the blind man, who Jesus heals. Mark names one blind man, but Matthew's account suggests there were many.

Mark 10:51-52 (Matthew 20:29-34, Luke 18:35-43):

"51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road."

(nnn) Jesus shows us that it is the man's faith and the supernatural (i.d) power of the Deity that heals this man.

The Jesus Party now move into the Holy City itself, in triumph to Jerusalem, stopping at Bethphage and Bethany along the way.

Mark 11:2-3 (Matthew 21:1-17, Luke 19:29-44, John 12:12-36):

"2 and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it. 3 And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here."

See notes on Matthew.

As they all leave Bethany, Jesus wants to eat some food from a fig tree by the roadside, but it is vegetative only.

Mark 11:14 (Matthew 21:18-22)

14 In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.

See notes on Matthew. Mark is more exact in his timings and separates it into two accounts, one the day before, the other, after. (dddd) This first account deals with the image of the tree looking right for fruit, but being unfruitful. The teaching is: beware of false people and teachers.

The Jesus Party then move into the Temple itself in Jerusalem. This is not the same incident recorded in John, who has given us another similar incident, but at the start of Jesus' Ministry. What Jesus sees does not please Him. In Mark's recollection of the Cleansing of the Temple incident, he adds the following that is unique to Mark:

Mark 11:17 (Matthew 21:12-13, Luke 19:45-46):

17 Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'

(jjj) This is an add-on in Mark, where he has Jesus reminding us that His Gospel is for all nations of the world.

Isaiah 56:7:

7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.

Jeremiah 7:11:

11 Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the Lord.

See notes on Matthew.

The narrative now takes us back to the fig tree mentioned above.

Mark 11:22-26 (Matthew 21:20-22):

22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. 23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. 25 "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. 26 But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

(bb) Faith, (pp.e) prayer, (eeee) forgiveness are all keys to unlocking our salvation. (i.b) We know God can move mountains because He created the universe, which is infinitely more complex than moving a mountain! (26) If our prayer is according to God's Law, we will receive from it what we are looking for. (27) Also, He teaches us we must forgive others if we are to expect God to forgive us at all.

Now, back in the Temple and being questioned once more by the priestly authorities concerning His authority to teach, Jesus answers:

Mark 11:29-33 (Matthew 21:23-32, Luke 20:1-8):

29 But Jesus answered and said to them, ***“I also will ask you one question; then answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things: 30 The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me.”*** 31 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ 32 But if we say, ‘From men’”—they feared the people, for all counted John to have been a prophet indeed. 33 So they answered and said to Jesus, “We do not know.” And Jesus answered and said to them, ***“Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”***

See notes to Matthew.

Jesus now embarks upon a series of teachings using parables.

Mark 12:1-11 The Parable of the Landowner (Matthew 21:33-46, Luke 20:9-19)

12 Then He began to speak to them in parables: ***“A man planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a place for the wine vat and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 2 Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vinedressers. 3 And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 4 Again he sent them another servant, and at him they threw stones, wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully treated. 5 And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some. 6 Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ 7 But those vinedressers said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ 8 So they took him and killed him and cast him out of the vineyard. 9 “Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others. 10 Have you not even read this Scripture: The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. 11 This was the Lord’s doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes?”***

See the notes on Matthew.

Questioned again by the authorities (I suspect to tease out of Him His intentions as a revolutionary) they show Jesus a Roman coin in the Temple and ask Him: should the subjected people be paying taxes to these occupiers of their land? If

Jesus had revolutionary intentions, surely He would more than likely want to desist from paying taxes.

Mark 12:15-17 (Matthew 22:15-22, Luke 20:20-26):

*15 Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "**Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it.**" 16 So they brought it. And He said to them, "**Whose image and inscription is this?**" They said to Him, "Caesar's." 17 And Jesus answered and said to them, "**Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.**" And they marveled at Him."*

See notes on Matthew. Mark skips the parable of the wedding garment here, and the Sadducees ask Jesus about the resurrection.

Mark 12:24-27 The Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection (Matthew 22:23-33, Luke 20:27-40):

*24 Jesus answered and said to them, "**Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? 25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.**" 26 But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? 27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."*

See notes on Matthew.

Mark 12:28-31:

Jesus begins his answers to the initial question posed by the Pharisees in Matthew 22: 37-39 (see notes above) with the following:

*28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?" 29 Jesus answered him, "**The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30***

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. 31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

The scribe who questioned Jesus congratulates Him and, quite correctly, adds to this that all of what was commanded here needed to be done with love in order to have real affect and meaning.

Mark 12:34:

34 Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that no one dared question Him.

(28) Jesus gives words of encouragement. However, He is also teaching us that He holds the keys to heaven, so we do need to believe in Him, repent and forgive, to still gain entry.

Mark 12:35-40 (Matthew 22:41-45, Luke 20:41-44):

35 Then Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, "How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David? 36 For David himself said by the Holy Spirit: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" 37 Therefore David himself calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?" And the common people heard Him gladly. 38 Then He said to them in His teaching,

Psalm 110:1:

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

See notes on Matthew.

Mark 12:38-40, (Matthew 23:1-14, Luke 21:1-4)

"Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, 39 the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, 40 who

devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

See notes on Matthew:

Mark 12:43-44:

43 So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; 44 for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

(22) First and foremost, after condemnation of the priestly authorities taking advantage of the widows, Jesus gives us a specific eyewitness example. (29) Jesus also teaches us no matter how hard up we are, we can still give. It is also even more amazing to give while in tight circumstances than in a situation when we have an abundance.

Outside the Temple now, the disciples ask Jesus about the construction of the Temple.

Mark 13:2 (Matthew 24:1-3, Luke 21:5-7, John 2:18-21):

2 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

See notes to Matthew.

Jesus sits now on the Mount of Olives to deliver a sermon.

Mark 13:5-24 (Matthew 24:4-26, Luke 21:8-24):

5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 6 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and will deceive many. 7 But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. 8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows.

9 *"But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. 10 And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. 11 But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. 12 Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 13 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 "So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not" (let the reader understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 15 Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. 16 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 17 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 And pray that your flight may not be in winter. 19 For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. 20 And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days. 21 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it. 22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 23 But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.*

See notes on Matthew.

Mark 13:24-28 (Matthew 24:29-31, Luke 21:25-28):

24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. 26 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven. 28 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near."

See notes on Matthew.

(30) In the parable of the fig tree, that is fruiting, Jesus is teaching its easy to see that this fruit is ready to pick. Just as we know this, we also will know when the hour for the second coming is upon us.

Mark 13:28-31:

*29" So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near—at the doors!
30 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take
place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."*

See notes on Matthew.

Mark 13:32-37:

*32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only
the Father. 33 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 It is like a
man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each
his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35 Watch therefore, for you do not know
when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the
rooster, or in the morning— 36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say
to you, I say to all: Watch!"*

Daniel 11:31:

*31 And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they
shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.*

Daniel 12:11:

*11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation
is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.*

(30.a) The teaching of Jesus here is fairly self-explanatory and very consistent at all times when He has mentioned the Second Coming. Only the God aspect of the Godhead knows this: it could be anytime, now or in the future. So everyone should always be prepared and watchful.

Back in Bethany, Jesus is resting in the house of Simon the leper, when a woman anoints Him, by pouring very costly oil over His head, following which there is

some criticism, as those observing this act felt the money it could have been sold for could go to the poor.

Mark 14:6-9 (Matthew 26:6-13, John 12:2-8):

6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. 7 For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. 8 She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. 9 Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

See notes to Matthew. In John, this is addressed to Judas, suggesting he has a specific role to minister to the poor. This may have started his loss of faith in Jesus.

The Jesus Party are now moving into Jerusalem.

Mark 14:13-25 (Matthew 26:20-35, Luke 22:14-39, John 13:21-30):

13 And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. 14 Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'" 15 Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us." 16 So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover. 17 In the evening He came with the twelve. 18 Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me." 19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, "Is it I?" And another said, "Is it I?" 20 He answered and said to them, "It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. 21 The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born." 22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. 25 Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

See notes to Matthew.

Mark 14:27-30 (Matthew 26:26-29, Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25):

27 Then Jesus said to them, ***“All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.’ 28 “But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.” 29 Peter said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be.” 30 Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.”***

See notes on Matthew.

The scriptural reference is as follows:

Zachariah 13:7:

7 Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion,” Says the Lord of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.

After the Last Super, Jesus and His disciples now move into the Garden of Gethsemane.

Mark 14:32-42 (Matthew 26:36-46, Luke 22:39-46, John 18:1):

32 Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. 34 Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch. 35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.” 37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” 39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. 40 And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. 41 Then He came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

See notes on Matthew. Matthew records the additional name of "Father" as opposed to just the Aramaic for the English word "Daddy" or "Abba" in this prayer.

Matthew only reports Abba as being said. This probably reflects the fact that he was writing for a Jewish Hebrew speaking audience and Mark, writing probably in Rome, to a gentile audience

Mark 14:48-49 (Matthew 26:47-56, Luke 22:47-53):

48 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

See notes on Matthew.

Following His arrest, Jesus now appears in front of the Sanhedrin:

Mark 14:62:

62 Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

See notes on Matthew. (i.k) However, Jesus does use the "I am" divinity declaration here, unique in Mark's recording of events, which is the same "I am" of Exodus 3:14. It is His declaration of His own divinity.

Mark 14:72: Peter's Denials

72 A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept."

See notes on Matthew.

At His trial in front of Pontius Pilate, Jesus is recorded as only saying one thing in this Gospel.

Mark 15:2 (Matthew 27:1-2, 11-23, Luke 23:1-5, 13-23, John 18:28-19:15)

2 Then Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered and said to him, "**It is as you say.**"

See notes on Matthew.

Mark 15:34 (Matthew 27:45-50, Luke 23:44-46, John 19:28-30):

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "**Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?**" which is translated, "**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**"

See notes on Matthew.

Mark 16:15-18 (Luke 24:13-48, John 20:1-10):

15 And He said to them, "**Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.**"

This section is part of 11 verses that don't appear in the very early Greek manuscripts, but come into existence in the 100-150 years following the writing of Mark. No theological weight should be given to it unless it is confirming existing parts of the Gospel. The Luke account cross confirms this section and calls it (31) "The Great Commission." The Gospel is to be preached universally. Baptism sets us on the path to Salvation, but is not the end of the matter, we also need to believe. In the Acts of the Apostles, wondrous healing and teachings are reported. Saint Mark gives the first hint of the fabulous events at Pentecost when the early church was reported as speaking in tongues. He also gives a hint as to what was to happen with St Paul at Melita, when he dealt with the serpent as recorded in acts of the apostles 28:3-5.

The Gospel According to St Luke:

As with Mark, so with Luke. I will only make comment if it is something new or produce a scriptural quote/reference if it has not been cited in Matthew or Mark above.

A young Jesus celebrates the Passover feast, in Jerusalem with His mother, Mary and (legal) father, Joseph. They travelled to Jerusalem in a caravan of people, as was the custom of the day, and left on mass post the feast. They are separated for some 3 days by the time the separation is noted and they eventually find him.

Luke 2:49 The Visit to the Temple at Passover:

*49 And He said to them, **“Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”***

(9.c) So the young lad Jesus responds to Mary, who significantly asks the question, *not Joseph*, His legal father, and Jesus makes His first notable assertion of His divine nature. He was teaching/learning the Word of God in the Temple amongst the priesthood. If the miraculous nature of His birth had been somewhat forgotten or over-looked in the uneventful childhood of Jesus in the north of the country in Galilee, it was thrust back into the forefront of His parents’ minds now: He was the Son of God, just as the Arch Angel Gabriel had said to Mary at the Annunciation.

In adult life now, after His baptism, Jesus is famously tempted by the Devil:

Luke 4:4-12 (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13) The Temptation of the Lord:

*4 But Jesus answered him, saying, **“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’”** 5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, **“All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.** 7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” 8 And Jesus answered and said to him, **“Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”** 9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, **“If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.** 10 For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge*

over you, To keep you,' 11 and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" 12 And Jesus answered and said to him, **"It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"**

See notes on Matthew.

Jesus moves on to Nazareth and went to this synagogue and stood up and read.

Luke 4:16-21 (it is only told in Luke like this, but there are some similarities to Matthew 4:12-25, 8:53-58): The Galilee Circuit, Teaching and Rejection at Nazareth):

16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind; 18 To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."** 19 Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. 20 And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, **"Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."**

Jesus is using the verse in Isaiah that implies the Trinity, both the spirit, the father and the anointed or the Christ is mentioned. Jesus is emphatically pointing the finger at himself, saying that He is the Trinity. The opening of the book, or scroll, just happens to open on this prophetic passage of Isaiah, 700 odd-years later. It can only relate to Jesus, and He reads it out.

The following is the scripture it is read from, Isaiah 61:1-2:

1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, 2 To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,"

Note: Jesus stops in the middle of verse 2. Why? Because this latter part of the prophecy of Isaiah relates to the second coming, which clearly was not fulfilled then.

Isaiah 35:5:

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Isaiah 58:6:

6 Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?

(9.d) After announcing that scripture had now been fulfilled He then moves on.

Luke 4:23-27:

23 He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'" Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

(jjj) This passage Jesus reminds His audience that in times past, God has by-passed the widows and lepers in Israel when delivering His judgments and shown His grace on two prominent Gentiles, Zarephath and Naaman. They were directed specifically to not obey the proverb and not heal themselves, but others. The cleansing of the widows echoes what was to come to pass in the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman, occurring later in the Ministry of Jesus. Luke's Gospel, written by a gentile, is loaded with references to God ministering to the gentile world and not exclusively to the Jew.

1 Kings 17 is where the Elijah/Zarephath story is as already quoted above and the following Naaman story is from 2 Kings 5:1:

1 Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper.

2 Kings 5:9-10:

*9 Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house.
10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean.*

2 Kings 5:14:

14 So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean."

The timing may well be drawn from:

Daniel 7:25:

He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

After being thrown out of the Synagogue with the authorities attempting to kill Him, Jesus vanishes and moves over to Capernaum.

Luke 4:35 (Mark 1:23-28) Healing of a Demon in the Capernaum Synagogue:

The unclean spirit is cast out:

*35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "**Be quiet, and come out of him!**" And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him."*

See notes on Mark.

Luke 4:43 (Mark 1:35-39) Jesus Preaches Throughout Judea:

(i.b) The sick are healed, and the devils cast out, again demonstrating His divinity.

43 but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."

See notes on Mark.

They move to the Lake of Gennesaret (the Sea of Galilee).

Luke 5:4-11 The Miraculous Catching of Fish and the Calling of Peter and sons of Zebedee (similar to Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20):

4 When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." 5 But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." 6 And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. 7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" 9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." 11 So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

The Party move on. (i.d) A cure is performed as the leper in question had such unquestioning faith.

Luke 5:13-14 Healing of a Leper (Matthew 8:2-4, Mark 1:40-45):

13 Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, ***“I am willing; be cleansed.”*** Immediately the leprosy left him. 14 And He charged him to tell no one, ***“But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.”***

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

Crowds gather (including religious officials) as they hear of the story of the leper being cured - such that Jesus gets stuck in a house by the multitude. A paralytic man is brought into Jesus, via the roof of the house, in order to be supernaturally healed.

Luke 5:20-24 (Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 2:1-12) The Paralytic Man is Healed:

20 When He saw their faith, He said to him, ***“Man, your sins are forgiven you.”*** 21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, ***“Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”*** 22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, ***“Why are you reasoning in your hearts? 23 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise up and walk’? 24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”***

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

The Jesus Party moves on once more.

Luke 5:27-32 (Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 2:13-17) The Summoning of Matthew:

27 After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ***“Follow Me.”*** 28 So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. 29 Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. 30 And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, ***“Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”*** 31 Jesus answered and said to them, ***“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”***

See notes on Matthew.

The Pharisees take another crack shot at Him and His disciples regarding some of their ways of life, such as eating on the Sabbath.

Luke 5:34-39 Jesus is Challenged on Fasting (Matthew 9:14-15, Mark 2:18-20):

34 And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? 35 But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days." 36 Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. 37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. 38 But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. 39 And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.'"

See notes on Matthew. This 39th verse is unique to Luke. The Lord, in his divine wisdom knows how hard it is for people to forgo long held prejudices. The teaching is this, time must be given to allow change and judgements must be tempered to allow this change in view point to take place.

In the Middle East at that time new sweeter wine was often thought of as good, however, it was generally viewed why change what you been drinking for something new? as the old wine was good enough. Jesus knew that in most of us we are impregnated with small 'c' conservative instincts, however His message, with patience and love would eventually turn even the most conservative viewpoint around.

Luke 6:3-5 (Matthew 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28) Jesus Works on the Sabbath:

3 But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?" 5 And He said to them, "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

See notes on Mark and Matthew. (9.a) Matthew adds the supernatural raising of the daughter of Jairus, the healing of two blind men and one dumb man, the message of John and the Mission of the disciples. Again Jesus demonstrates His divinity.

Luke 6:8-10 (Matthew 12:9-14, Mark 3:1-6) Jesus Heals a man's Withered Hand on the Sabbath:

8 But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand here." And he arose and stood. 9 Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?" 10 And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other."

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

Luke 6:20-26 (Matthew 5:1-12) The Beatitudes, or Sermon on the Plain

This is situated on a plain rather than a mountain, as in Matthew. It suggests that the recollections of the exact location(s) can be lost in time. But it always affords us the opportunity to speculate that He repeated His teachings to let core messages be transmitted to new audiences. This does not affect the essential nature of the teachings of Jesus.

20 Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God. 21 Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. 23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets. 24 "But woe to you who are rich, For you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full, For you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, For you shall mourn and weep. 26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

See full notes on Matthew. Luke reports a slightly different order. Matthew reports the blessings of the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, the hungry and thirsty for righteousness, the merciful, the pure of heart, the peacemakers and the persecuted. Luke also recalls the “woes,” which Matthew does not, although the imputed meaning comes to the same as that in Matthew. For example, “Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep,” pretty much amounts echoes Matthew’s: “Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.” Luke also removes any scriptural references as his audience was more than likely a Gentile one. The Jews had killed most of the prior prophets. Reward for the martyrdom of the prophets, was, heavenly bliss. Jesus was also teaching, beware of amassing worldly wealth and power, as you eventually become slave to it. Use your blessings wisely, as they have been given to you by God. Jesus is teaching self or over indulgence, will lead to the destruction of your soul. Jesus is also warning against believing your own publicity and welcoming endless praise, at the expense of recognising, all glory is actually to the Father, who is giving you these blessings in the first place.

Luke 6-27-36 (Matthew 5:39-48, 7:1, 2,12) The Rules for Conduct in this Life:

27 “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. 29 To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. 30 Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. 31 And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. 32 “But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. 36 Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 6: 37-38:

After the discourse of the Beatitudes, Jesus then lays out some ground rules as to how His Kingdom should operate on earth. In **Luke 6:38**, we have unmistakable scriptural references.

37 "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

Psalm 79:12:

12 to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom Their reproach with which they have reproached You, O Lord.

Isaiah 65:6-7:

6 Behold, it is written before Me: I will not keep silence, but will repay— Even repay into their bosom— 7 Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together," Says the Lord, "Who have burned incense on the mountains And blasphemed Me on the hills; Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom.

Jeremiah 32:18:

18 You show loving kindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the Lord of hosts.

Proverbs 19:17:

17 He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given.

Proverbs 28:2:

27 He who gives to the poor will not lack, But he who hides his eyes will have many curses.

See notes on Matthew.

Now Jesus finishes off this mammoth section of teachings with some parables addressed to His apostles and also future church leaders.

Luke 6:39-45 (Matthew 7:35, 16-18) Parable of the Blind Leading the Blind:

39 And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? 40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. 41 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? 42 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye. 43 "For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. 45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

(ddd) Jesus is teaching: beware of who we choose to follow, because we should only be following Him. (9r) As Jesus Himself demonstrated, service should be done with (q) humility. With wonderfully memorable imagery, (zz) Jesus warns them against being judgmental, when their own house may well not be in order. Clear our own issues up, is the imputation, before we judge or try to help others. We will know the good people from the bad by what comes out of their hearts.

Proverbs 15:28:

28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

Proverbs 16:23:

23 The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips.

Luke 6:46-49 (Matthew 7:21-27) Parable of the Two Foundations:

46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? 47 Whoever comes

to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

See notes on Matthew.

Jesus then takes His Ministry into Capernaum.

Luke 7:9 (Matthew 8:5-13) The Centurion's Servant is Healed:

9 When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"

See notes to Matthew. Luke adds the fact that the Centurion used Jewish elders to ask Jesus. This was an act of piety, not arrogance, as the Centurion knew his unclean (or less than perfect) nature and did not want to approach Jesus direct.

The Jesus Party move on to Nain and encounter a widow whose only son was in the process of being taken away for burial. This woman, facing the absence of her son as well as her late husband would be totally destitute. (5) Jesus showed His compassion towards her.

Luke 7:13-14 The Widow's son is Raised at Nain (The Second Raising):

13 When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." 14 Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."

Jesus is referred to as 'Lord' which shows that He was viewed by His followers, at least by the 60's when this gospel was written, that His Divinity was established.

Word of this gets around the whole of Judea and John the Baptist sends some of his followers to go and investigate.

Luke 7:22-35 (Matthew 11:2-19) John the Baptist's Questions are Answered:

22 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. 23 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." 24 When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 25 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. 26 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 27 This is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' 28 For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." 29 And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. 31 And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? 32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not weep.' 33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' 34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' 35 But wisdom is justified by all her children."

See notes on Matthew.

After dealing with the messengers from John the Baptist, Jesus eats with a Pharisee at his house. A female sinner hears of the arrival of Jesus. She gets herself into the house. A traditional Jewish dinner, adopted from the Roman custom of the *convivium* dinner, which may also be open to the public to observe, had at that time the participants reclining on *chaise longue* style seating, spread around a square table in staggered rows, leaning on one arm (the left) and eating with another arm (the right), with their legs laid down the chair and their feet hanging

over the end of it. This way, one diner could be said to be 'in the bosom' of the other. If we sat on the table at one side of the square, we would look back and see the first *chaise longue* occupied by one guest, then behind him at a diagonal, another. In this way, the first person's head would appear to be the breast of the second person, and so on. This would have great meaning when we come to the Last Supper, but for now, we can watch the un-named woman coming in and anointing Jesus with an alabaster flask full of fragrant oil. This woman does not anoint the head, which is the only place to anoint, but is so moved by Him that she bursts into tears at His feet. Overcome with emotion, she unwound her hair and wiped the tears from His feet, and after that anointed the feet. The feet were the dirtiest part of the body - the most unholy part - as opposed to the head, and is chosen surely to indicate her acceptance of her lowliness and His Greatness. As she was a sinner, the Pharisee, Simon, is stunned that Jesus has allowed this sinner to touch him. Not only that, she is a random woman, she anoints feet. No prophet would allow this, for sure - Jesus was omniscient, so He knew Simon's thoughts on the matter.

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 7:40-50, (potentially Matthew 26:6, Mark 14:3, John 12:3):

40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." 41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." 44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. 47 Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

(i.f) (9.e) In this this parable, Jesus teaches forgiveness, increasing in ratio in accordance with that which was forgiven. If we view this in monetary terms, we have missed the point of the parable. What Jesus is really teaching here is that a money-debt signifies sin. The more sin we have, the greater is the weight of that forgiveness.

Jesus notes that Simon offered no welcome kiss. This would be akin to us not shaking hands today as we welcome someone into our company. Jesus then gets to the nub of the matter and focuses on the fact that the woman's fumbled attempt at a traditional anointing pales into insignificance at the prospect of a host not providing a bowl to wash away the dust, dirt and detritus of the day, (v) which Simon, self-righteous man that he is, had woefully not done. The legalism of the Pharisee is contrasted with the (q) humility of the sinner who, with great tenderness, graciously provides a welcome of Simon's guest, Jesus. Jesus takes a swipe at Simon by teaching that those who forgive little, love little and are indeed incapable of receiving and giving love. Simon is not forgiven. The love she displayed in cleaning the most obnoxious part of the body of Christ, His dirty feet, was a great act, but we must remember that she only did it because she had complete faith in Jesus. Jesus then does what only God can do, and forgives her sins. She is saved, as only God can save. (z) And then told to "Go in peace."

In the Old Testament, the Lord is accustomed to having His feet washed. When the Lord visited Abraham, "by the terebinth trees of Mamre" this indeed did happen.

Genesis 18:4:

4 Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

Immediately after the end of this closing verse, a new chapter opens for Luke. Chapter 8:1-3 Luke tells us how Jesus went with his 12 apostles, preaching to all the towns and villages, with not only the 12, but Mary called 'Magdalene', who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. Now, we can't just assume that the

curing of evil spirits and infirmities out of whom came seven demons was the same woman Jesus just had an encounter with, whom Jesus forgave her past sins. However, **Mark 16:9-10** does say (concerning the immediate events on the first day of His Resurrection) *“Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.”* This gives strong scriptural support to suggest that the un-named woman of Luke 7:40-50 is the same Mary Magdalene as Luke 8:1-4. The early church maintained that these were the same. There must be a high probability as to sin, we do need to have shades of evil working within us, which would imply an element of demonic possession. Luke then names the new travelling companion as “Mary called Magdalene”, making it more puzzling that he did not specifically name her before this, unless people were just so familiar with this fact. Magdala was a local town they were near, on the Sea of Galilee. It is not unreasonable to assume that this Mary called Magdalene, or Mary Magdalene, and the woman sinner who anointed Jesus, were one and the same. She is said to be one of a number in this traveling party who are said to provide for their needs. This would also suggest that this Mary had money and means. It could also explain why this sinner had money to purchase expensive anointing oil. The Prodigal Daughter had received her inheritance.

A great multitude gather and Jesus tells a parable.

Luke 8:5-18 (Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20) Soil & Lamp Parable:

5 “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. 6 Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. 8 But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” 9 Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” 10 And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.’ 11 “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear,

receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. 14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. 15 But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience. 16 "No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. 17 For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. 18 Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."

See notes to Matthew and Mark. Luke slightly condenses the levels of fruitfulness to just one.

Jesus' mother and brothers try to get through the crowds and go directly to Him.

Luke 8:21 (Matthew 12:46-50, Mark 3:31-35) The True Family of Jesus:

21 But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

The Jesus Party now move away from the towns and onto the Lake, or Sea of Galilee.

Luke 8:22-25 (Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41) Jesus Stills the Sea:

22 Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out. 23 But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy. 24 And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 But He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"

See notes on Matthew and Mark. In Matthew, the rebuke is before the stilling of the storm.

The Jesus Party next moves to the place of the Gadarenes. Luke gives us another rendition of the story of demons being cast into swine, with Jesus only speaking at the end of the story.

Luke 8:39 (Matthew 8:28-34, Mark 5:1-20) The Demons are Cast into the Pigs:

39 "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

Travelling on now, a great multitude had gathered post the casting out demon event. A Jewish leader, Jairus, makes contact, to ask that his only daughter, who is dying, be healed. As this is going on, amongst the throbbing crowd a woman of deep faith reaches out to touch the hem of a garment of Jesus'. She had had an irregular period for 12 years and healing. That she was unclean and yet she touched Jesus would have been bad enough, but ...

Luke 8:45-54 (Matthew 9:18-22, Mark 5:21-34) A Random Woman is Healed & The only Daughter of Jairus is Raised from the Dead:

45 And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" 46 But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." 47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. 48 And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." 49 While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." 50 But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." 51 When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. 52 Now

all wept and mourned for her; but He said, **“Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping.”** ⁵³ And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, **“Little girl, arise.”**

See notes on Matthew and Mark. In Matthew’s account, the daughter is already dead and then raised to life by Jesus.

Luke 9:3-5 (Matthew 10:1-14, 14:1-14, Mark 6:7-16, 30-34) The Commissioning of the Disciples:

³ And He said to them, **“Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. ⁵ And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”**

See notes on Matthew and Mark. The Luke instruction is saying: just go as you are and don’t pack a bag with lots of travel accessories. Then they all move on to Bethsaida. By going simply, armed only with your faith is always the best way to do missionary activity. Historically this has also been the most successful format leaving loving and growing Christian communities around the world that we witnessed today.

Luke 9:13-14 (Matthew 14:15-21, Mark 6:35-44, John 6:1-14) The Feeding of the Five Thousand:

¹³ But He said to them, **“You give them something to eat.”** And they said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people.” ¹⁴ For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, **“Make them sit down in groups of fifty.”**

See notes on all the other Gospels. Luke can’t have been in possession of the Gospel of Matthew as he leaves out the healings in Gennesaret, the unclean hands incident, the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman, the feeding of the 4,000, plus the asking of a sign from Heaven and the forgetfulness of not taking any bread with them.

At a private moment of prayer, His disciples join Jesus and He asks them a question.

Luke 9:18-27 (Matthew 16:13-28, Mark 8:29 – 9:1) continued to include the first announcement of the Resurrection & Peter's Confession:

18 And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" 19 So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again." 20 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God." 21 And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, 22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." 23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. 25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? 26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels. 27 But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."

See notes on all the other Gospels.

A week or so after Jesus' Transfiguration, He is then approached by father of a sick son who has asked for a healing from the disciples to no good effect.

Luke 9:41-44 (Matthew 17:14-18, Mark 9:14-27) Jesus Heals the Possessed Son & The Lord's Second Announcement of His Death:

41 Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." 42 And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father. 43 And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, 44 "Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men."

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

After the healing of the possessed son, Jesus then commissions the apostles to go to work.

Luke 9:48-50 (Matthew 18:1-5, Mark 9:33-40) What is the Pecking Order Ordained for the Disciples:

48 and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great." 49 Now John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us." 50 But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side."

See notes on Matthew and Mark.

Jesus, at this point, seems to know that the time was right to set His path firmly on the way to Jerusalem; the disciples, out of kindness, sought to make Jesus welcome in a Samaritan village on the way. These people reject Him. The disciples make reference to an Old Testament incident of terrible magnitude that they suggested should be re-enacted on these people as punishment.

Luke 9:55-62 The Personal Cost of Being an Apostle (Matthew 8:18-22):

55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. 56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village. 57 Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." 58 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." 59 Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." 61 And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house." 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

See notes on Matthew.

The next section is only recorded in Luke, when Jesus selects another 70 key followers.

Luke 10:2-16 The Commissioning of the Seventy:

2 Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. 3 Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. 4 Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. 5 But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. 7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. 8 Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. 9 And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' 12 But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city. 13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. 15 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. 16 He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

Moses appoints 70 elders in Numbers 11:16-17:

16 So the Lord said to Moses: "Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. 17 Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone."

Numbers 11:24-26:

24 So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and he gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. 25 Then the Lord came

down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again. 26 But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they were among those listed, but who had not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp."

The selected ones go to each and every place before Jesus. They would face danger and should travel lightly. They should also not involve themselves in elaborate greetings. The commission was clearly geared to a timeline that was short, and known only to Jesus. Indeed, once back, their mission would cease. This mission was very much of the now, as opposed to Matthew's recording of the commissioning of the 12 as a more future-orientated act. The former could also only heal the sick, the latter also expel demons. Stern warnings for people who rejected any of the 70 were made by Jesus, and for an explanation see notes to Matthew 10:14-15 and Matthew 11:21-23.

(i.l) After the 70 disciples return Jesus reminds them not to be surprised that demons have been subject to their commands.

The cities of the Lake of Gannasaret mentioned a where Jesus was very active. The citizens of these cities would've had ample opportunities to extol the virtues of Jesus' teachings and his miracles. Jesus is teaching us that we will be judged not by just all our actions, but also what all actions could've been, in the circumstances. Jesus teaches that some punishment will be more tolerable than others. This suggests that, we will be faced with degrees of punishment, for our transgressions. Therefore, Judgement Day is not a binary black and white choice, but that we will be presented with varying degrees punishment, seems certain by this passage.

Luke 10:18

Jesus announces that He saw the fall of Satan, the implication being He was responsible for that act, therefore the 70, empowered by the Spirit, should not be

surprised at their control over the servants of Satan. The implication is that Satan was subject to His commands and He therefore is confirming His deity.

And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Isaiah 14:12:

12 How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!

Here, the Lord makes Ezekiel address the King of Tyre, behind whose power was Satan, whose fall is described.

Ezekiel 28:11-19:

11 Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. 16 "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. 18 "You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever."

More about their powers are then explained:

Luke 10:19-24:

19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” 21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. 22 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” 23 Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; 24 for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.”

Jesus gives them power to stamp on the head of serpents. This must be a reference to the serpent in the Garden of Eden (Satan)

Genesis 3:15:

15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.

Psalms 91:13:

13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

(9.f) At the Cross, Jesus *did* defeat Satan and Satan *did* pierce the nail through His heel; now His 70 apostles were to be given these powers to do that to Satan’s minions on earth. (9.f.i) Jesus warns them not to become over-confident about their Spirit-given powers. (9.f.ii) Also, they should rejoice because they are doing the Lord’s work and their names are written in heaven. The innocent can see this easily. See notes to Matthew 11:25-27: Jesus chooses to reveal Himself to the innocent (as Son of God, or the Deity itself). (9.f.iii) Jesus also reminds them of the tremendous privilege of being chosen to witness all of this. Most of the prophets of old could only dream of such a privilege. Jacob, in some of his last words on earth, said:

Genesis 49:18:

18 I have waited for your salvation, O Lord!

In verse 21-22, Jesus refers to His Father in intimate terms, to be in effect one and the same, this is very much like the prayer Jesus uses in John chapter 17. The latter gospel, is often called the more theological or philosophical one, but clearly Jesus as Father creator of everything, was also apparent in Luke's understanding.

A lawyer then asks Jesus what he needs to acquire eternal life.

Luke 10:25-37 The Good Samaritan:

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" 27 So he answered and said, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." 29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you." 36 So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" 37 And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

(r) (32) Jesus pushes the question back to the lawyer who, after all, is a teacher of the Law. Jesus answers, making the same scriptural references that he gave in Matthew 22:37-40 when addressing a Pharisee, also a lawyer. I don't think Jesus holds out much hope for our lawyer here as He does say obey the Law and "you

will live.” However, living is not the same as eternal life. The lawyer, if he has any true awareness, would have realized his utter hopelessness at fulfilling the Law and in the end, his total dependence on Jesus to forgive him for his sins. However, the lawyer does probe more and asks for clarity concerning who his “neighbour” actually is. Albeit the man seems to ask in a self-righteous fashion, seeking to justify himself, which of course will miss the point of the message of humility, compassion and service that Jesus teaches for His Christian followers to show towards their neighbours. Jesus also subtly refocuses the lens away from the lawyer who is asking who is his neighbour to his obligation *as a* neighbour to go help. The teaching is clear: the default is that *all* are our neighbours, especially those in distress, and not just those we may select.

Now, to the 1st Century Jew, the neighbour was almost certainly only a member of the community, hence the priest and the Levite walk by the beaten up and robbed man in such a way that this would seem to be ‘normal’ behaviour for the Jews of the day, despite the Mosaic commands of the past directly contradicting that approach; it is contrary to their own Law that they have clearly forgotten. Jesus is teaching the universality of the Gospel and the fact that we are not just a passive role player in this Good News, but we need to, very much, be a pro-active participant in serving in order to lead, in going that extra mile in recognising that everyone is your neighbour.

Exodus 23:4-5:

4 “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. 5 If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying

Isaiah 58:7:

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And to bring the homeless poor into your house to your house When you see the naked, to cover him with clothing, And not raise yourself up from your own flesh and blood?

Jesus, in Luke 9:52, reminds us that there is a build up to this moment. Jesus had not allowed the destruction of a disrespecting Samaritan village by His disciples, suggesting that He regarded Samaritans in the same light as all other human beings. This parable has a deeper analogy to make - about the spiritually neglected mass of “us,” of mankind, being failed by the conventional religious folk of the day, with Jesus, the Good Samaritan, coming to heal. Not only to heal, but to take us into the Inn, for healing, rest and after-care, and to take no payment for such healing. (32.a) This Jesus, as the redeemer of our sins and our healer, comes to mind in the Inn of the Church. In Jesus, God becomes man’s neighbour by the roadside. (32.b) Love conquers all. We now can see that we, as the wounded man, alienated and left to rot, now have the greatest friend in Jesus and His wider church family. God makes Himself our neighbour and in turn, the lesson is, we must make ***all our neighbours***, not just our immediate local community, irrespective of race, class, colour or creed. Jesus magnifies the Golden Rule of ‘love your neighbour as you love yourself’ to the extent of advocating going out of our way to serve our neighbour. The Gospel is universal, it is positive and requires proactivity from us all.

The Jesus Party now heads for Bethany, to the house of Martha. Martha welcomes Jesus. Her sister, Mary is mentioned. She is either lazy or transfixed by listening to Jesus while Martha is busy running around being a great host. She remonstrates with Jesus about this. Jesus’ response is recorded as follows:

Luke 10:41-42:

41 And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. 42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

The events at Bethany, and not listed by Luke as happening specifically at Bethany, indeed it is called "a certain village." The probable reason for this, Luke and the other Synoptic Gospel writers at the time, where that the Jewish Christians were being persecuted. Writing a decade or so later, he did not need to be so guarded. Therefore he could give full details. (9.g) I can't help pondering: what does Jesus mean by 'choosing that "good part?"' Is this a good part of the food Martha is laying out in preparation? Or a good part of the things Jesus was saying? The latter seems more probable in order to make it into the Gospels. Much better would it be if Mary was receiving the good part of the gift of eternal life, as she was feeding on the bread of life based on her faith in Jesus. There may also be a richer backdrop and meaning to this if the Mary of Luke 8:1-4, Mary Magdalene, is in fact the same sinner who anoints Jesus in the prior verse of Luke 7:36-39. She, too, sits at the feet of Jesus, in total submission. There is a reasonable case to assume they could be one and the same person. We know her sins have been forgiven if that is the case. The "good part" must mean an eternity with Jesus.

One of His disciples asks Him how to pray.

Luke 11:2-13 (Matthew 6:9-13):

2 So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. 3 Give us day by day our daily bread. 4 And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

See notes to Matthew 6:9-13. Luke uses "sins" rather than "debt" that Matthew uses. He also adds:

5 And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? 8 I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. 9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who

asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Unlike the Matthew near parallel, we find Jesus putting stress on the word persistence in your prayer. So, this is not a call for all believers to quickly say under their breath a prayer for X or a prayer for Y and like putting a coin in a slot machine, out comes the prayer answered: it's a call to be persistent on prayer. Persist and you will either be answered, and or in the process of repetitive petitioning, you all come closer to God and become more aware of what His plan in this matter is.²⁴

For the next section, see notes on Matthew 7:7-11.

11 If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

(e) The main difference with the Lukan account of Jesus' teachings is that the Holy Spirit is the gifting agent while in Matthew there is no intermediary between the Father and the person who is being gifted.

After healing a demon, Jesus knows His audience's thoughts, as He is omniscience. They are thinking He must be satanic.

Luke 11:17-19 (Matthew 12:25-30, 43-45, Mark 3:22-27) The Power of Jesus is Divine Power, not Satanic Power:

17 But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls. 18 If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. 19 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.

²⁴ I am grateful for Fr Michael Barrow or St Francis of Assisi, Mount Steadfast, Barbados for awakening myself to the meaning of this in his sermon of 24/07/16.

See notes to the Matthew and Mark sections.

Jesus does not derive His power from Satan.

Luke 11:20:

Jesus reminds all how Moses, using God's power, proved to the magicians that His power was greater. And they knew it.

"But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you."

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 11:21-28 The Divided House will always let in an Unclean Spirit (Matthew 12:25-30 Mark 3:22-27):

21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. 22 But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. 23 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters. 24 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. 26 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first." 27 And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" 28 But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

See notes to the Matthew & Mark section.

The sceptics among the people now ask for a sign. In return, they receive a rebuke from Jesus.

Luke 11:29-32 They Want More Than They Have Seen, Another Sign

(Matthew 12:39-42):

29 And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. 30 For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. 31 The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here. 32 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

See notes to Matthew.

Luke 11:33-36 (Matthew 5:13-16):

33 "No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. 34 The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness. 35 Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. 36 If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light."

See notes on Matthew. (33) Jesus is teaching us you don't need a sign, but we need our own perception.

Luke 11:39-52 Woe to the Pharisees (Matthew 23:13-36):

39 Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness. 40 Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also? 41 But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you. 42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 43 Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. 44 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them."

See notes on Matthew. Jesus was pointing out to the Pharisees the hypocrisy of looking after, meticulously, all the ceremonial things, but leaving out the right attention to their whole moral life which was unclean and defiled.

They ignore the great law of love by concentrating on formalism. If you want to purify all the ceremonial things, share your gifts with the poor! This is what Jesus is teaching.

The grave analogy in Matthew is contrasting the nice clean whitewashed tomb with the decaying flesh inside. With Luke, the analogy is that the whitewash of the Pharisees has worn off and looks dirty and decayed. People would walk over these graves, not noticing they were ceremonially unclean and in advertently defile themselves. Just as they would buy listening to bogus self righteous religious teaching.

Woe to the Lawyers:

45 Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, "Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also." 46 And He said, "Woe to you also, lawyers! For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. 47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. 48 In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. 49 Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,' 50 that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, 51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation. 52 "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered."

See the notes on Matthew.

Luke 12:1-12 (Matthew 10:26-33) Don't be Hypocritical:

12 In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. 3 Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. 4 "And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! 6 "Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. 7 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. 8 "Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. 9 But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. 10 "And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. 11 "Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. 12 For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

See notes on Matthew as the passage shows similarities. (ddd.f.i) The teachings are to beware of the plausible teachings of the Pharisees as much as they appear good, their teachings are often in conflict with the spirit of the Law. This is a key teaching of Jesus. (i.e) All is known to God, so do as we speak. (ddd.f) Fear only God who has the power to actually send us to hell, man and Satan can only kill us. (34.a) Deny Jesus to other men and we will lose Jesus as your advocate in heaven. (34) God will forgive misunderstandings, or weakness concerning Jesus, but say anything against the Holy Spirit, another part of the Trinity, and we will not be forgiven, period. The Holy Spirit will guide the disciples. Jesus is teaching that although His disciples teachings are not heard by the masses, they will very much be in the future, when they reveal His true teachings.

A man from the crowd speaks to Jesus about an inheritance dispute.

Luke 12:14-21 (Matthew 6:19-20) The Rich Fool:

14 But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" 15 And He said

to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." 16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

See notes to Matthew 6:19-20

(35) Jesus is teaching He is not judging civil and criminal matters (under the Mosaic Law, the 1st born some got twice the inheritance of the next, so this might have been a dispute about that), but the fate of our soul. (t) He is carefully distinguishing Himself from Moses who did have this earthly role and His role of judging our spirit, but also stressing the similarity that both Moses and He were rejected by their own people at first. (36) Jesus reminds the rich that their good fortune rests on the fruitful soil laid out by God and they should not forget this. (tt.a) (tt.b) Jesus warns about being possessive concerning material things at the expense of our spiritual neglect. How much we are selfish with our material things is directly inversely proportional to how our spiritual richness grows or declines. The parable tells us how our lives are contingent as death could happen at anytime and God may call us back to Him any moment and all your coveted material things will be utterly meaningless then, so get your priorities right and get our soul in order. Jesus could have been elaborating on a teaching in the Apocrypha Book of Sirach.

Sirach 11:18-19:

18 There is a man who is rich through his diligence and self-denial, and this is the reward allotted to him: 19 when he says, "I have found rest, and now I shall enjoy my goods!" he does not know how much time will pass until he leaves them to others and dies.

Luke 12:22-34 (Matthew 6:25-33) Trust in God:

22 Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. 23 Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? 25 And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26 If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith? 29 "And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30 For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. 31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. 32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

See notes on Matthew. (dddd) Luke adds the additional setting of Jesus as the Shepherd that comes out so strongly in the Forth Gospel (that of John). For example, John 10:1: *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.* (37) The real thrust of the teaching is that He who creates wealth should use it to benefit the poor. The early church did literally take this instruction to sell everything and follow Jesus entirely, literally, too disastrous effects. The Acts of the Apostles and in some of Paul's letters, we see how the wider earlier Christian community had to bail out the church in Jerusalem, who had gone down this more communistic route. Families can still be run on communistic rules, (you work as a unit, each doing what you need to do, not charging any money, to further the interests of that family unit) but as soon as you get beyond the scope and size of the family, the incentive to work, seems to be put to one side, and the whole community starts to collapse.²⁵ ²⁶We can only conclude that Jesus was establishing the 12 apostles as

²⁵ This is a good essay on the problems of trying to run a socialist society
http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/1974/hayek-lecture.html

²⁶ This is a good essay on why a socialist society will always collapse
<https://mises.org/library/economic-calculation-socialist-commonwealth/html>

his family and instructing them to run their affairs as His immediate family on earth as he was talking directly to them.

Luke 12:35-48 (Matthew 24:42, 25:1) The Expectant Servant: Be Ever Watchful:

35 "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. 38 And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 40 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

These two verses are teaching of Jesus, as the Son of Man very much coming again, or his Second Coming. (oooo.a) In this parable, Jesus teaches that we must wait in readiness for the return of our Master, unlike the disciples who fell asleep during their watch with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. A first century worker would have to tuck any flowing robes into his belt, so the teaching is: be prepared. Jesus affirms those who will lead a prepared life waiting for His return. (r)Jesus then teaches that when He does return, He will return as a servant-leader and we will share in His banquet. Much as He teaches in the Book of Revelation.

Revelation 3:20-21:

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

There is also a strong hint of the Servant Jesus, washing His disciples' feet as a last self-abasing act of example to them during the Last Super, in John 13. Be always ready for the return of Jesus as He will come out of nowhere.

We now have another significant parable taught by Jesus and perhaps one of my personal favourites.

Luke 12:41-48 (Matthew 24:45-51) The Faithful Steward:

41 Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?" 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45 But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. 47 And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

See notes to Matthew. Luke adds in the fact that this was a question from Peter that Jesus does not answer directly, but it is clear (pppp) that Jesus is teaching all of us to be Stewards of His creation, always. It is also clear in these verses, that come our entry into our life beyond death, the degree of our punishment for sins committed in this life, will be proportional to the degree of seriousness of those sins . This implies there are degrees of gradation of heavenly existence. Hell, is clearly at the bottom, and a more refined and perfect area of heaven at the top. There would seem to be something akin to no-mans land in between.

Luke 12:49-53 The Divisive Nature of His Work, the Choice we all Need to Make:

49 "I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! 51 Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. 52 For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. 53 Father will

be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

(38) Jesus teaches that He will come as fire - as He did at the time of Pentecost - to infect His disciples and others with the Holy Spirit. He teaches that He will revel in the fact that this indwelling Spirit will burn strongly forever. (39) As He views His death and Resurrection (the Baptism, originally, was a death of one body, and a resurrection of another). With anticipation, He is teaching of its immanence. (cc.a) Jesus is aware that His teachings about (z) peace and (eeee) forgiveness will divide even families.

Malachi 3:2-3:

2 But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord An offering in righteousness.

Malachi 4:1:

1 For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the Lord of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch.

Luke 12:54-59 (Matthew 16:2-3) Don't Bother Guessing the Time of His Return:

54 Then He also said to the multitudes, "Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. 55 And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is. 56 Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time? 57 "Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? 58 When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. 59 I tell you, you shall

not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite."

See notes on Matthew. (30.b) Luke adds that Jesus teaches at the time of His return we really do need to have had all our spiritual affairs sorted and in concordance with a Godly life, lest we be judged wanting as we all will be going before Jesus, (9.h) the ultimate Magistrate. Jesus is teaching, we and we alone will have to discharge or indebtedness, caused by our sinfulness, on our own, and not by any third parties.

People from the crowd ask Jesus about the death of some Galileans who were executed along with the Temple sacrifice, a blasphemous act for sure.

Luke 13:2-9 The Murdered Galileans, the Tower of Siloam and Sin:

2 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. 4 Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." 6 He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. 7 Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' 8 But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. 9 And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'"

(40) Jesus is teaching that the fate of these Galileans, grizzly and bloody though it was, was not on account of them being sinners but due to the blood lust and control Pilate was seeking to exercise over the whole of Judea. This is not to deny that their sins must be punished, but there is not a connection between the earthly severity and the punishment (or forgiveness) that may exist when our soul is judged. Their fate was not made better or worse because of their sin. Likewise, when natural disaster struck, their fate was not any worse either. Jesus does not ratchet up earthly punishments for sinners, as His punishment is directed against the soul and not on earthly matters - for eternity, not just for physical life.

However, there is a big sting in Jesus' words as He does teach you to repent now and so avoid the far worse fate that is eternal damnation.

The fig tree parable has Israel once more represented by a fig tree; the vineyard as the world, the Father as the eternal owner. (41) If people remain spiritually barren, Jesus teaches that He will attempt to fertilize their minds and bring them to faith or intercede on their behalf, to give them time to repent. The 'three years' reference, alludes to His three year Ministry. So as far as we know, Jesus has given us His core teachings and we either grow in them or face an eternity outside of His Grace. Failing that, then all who don't repent are to be cast aside.

(i.d) (9.a) Jesus moves on to teach in the Synagogue, once more on the Sabbath (controversially), where He supernaturally heals a crippled woman. On this occasion Jesus is not asked to heal and does not require faith from the recipient. This may not have been the full story, or it may have been a device to alert this community about His divine powers and it should therefore be viewed as a demonstration of those powers:

Luke 13:12-16 Healing the Crippled Woman:

*12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, **"Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity."** 13 And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. 14 But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, **"There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."** 15 The Lord then answered him and said, **"Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it? 16 So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"***

In Matthew 12:2-3 13:31-33, Mark 4:31-34, we see Jesus laying out what was not prohibited on the Sabbath day and that as God it did not apply to Him anyway. In the tradition of Job, Jesus says that Satan had inflicted the woman's crippled status and it was perfectly correct for Jesus to free her of this bondage. (vvv) The hypocrisy of treating an ox better than a human was also amplified by Jesus.

Luke 13:18-21 (Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32):

18 Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? 19 It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches." 20 And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

See notes to Matthew.

The Jesus Party moves on. One in the crowd asks how many will be saved.

Luke 13:24-30 The Universal Salvation of the Few:

24 "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' 26 then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' 27 But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' 28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. 29 They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. 30 And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

(fff) Jesus is teaching that strive we may, but unless we are known to Him via our faith and have secured his Grace, then we will not be saved, no matter how worthy we think we have been. To His local Jewish audience, (jjj) He reminds them that His mission is to the whole of humanity and not just for the Jews. Indeed, the Church of Jerusalem and 4 of the 5 Pentarchies (Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople) will fall, with only Rome being left. Rome was the last church, and now the first to salvation. A number of these themes are discussed in the notes to Matthew 7:21-23, 20:16, 22:13, 25:11 Mark 13:27.

The Pharisees arrive, to warn Jesus that Herod wants to kill Him.

Luke 13:32-35 The Sad Fate of Jerusalem:

32 And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.' 33 Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. 34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! 35 See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

(qqq) Jesus is teaching us that the fox would have been Herod and this would have been a great insult to him. Jesus uses the three-day expression in figurative terms, expressing the preferred number three which was common to the Jews (as were 7, 12 and 40). All prophets were killed, as far as we are aware, and Jesus' divine plan is centred on Jerusalem, where He must move towards. (jjj) This city would be destroyed. Despite all this, the compassion and tenderness of Jesus shine through as (5) He would naturally like to protect them (as a hen protects her brood, or how the feminine Wisdom of Proverbs 8 does the same, tenderly). However, if they don't believe, they seal their own inevitably desolate fate.

Psalm 118:26 (part of the Psalm also sung as Jesus entered Jerusalem):

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We have blessed you from the house of the Lord.

The parallel passage in Matthew 23:37-39 is set at a different time during Jesus' final days in Jerusalem.

We find Jesus at a house of a leading Pharisee, eating bread, then identifying a man with dropsy and healing him.

Luke 14:3-4 The Man with Dropsy is Healed:

3 And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" 4 But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go. 5 Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" 6 And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

See notes to Luke 13:12-16 as the ailment and the sex of the person are the only real details that have changed.

Jesus then tells a parable of how, when people get invited to dinner, they tend to seek out for themselves the best places to sit.

Luke 14:8-14 The Sabbath Feast:

8 "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; 9 and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. 10 But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. 11 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." 12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. 13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

(q) Jesus is teaching us: don't be presumptuous about our status, be humble first and enjoy the moment of exultation should it befall us (Matthew 23:12 and Luke 18:14). Jesus uses an example *in extremis* of not inviting friends and family since we will just get involved a tit-for-tat of invitations to our same circle of friends and family coming and going back and forth to enjoy our hospitality. No: invite from outside, invite especially the poor, who need encouragement, and in this way we may clock up some good in the matter of our judgment at the final Day of the Resurrection.

Proverbs 25:6-7:

*6 Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of the great;
7 For it is better that he say to you, "Come up here," Than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen."*

A guest breaking bread with Him suggests to Jesus that we are Blessed if we eat in the Kingdom. If this guest was Jewish, Jesus then gives His fellow Jew a timely reminder as to what was at stake concerning the presumption of blessedness.

The "certain man" is God.

Luke 14:16-24 The Greatest Super:

16 Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' 18 But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' 19 And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' 20 Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' 21 So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' 22 And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' 23 Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"

The parallel in Matthew 22:1-14 offers great similarities, so see notes there. (42) Jesus is teaching that the first pre-invited guests are the Jews. They give their excuses which are all just that: the equivalent of the nursery school 'my homework was eaten by the dog.' The host then invites the second party of guests - the poor and sinners - who need encouragement as there is room for them. This is broadened to include the third tranche of guests: the Gentiles out on the highways. The original invitees' fate is sealed by themselves alone and they are cast out of

the Father's house. The three-fold parallel is 1) John the Baptist came to deliver the message to the Jews; 2) Jesus and His Apostles to the Jews and all those who were forgotten in Israel; and 3) the Apostles, knowing Jesus taught that His Ministry was universal, to the Gentiles.

Jesus continues.

Luke 14:26-35 Speaking to the Multitudes:

26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish'? 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. 34 "Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? 35 It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

(43) Jesus was not looking for a multitude of disciples, but a core of the dedicated, whose devotion to Him was over and above that given to their earthly families. As Jesus has the foreknowledge that their lives would on the whole be hard, persecuted, and often end in a miserable deaths in many respects, it was better if their family ties were secondary. Therefore only those truly aware of the enormity of this task, were worthy to carry the task to the finish. The 'one king' is The King, God, and to serve in His presence, we really need to know if we are fully up to completing the task. It is always best to sue for peace when God is involved. We must really analyse your inadequacies to see if you are prepared for discipleship.

(44) The salt analogy (for the 3rd time used, as before in Matthew 5:13, Mark 9:50: see notes above) amounts to this: once we have lost our mo-jo, or the edge of a salty flavour, or our part of the Holy Spirit in us, we have become useless to the task of discipleship. Jesus really wanted to make us examine ourself at this point.

Psalm 68:17:

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, Even thousands of thousands; The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the Holy Place.

Tax collectors and sinners come to hear Jesus, and the Pharisees are shocked.

Luke 15:4-7 (Matthew 18:12-14) The Lost Sheep Parable:

4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' 7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

See notes on Matthew. (dddd) Jesus is the man with the hundred sheep; God in Christ is the owner. He is joyful when He finds a lost sheep and brings him back into the fold. He finds the lost sheep, motivated out of love for it. In Matthew the emphasis is more on the unique individual nature of the sheep. The whole of Ezekiel 34 is relevant to this parable.

Isaiah 40:11:

11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

Luke 15:8-10 The Parable of the Lost Coin:

8 "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

(dddd) God plays the role of the woman in this parable in which, much like the Lost Sheep parable, God rejoices at the finding of the sheep/coin: that repentant sinner.

Luke 15:11-32 The Prodigal (Dissolute) Son:

11 Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood.

In this parable the Father is God. The elder son is the Jewish Pharisee. The younger son is the sinner: the tax collector, the reprobate, and maybe even the Gentile. In Jewish culture of the time, you were, in effect, saying that your father is dead when you take your inheritance prematurely. This behaviour could only be viewed as highly insulting at best.

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.

The prodigal son chose to abandon and estrange himself from his current country and belief system. (uu) (45) The son is expressing his free will to choose to do as he pleases, just as we all can choose. *This is his sin.* He is rejecting God, in favour living what he thinks is the good and free life. I am reminded of the adverts placed on the London buses some years ago by Richard Dawkins and some of his fellow atheists at the British Humanist Association announcing: "There's probably no god. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." The free life that the atheists were promoting in 2009 was the same type of free life that the prodigal son was seeking. As we can see, the grass is not always greener on the other side ...

14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. 17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

The reference to being joined to or, in effect, becoming a slave to a heathen, would have been a tragedy for a Jew and especially as his job was now to attend to animals forbidden as unclean to eat for the Jew. *This is his misery.* In his freedom from God - freedom from the laws of life - he was truly indeed *the real slave.* In our modern setting this is akin to how the young are attracted to the freedoms offered by excessive celebrity culture, casual sex, liberal use of drugs and the like, that for most end in complications and unhappiness. The modern prodigal son would be slavishly addicted to this ephemeral tosh at the expense of his true fulfilment in complete union with the teachings of Jesus. But this son has second thoughts about his rebellion against his father and culture (this is our equivalent of the modern rebellion against God, the secular nothingness, that increasingly the young are thinking twice about in our own times). The son thinks, correctly, that even the most lowly of his father's household are happy and provided for. They were in effect more free than he was with all the license he had and the ability to "stop worrying and enjoy your life." *Their life with their master is freedom compared with his.*

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."

This is his penitence. His conversion back to the truth of his Father is now complete - he is coming home. Just as the Israelites were in the time of Moses.

Deuteronomy 30:1-3

1 Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God drives you, 2 and you return to the Lord your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, 3 that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you.

20 And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. 21 And the son said to

him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

The father recognizes him instantly as a repentant sinner-son and takes him back unconditionally into the fold. The son lives again. He is clothed in the garments of salvation. *This is his restoration.* There is scriptural precedent for *drawing towards* a forgiving God, and the use made of the garments of salvation. This parable would have been instantly understood by the Jews of the day as the prophet Jeremiah had said much the same.

Jeremiah 3:12:

12 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: 'Return, backsliding Israel,' says the Lord; 'I will not cause My anger to fall on you. For I am merciful,' says the Lord; 'I will not remain angry forever.

Isaiah 61:10:

10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

25 Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' 28 "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him.

A typical reaction we might begrudgingly take with regard to someone in this situation I don't suppose. It does not seem immediately fair to have been 'text-book good' all our life – or, a perfect son to our father - then seeing our brother to be the exact opposite, doing everything bad according to the text book, yet being rewarded for it. The 'good brother' is in this story for the purpose of this parable:

a Pharisee, typically self-righteous and not understanding the truth of it ... once again, this Pharisee is probably representative of a bit of all of us.

29 So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. 30 But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' 31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. 32 It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"

(32.b) Thus speaks the Just Lord of the Universe..... with *great tender care and love*. And notice the other son, the 'good son' has been told how fair God really is: "all that I have is yours." We don't know if this good son/Pharisee understood, but I suspect he did as what more could we realistically want from a father, let alone *The Father*.

(46) A quick read may focus us on the behaviour of the wayward son. Perhaps this would be better styled the Parable of the Good Father? Why? The father is an analogy for The Father: God. This is about how God forgives and welcomes/encourages back even the most disrespectful sinner, with open arms, especially when the sinner is *so clearly repentant*. The other diligent and loyal son is consoled that he would not be put out of pocket in anyway, but more so, he is getting into His Father's kingdom, heaven and eternal salvation. Also, He is teaching that we should rejoice and welcome back repentant sinners. More importantly, the 'good son,' is in fact a sinner for even questioning his father's unconditional forgiveness of his wayward brother. In fact, this parable is for us all, as we all have a little bit of the prodigal and the good son in us and we all crave for that unconditional love from the Father.

See notes to John 12:7-8 for my suggestion, that Mary of Magdalene, is indeed the real historical partner to this parable, that is latent to the Gospels, that of the Prodigal Daughter.

Luke 16:1-18 The Unjust Steward & Unjust Master:

16 He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. 2 So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' 3 "Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. 4 I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' 5 "So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 7 Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. 9 "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. 10 He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. 11 Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? 13 "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." The Law, the Prophets, and the Kingdom

So in this parable, which is only in Luke, the master thinks his steward is wasting money and the steward knows of this and prepares an escape route for himself for the day he would be fired. (pppp.b) The key teaching here is that everyone will need to give an account of themselves to their Master upon their death. Death is the ultimate dismissal. This steward is oblivious to this. The steward, preparing his earthly future, does this by offering people who owe his master discounts on the amounts owed to the master. At best, the steward may be forgoing his commission or back-hander so it is debatable whether he should or should not have been accused of, at worst, outright theft. The master knows and praises the steward's shrewdness. This is a Godly sleight of hand, as it truly exposes the badness of the steward's actions and points to the way forward for the "sons of light" who have a higher moral compass. Needless to say, the master gets rid of the steward now he has served his purpose of shining a light on this juxtaposition.

The master knows that shrewd unbelievers can be more savvy than the innocent (gullible) believers. (47) The core teaching is that believers should make friends with unbelievers so long as they can be encouraged to change their ways, and so long as their master's money is being deployed to work for their salvation in eternity. Build our treasures in heaven, not only here on earth, as the unjust do. (tt) Don't serve money, but God. The juxtaposition between the sons of the earth and those of them who follow the light has its scriptural antecedents in the following passage:

Isaiah 58:6-8:

6 Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? 8 Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard."

(48) However, it should be noted that this parable exemplifies another juxtaposition: that between the Pharisees and the Publicans (tax collectors). The former outwardly served God and inwardly they served themselves; the latter outwardly served mammon. But in their encounters with Jesus and the Publicans, they served God.

Luke 16:14-18 Christ Warns the Pharisees-the Lovers of Money:

14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. 15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. 16 "The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. 17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail. 18 "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery."

(40.a) As with the friends of Job, the traditional view was that if we were wealthy

we must be blessed by God. Jesus points out that we may be surprised to know that the two are not connected. Jesus also teaches that those who think they are a great worthy may be surprised to find God does not view this as so because He is not interested in our external, polished veneer, but that which is in our heart. The next teaching is a bit more in-your-face. (mmm) Jesus is maintaining that before John the Baptist was the time of Old Covenant whereas now He Himself was teaching about the Kingdom and how people were trying to get into it. This mass of sinners was growing, particularly as the Pharisees were blind to the correct teachings of the Law Jesus is presenting. There might also be a passing reference to how the Pharisees had allowed Herod Antipas to commit adultery with his brother's wife, thus negating the Old Law that Jesus had come to fulfil. (49) Jesus re affirms that the ethical teachings of the Law apply for eternity and will still exist if this earth and His heavenly teachings pass away.

It seems like the comments on divorce come out of nowhere. (hh) However, the Pharisees had neglected divorce into a simplistic process of just obtaining a certificate, so Jesus was reminding that there is more to the Law than that. This abridged divorce passage must be read in light of His other teachings on the matter. See notes on Matthew 5:31-32 and 19:3-9.

Luke 16:19-31 The Rich Man & Lazarus:

19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' 27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers, that he may

testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ 29 Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ 30 And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ 31 But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’”

(40.a) Jesus is teaching us that the rich man, dressed in the rare and expensive colour purple, is no-one specific, other than a man who has devoted his time to accumulating wealth and maybe doing nothing proactively wrong, but certainly not being proactive in the things he should be doing right, like healing the sick, feeding the poor, tending to the marginalised and so on and so forth. There is also another theme present here: a struggle between those who view God to reward good behaviour and punish bad and those who can't quite understand that bad things can sometimes happen to good people, irrespective of their behaviour. **The Book of Job** and other books styled as Wisdom literature try to point this out and conclude that irrespective of what bad may befall us, if we can just keep the faith we will be rewarded in heaven and maybe even during life. We should also plea that any earthly trials will be mitigated and measured, as we can only cope with so much, and know that ultimate punishment for the wicked will be in hell. This Psalm echoes the typical cry of the good, but oppressed.

Psalm 44:15-23:

*15 My dishonor is continually before me, And the shame of my face has covered me,
16 Because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles, Because of the enemy and the avenger. 17 All this has come upon us; But we have not forgotten You, Nor have we dealt falsely with Your covenant. 18 Our heart has not turned back, Nor have our steps departed from Your way; 19 But You have severely broken us in the place of jackals, And covered us with the shadow of death. 20 If we had forgotten the name of our God, Or stretched out our hands to a foreign god, 21 Would not God search this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart. 22 Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 23 Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord? Arise! Do not cast us off forever.”*

Maybe Jesus referenced this Psalm in the knowledge that the Jewish audience would have been very familiar with when telling His parable.

Psalm 73:3-11:

3 For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm. 5 They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men. 6 Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them like a garment. 7 Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish. 8 They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression; They speak loftily. 9 They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth. 10 Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full cup are drained by them. 11 And they say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

(50) Jesus is teaching that the wise and, indeed, poor man, like Lazarus, may well seek the riches of the heart through beholding the very nature of God and the love He emanates. He sits in the bosom of Abraham, a vision of reclining as if to eat super, just as Saint John would do (John 13:23 & John 1:18), but not in the breast of Jesus, in the breast of Abraham. A high honour indeed, and similarly in heaven. John the Baptist, in Luke 3:8, had also made the point that God could raise up believers from stones to Abraham, so the Lukan audience would have been able to connect with this use of Abraham without knowing the events of the Last Super.

The rich man's mistake was to not lead as righteous a life as he could, but also to ask for more signs of God's existence when they are all over the scriptures. That this desire does not go away in the breast of mankind is evidenced by the agnostic philosopher Bertrand Russell who was once asked what he would say if he found himself standing before God on Judgment Day and God asked him, "Why didn't you believe in Me?" Russell replied, "I would say, 'Not enough evidence, God! Not enough evidence!'" The rich man and the latter day Bertrand Russell are like their 1st century intellectual predecessors, the Pharisees of the New Testament, who witnessed the bodily raising of another Lazarus from the dead, still did not believe, and actually got more worked up that this Jesus was a blasphemer and a dangerous person who should be sought out and executed! (33) Jesus is teaching that the brother of the rich man would not respond any differently if more signs had been sent to them.

Luke 17:1-10 More Discourses:

17 Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! 2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. 3 Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. 4 And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him." 5 And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." 6 So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. 7 And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? 8 But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? 9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

(k.a) Jesus teaches that believers will be corrupted by external influences as it will be impossible to always avoid them. (51) What is more, he who corrupts the believers, "the little ones," in this parable will surely be damned. (mm.b) Jesus shows - and in effect teaches us - to have tremendous compassion towards sinners who are truly repentant. The figure 7 is just a number used to illustrate many times, or the un-ending amount of forgiveness available for a truly repentant sinner.

(52) The disciples cry out in anguish and ask for help to increase their faith. In the second part of this parable, Jesus teaches that if we have faith, anything is possible. He further teaches that if we just do our job, don't expect any extra, for it is doing just what we should do or, to be precise, just what is required anyway. In this way, Jesus is saying there is nothing He will do to increase their individual aspects of faith, since the onus is on them to meet His standard.

Luke 17:14-19 The Healing of the Ten Lepers:

The Jesus Party move on from Jerusalem via Samaria and Galilee and encounter ten men who are lepers, who petition Him for His mercy.

14 So when He saw them, He said to them, **“Go, show yourselves to the priests.”** And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. **15** And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, **16** and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. **17** So Jesus answered and said, **“Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18** Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” **19** And He said to him, **“Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”**

Jesus knows the Levitical Law concerning leprosy and directs the ten men to see the priests. The whole of Leviticus 13 details the procedures for identifying leprosy.

Leviticus 13:1-3:

1 And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: **2** **“When a man has on the skin of his body a swelling, a scab, or a bright spot, and it becomes on the skin of his body like a leprous[a] sore, then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. 3** The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body; and if the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a leprous sore. Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce him unclean.

Only one returns to give thanks that they are healed. This healed man echoes Naamam, the Aramean or foreigner/Gentile in 2 Kings 5:15, who responded in a similar way when he was healed:

15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, **“Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant.**

(jjj) What is more, he is the Gentile. Again, although the focus of Jesus is aimed at the Jews, Jesus is very much teaching that His agenda applies to all mankind, irrespective of race, colour and creed.

Luke 17:20-37 Prophetic Answer to the Pharisees:

20 Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." 22 Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. 23 And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. 24 For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. 25 But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34 I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." 37 And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

(i.m) Firstly, Jesus teaches these Rabbis that the Kingdom is actually here - in the presence of Jesus Himself, anyway. This Kingdom was not the big gun's ablazing, all-conquering Kingdom they believed was to be ushered in by the new Messianic King, but a much more subtle one where the hearts and minds of people are converted in the process of becoming believers and more God-like in their behaviour than before their conversion. Jesus also teaches that at some point they will truly desire to see Him (at great times of tribulation), (qqq) but that before then the Resurrection story must unfold in time. Jesus also notes that just as with

the stories of Noah (**Genesis Chapters 6-9**) and Lot (**Genesis Chapter 19**), no one will really be concerning themselves with anything other than (13) trivial things. Clinging to such things with our life will eventually end our life; yet those who have given their life's faith to Jesus will flourish. Jesus teaches much like messages in Proverbs: to humble, not exalt ourselves.

Proverbs 25:6-7:

*6 Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of the great;
7 For it is better that he say to you, "Come up here," Than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen.*

(30.b) What is more, Jesus is teaching that His judgment will be there and then, at the moment when they are least expecting it, so best resist trivial things in life and focus on getting our spirit in order. (rr.a) Jesus also says that like the eagle circling above its prey in the sky, it can be seen for miles around. When He does come again, it will be so obvious - but too late for anyone who has not repented. Repenting in the instant sight of Jesus is not good enough to get us into heaven, either. We need to really mean it during our lifetime. Also, I can't help feeling that the eagle reference also points to the insignia of the Roman army whose banner would be so clear to those in Jerusalem as it was destroyed. The Book of Job also has a reference to the eagle being under the control of the Father and instrumental in any acts of judgment.

Job 39:26-30:

26 Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, And spread its wings toward the south? 27 Does the eagle mount up at your command, And make its nest on high? 28 On the rock it dwells and resides, On the crag of the rock and the stronghold. 29 From there it spies out the prey; Its eyes observe from afar. 30 Its young ones suck up blood; And where the slain are, there it is.

Luke 18:2-8 The Unjust Judge:

2 ... saying: *"There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. 3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.'* 4 *And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'"* 6 *Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. 7 And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"*

(46) After constantly being petitioned by a widow this unjust judge grants a judgement - not because it was just to do so, but because he wanted an easy life. Jesus is teaching how, just as night is opposite to day, so God stands in opposition to the unjust judge. God judges there and then, speedily. Jesus also teaches that when He does appear on earth again, it will be during a time of little faith, so paradoxically, He might not be doing as much positive judging as some expect.

Luke 18:10-14 The Pharisee and Publican/Tax Collector:

9 *Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'* 13 *And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'* 14 *I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."*

(v) Once more, Jesus warns those who think they are perfect not to think that way.

(ss) The fasting the Pharisees mentioned here is one such example. What they are practicing is voluntary, to demonstrate what they think is their piety. Jesus uses this to show that this is nonsense as they are only required by Law to fast once, on the Day of Atonement.

Numbers 29:7:

7 On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall afflict your souls; you shall not do any work.

The only tithe required was for the fruit of the field and the produce of the cattle you had, not all your possessions.

Deuteronomy 14:22:

22 You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year.

(fff) Jesus is teaching that works will not get us into heaven on their own, but only by our faith will you achieve entry. It is the repentant sinner, the truly repentant sinner, who achieves salvation. (48) The purpose of prayer is to ask for forgiveness for our sins and not to marvel at what we think is your perfection. The closing verses in chapter 17 concerning humbling yourself are repeated here. It is worth noting that Jesus will be teaching nothing new as the Old Testament, when God stated His covenant with Abram, it is very clear on this.

Genesis 15:6:

6 And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

The multitude then bring little children to Jesus.

Luke 18:16-17 The Requirement for Child Like Innocence for Salvation (Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16)

16 But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. 17 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

See notes on Matthew

Jesus then gives some guidance to a rich young ruler.

Luke 18:19-30 The Rich Ruler (Matthew 19:16-26, Mark 10:17-31):

19 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. 20 You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" 21 And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." 22 So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 23 But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. 24 And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" 27 But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

See notes on Matthew. The notable difference here in Luke is that Matthew reports this man and a young man, and Luke a young ruler. Matthew also contains the 'love your neighbour' command, omitted here - the commandment upon which all the Laws flowed, according to Jesus in Matthew 22:40 *"On these two commandments (the other love God) hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

Peter then interjects.

Luke 18:28-30 Personal Sacrifices will be Rewarded (Matthew 19:27-29, Mark 10:28-30):

28 Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You." 29 So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life."

See notes on Matthew.

Jesus then separates himself and the disciples from the crowds to talk in more intimate terms with them.

Luke 18:31-33 Jesus Predicts His Resurrection Again (Matthew 20:17-19 and Mark 10:32-34):

31 Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. 32 For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. 33 They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

See notes on Matthew. Also, concerning what the prophets say I have a list of 368 Old Testament predictions at appendix I in this section so you can scan the references, (to the Resurrection, highlighted in yellow) there for what Jesus was referencing.

The Jesus Party now move on to Jericho where the blind man Bartimaeus appeals directly to be healed.

Luke 18:41-42 The Blind Man Bartimaeus is Healed (Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 10:46-52):

41 ... saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." 42 Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well."

See notes to Matthew. In Luke, one of the blind men is named. In Matthew there are more than one of them. Also, it is not clearly spelled out which Jericho: the ancient ruin or the modern town the Jesus Party was either entering or leaving? Or whether this was two separate events.

As this Gospel unfolds, we are now told that upon leaving Jericho, a chief collector of taxes (so he must be a sinner, from a Jewish perspective at least) shins up a tree to get a good view of Jesus. There is no indication anywhere that they (Jesus and the tax collector) know each other.

Luke 19:5 Zacchaeus:

*5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "**Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.**"*

This recalling is unique to Luke's recording. The crowd are suspicious as they know Zacchaeus is a sinner. (i.e) The omniscience of Jesus is demonstrated as He knows who this person is and what is in his heart without being told. (eeee) Zacchaeus makes a heartfelt confession of his past and demonstrably shows how he has repented. Jesus responds.

Luke 19:9-10:

*9 And Jesus said to him, "**Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.**"*

Jesus forgives, and likewise stresses His mission to save those individual lost sheep.

Jesus also sensed that as He was heading for Jerusalem, the crowd were thinking that the Kingdom would appear immediately upon their arrival in Jerusalem. So Jesus teaches another parable.

Luke 19:12-27 The Parable of the Minas (a monetary unit):

*12 Therefore He said: "**A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'** 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' 17 And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' 18 And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' 19 Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. 21 For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' 22 And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant.*

You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. 23 Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' 24 "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' 25 (But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.') 26 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 27 But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'"

This parable is clearly similar to the parable of the talents (the monetary unit mentioned in Luke is significantly lower than that mentioned by Matthew) - but different in many respects. This would indicate that Jesus delivered His key messages in different ways at different times and was reported as such by the Gospel writers. The locations are different: Matthew's (25:14-30) is part of the Olivet discourse; the other, in Luke, on the road to Jerusalem. (qqq) However, Jesus is framing Himself as the King, who goes away to receive His Kingdom. What is more, this is a two-stage process since after His visit and his subsequent death/Resurrection in Jerusalem the hint here is (oooo) that He must go away and come back at the Second Coming. The Jewish audience would be very familiar with this first earthly granting of Kingship, as their kings had to receive their Kingdom, as client kings, from Rome. But they would be not so clear on the Second Coming. In Luke, a delegation follows the King in waiting, to petition His master, not to grant Him this Kingdom. The reference here is to how the Jews sent a delegation to Rome (Augustus did not listen to them), to challenge Herod Archelaus and his impending grant of Kingship over the Jews. The departure of Archelaus was also from Jericho, as is Jesus' departure from here. Jesus is not likening Himself spiritually to Archelaus, just drawing on the historical fact to illustrate His point, that as with Archelaus, there will be many Jews who oppose Him and His Kingship. When this newly appointed King returns to earth, Jesus will call the faithful to account. (pppp) Those who have stewarded His assets well, according to their abilities, are judged well and praised well. (rrr.a) The fellow who did not have faith and feigned fear (if it was real fear of God, the sole creator of the universe, then fear would have produced obedience at least.), but really loved his life. As it was, this hapless steward produces nothing for his period of stewardship and applies false attributes to Jesus. Jesus repeats these false attributes, but does not endorse

them and then passes a fearful judgment on them, just as will happen to all unbelievers.

The Jesus Party then continue to move up to Jerusalem.

Luke 19:30-31 The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-9, Mark 11:1-10, John 12:12-19):

On the approach to Jerusalem, Jesus instructs His disciples

30 ... saying, "Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. 31 And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'"

See notes to Matthew.

At the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, Jesus is asked by the Pharisees to rebuke his disciples for singing Psalm 118:26 (quoted above), welcoming Him as the Davidic heir & Messiah. Luke adds Christ's response:

Luke 19:39-40:

"And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

In Habakkuk 2:11 this was said in relation to punishment for the Chaldeans when it was said the very walls of their property would testify against them:

For the stone will cry out from the wall, And the beam from the timbers will answer it.

See notes on Matthew.

Jesus is moved with emotion as He comes close to the City.

Luke 19:42-44 Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem:

42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

This rendering is unique to Luke. Despite the triumphal entry Jesus, knowing that some in Jerusalem who worshiped Him now would not do so (qqq) after His Crucifixion, would now surely pay the penalty for their change of hearts and minds with the (rr.a) total destruction of Jerusalem as carried out by Titus in 70 AD. This Jesus memorably predicts. However, it was also foretold before.

Isaiah 29:2-4:

*2 Yet I will distress Ariel; There shall be heaviness and sorrow, And it shall be to Me as Ariel.
3 I will encamp against you all around, I will lay siege against you with a mound, And I will raise siegeworks against you. 4 You shall be brought down, You shall speak out of the ground; Your speech shall be low, out of the dust; Your voice shall be like a medium's, out of the ground; And your speech shall whisper out of the dust."*

(rr.a) When reading Josephus on the Wars, it is clear there are other matters predicted by Jesus - such as the exact way the siege took place via the Roman army building an embankment around the City to starve it and lay siege to it. Once Titus had embarked upon the siege, there was no chance of escape as as Jesus had predicted as well.

Josephus, War of the Jews, Book 5, Chapter 12 (my bold and underlining):

"That therefore his opinion was, that if they aimed at quickness joined with security, they must build a wall round about the whole city; which was, he thought, the only way to prevent the Jews from coming out any way, and that then they would either entirely despair of saving the city, and so would surrender it up to him, or be still the more easily conquered when the famine had further weakened them; for that besides this wall, he would not lie entirely at rest

afterward, but would take care then to have banks raised again, when those that would oppose them were become weaker. But that if any one should think such a work to be too great, and not to be finished without much difficulty, he ought to consider that it is not fit for Romans to undertake any small work, and that none but God himself could with ease accomplish any great thing whatsoever. These arguments prevailed with the commanders. So Titus gave orders that the army should be distributed to their several shares of this work; and indeed there now came upon the soldiers a certain divine fury, so that they did not only part the whole wall that was to be built among them, nor did only one legion strive with another, but the lesser divisions of the army did the same; insomuch that each soldier was ambitious to please his decurion, each decurion his centurion, each centurion his tribune, and the ambition of the tribunes was to please their superior commanders, while Caesar himself took notice of and rewarded the like contention in those commanders; for he went round about the works many times every day, and took a view of what was done.Now the length of this wall was forty furlongs, one only abated. Now at this wall without were erected thirteen places to keep garrison in, whose circumferences, put together, amounted to ten furlongs; the whole was completed in three days; so that what would naturally have required some months was done in so short an interval as is incredible. When Titus had therefore encompassed the city with this wall, and put garrisons into proper places, he went round the wall, at the first watch of the night, and observed how the guard was kept; the second watch he allotted to Alexander; the commanders of legions took the third watch. They also cast lots among themselves who should be upon the watch in the night time, and who should go all night long round the spaces that were interposed between the garrisons.”

As Josephus was a Jew, there is no Christian bias assumed. Ancient histories did embellish, and at times of great turmoil, like war, may have exaggerated the extremity or enormity of the situation. However, we don't have anything to tell us whether Josephus embellished matters.

Now in Jerusalem, we move to the cleansing of the In the Temple narrative. Luke records the seminal incident of Jesus (iiii) turfing out the money changers, not because it was an economic activity but because they were profiting too much for the task of changing the money into an acceptable medium for the Temple to be able to receive. This exchange of coins was necessary for the Temple authorities so they could get a coin not depicting an Emperor, who was a self-proclaimed God. This was a horrendous blasphemy to the Jews and needed to be avoided, hence the presence of money changers. Jesus beef with them was not what they were doing, but what they were charging. The same goes for the other traders who had

ceased to serve the interest of the Temple but were profiteering at the expense of the penitents who came to worship.

Luke 19:46 Cleansing the Temple (Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 11:15-17):

46 saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'

Isaiah 56:7:

7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.

Jeremiah 7:11:

11 Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the Lord.

See notes on Matthew.

After the Temple incident Jesus continued to teach for a number of days and is asked by the Pharisees by what authority does He teach, to which He replies:

Luke 20:3-8 On What Authority does Jesus Teach? (Matthew 21:23-27, Mark 11:27-33):

3 But He answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: 4 The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?" 5 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 6 But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet." 7 So they answered that they did not know where it was from. 8 And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

See notes on Matthew.

In the Temple, Jesus carries on teaching in parables.

Luke 20:9-18 The Vineyard Owner Parable (Matthew 21:33-44, Mark 12:1-11):

9 Then He began to tell the people this parable: "A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. 10 Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 11 Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. 12 And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast him out. 13 "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect him when they see him.' 14 But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' 15 So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others." And when they heard it they said, "Certainly not!" 17 Then He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone'? 18 Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 20:23-25 Trick Questions to Jesus Concerning Tax (Matthew 21:45-46, 22:15-22, Mark 12:12-17):

After they tried to stop Him on several occasions, Jesus is then challenged in the Temple about whether they should pay tax to their Roman overlords, to which Jesus enigmatic reply is recorded as follows:

23 But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? 24 Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" They answered and said, "Caesar's." 25 And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

See notes on Matthew.

He is then questioned by some Sadducees concerning the resurrection that they do not believe in.

Luke 20:34-38 The Sadducees Question the Resurrection (Matthew 22:23-32, Mark 12:18-27):

34 Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. 35 But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36 nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. 37 But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' 38 For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him."

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 20:41-47 Jesus now Questions the Scribes Concerning David & The Messiah (Matthew 22:41-23:14, Mark 12:35-40):

41 And He said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? 42 Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 43 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" 44 Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?" 45 Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, 46 "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, 47 who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

See notes on Matthew. (48) Jesus adds in the Luke recording the condemnation of those who are self-righteous that appears later in Matthew.

Still at the Temple, Jesus observes a rich person and a poor widow both make a donation.

Luke 21:3-4 Jesus and the Widows Devotion (Mark 12:41-44):

3 So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; 4 for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

See notes on Mark.

Still at the Temple, somebody remarks about the staggering beauty of all the gifts made to the Temple and its administrators.

Luke 21:6-23 The Looting of the Temple Predicted & His Second Coming (Matthew 24:1-13, Mark 13:1-13):

6 "These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down." 7 So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?" 8 And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them. 9 But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately." 10 Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 11 And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. 12 But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. 13 But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. 14 Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; 15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. 16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. 17 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. 18 But not a hair of your head shall be lost. 19 By your patience possess your souls. 20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people."

(rr.a) Jesus foretells of how those same stones of the mightily fortified Temple will one day vanish. This did happen in 70 AD when Titus looted the building before utterly destroying it. The Matthew version of the Temple destruction could reference the very building stones of the Temple, but here Jesus, in the Luke recording, specifies very much that the comment was focussed on the looting of the place that would happen at the same time as the destruction of the Temple.

(42.a) In Luke's reporting of Jesus predicting the destruction of the Temple - unique to Luke - he adds a passage concerning the massive benefits that will accrue to the Gentiles as a result of this.

Luke 21:24:

"And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

Isaiah 11:11-12:

11 It shall come to pass in that day That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar, From Hamath and the islands of the sea. 12 He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth.

Isaiah 66:12:

12 For thus says the Lord: "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then you shall feed; On her sides shall you be carried, And be dandled on her knees."

Jeremiah 51:6:

6 Flee from the midst of Babylon, And every one save his life! Do not be cut off in her iniquity, For this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; He shall recompense her.

(rr.a) There are various accounts of this event that Jesus foretells by participants in the Destruction of Jerusalem. The most notable is Josephus. He confirms in “War of the Jews” Book 5-7, the following, once Titus had conquered Jerusalem, that is very relevant in this passage:

1. Titus ordered the Temple foundations to be ripped up, stone by stone when they consistently refused.
2. Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the Roman army in the aftermath of the destruction of the Temple, had then set about immediately to plough the very foundations to dust as if he were ploughing a field.

The prophecy of Micah 3:12 is fulfilled:

12 Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, And the mountain of the temple Like the bare hills of the forest.

The woeful acts of the Jews in refusing to believe had delivered Jerusalem, via the Romans, to be totally destroyed, just as the Lord Jesus Christ himself had predicted.

Specifically concerning Luke 21:11:

We know from Josephus the following:

1. There were signs and prodigies (a marvel or a wonder) before the taking of the city.
2. A star/comet, like a sword, hung over the city for a whole year.
3. In the night at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for half an hour, the altar was flooded with light and, even more astonishingly, a cow brought forward for sacrifice gave birth to a lamb!
4. Chariots and armies were seen fighting in the sky over the city.
5. The Eastern gate, which needed 20 or more people to move it, opened on its own accord.

6. At the feast of Pentecost, in the Inner Temple, a voice like the multitude was heard saying “depart hence.”
7. Jesus, son of Ananias, is recorded for posterity in the following way:

“But, what is still more terrible, there was one Jesus, the son of Ananus, a plebeian and a husbandman, who, four years before the war began, and at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for every one to make tabernacles to God in the temple [Sukkot, autumn, 62 CE], began on a sudden to cry aloud,

“A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the Holy House, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!”

This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city.”

Jesus had predicted much the same in Matthew 24:27

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

The Roman army entered from the east, continuing the conquest of Jerusalem westwards. Jesus was using his awesome power to guide the Roman army as His agent of destruction.

Tacitus also references the signs from heaven that Jesus foretold.

Tacitus in Histories, Book 5 verse 13 confirms:

“Prodigies had occurred, but their expiation by the offering of victims or solemn vows is held to be unlawful by a nation which is the slave of superstition and the enemy of true beliefs. In the sky appeared a vision of armies in conflict, of glittering armour. A sudden lightning flash from the clouds lit up the Temple. The doors of the holy place abruptly opened, a superhuman voice was heard to declare that the gods were leaving it, and in the same instant came the rushing tumult of their departure. Few people placed a sinister interpretation upon this. The majority were convinced that the ancient scriptures of their priests alluded to the present as the very time when the Orient would triumph and from Judaea would go forth men destined

to rule the world. This mysterious prophecy really referred to Vespasian and Titus, but the common people, true to the selfish ambitions of mankind, thought that this mighty destiny was reserved for them, and not even their calamities opened their eyes to the truth."

(53) No Christians were reported to have died or suffered at the Destruction of Jerusalem, as Jesus had predicted. They had all swiftly fled the City, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, and not one hair of the head of a believer was touched, as Jesus foretold.

Josephus' "The Wars of the Jews" Book 6, Chapter 3:4 (This book, and chapter 3 especially, documents the terrible famine that engulfed Jerusalem) reports the chilling and truly terrible things that would happen to pregnant women and young mothers:

"She then attempted a most unnatural thing; and snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast, she said, "O thou miserable infant! for whom shall I preserve thee in this war, this famine, and this sedition? As to the war with the Romans, if they preserve our lives, we must be slaves. This famine also will destroy us, even before that slavery comes upon us. Yet are these seditious rogues more terrible than both the other. Come on; be thou my food, and be thou a fury to these seditious varlets, and a by- word to the world, which is all that is now wanting to complete the calamities of us Jews." As soon as she had said this, she slew her son, and then roasted him, and eat the one half of him, and kept the other half by her concealed. Upon this the seditious came in presently, and smelling the horrid scent of this food, they threatened her that they would cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had gotten ready. She replied that she had saved a very fine portion of it for them, and withal uncovered what was left of her son. Hereupon they were seized with a horror and amazement of mind, and stood astonished at the sight, when she said to them, "This is mine own son, and what hath been done was mine own doing! Come, eat of this food; for I have eaten of it myself! Do not you pretend to be either more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother; but if you be so scrupulous, and do abominate this my sacrifice, as I have eaten the one half, let the rest be reserved for me also."

Jesus continues with more teachings.

Luke 21:25-36 The Second Coming (Matthew 24:29-31, Mark 13:24-27):

25 "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress

of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 21:29-33 The Parable of the Fig Tree (Matthew 24:32-35, Mark 13:28-31):

29 Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30 When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 21:34-37 Always Keep Alert to the Second Coming of Jesus (Matthew 24:36-44, Mark 13:32-27):

34 "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

See notes on Matthew. In the Lukan record, Jesus omits the reference to Noah.

Now the scene is set for the Passion as Jesus starts His final evening with His disciples.

Luke 22:8-13 The Upper Room is Prepared (Matthew 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-16):

8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, **“Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.”** **9** So they said to Him, **“Where do You want us to prepare?”** **10** And He said to them, **“Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. 11 Then you shall say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, ‘Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?’”** **12** Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready.”

See notes on Matthew. In Matthew the question of where to do this comes from the disciples and not Jesus.

Luke 22:14-18 The Passover is Celebrated (Matthew 26:20,29, Mark 14:17, 25):

13 So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover. **14** When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. **15** Then He said to them, **“With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”** **17** Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, **“Take this and divide it among yourselves; 18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”**

See notes on Matthew.

Luke 22:19-20 The Eucharist Celebration is Initiated (Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24):

19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, **“This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”** **20** Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, **“This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.**

See notes on Matthew. (54) In the Lukan recording Jesus says this act is done in remembrance, and Matthew for remission of sins. The Mark recording has Jesus breaking the bread, but does not positively say if it was an act of remembrance or for a remission of sins. For the Markan account, it is the act of making the New Covenant that is significant. This is another example of how to date, the Gospel accounts all record this incident, but like most genuine witness testimonies are never completely, word for word, the same. Such is the fallible nature of the human memory. The key teaching is that the (xx) Bread of Life, Jesus Himself if our

sustenance. By listening to and learning from the bread of life, we are freed from our (xxxx) slavery to sin. If we follow His way, we avoid the pitfalls of sin. Although He walks with us, we have to embrace this as we have the freedom to also reject this. We are nourished with His peace. This fills us with joy. This is what we remember when we eat the bread of the Eucharist. We must remember this every-time we partake in this thanks giving feast. His blood should remind us of its purifying (from sin) properties that was spilled at His Crucifixion, the ultimate sacrifice. This should also allow us to hark back to the original Covenant, which Jesus is reaffirming, that the Lord affirms with Moses before Moses goes up to receive the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 24:7-8

Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient."⁸ And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words."

Still at the Last Supper, Jesus predicts his betrayer.

Luke 22:21-22 Jesus foretells of His Betrayal (Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, John 13:21-26):

21 But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. 22 And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" 23 Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

See notes on Matthew. The Lukan account has Judas firmly in the presence of Jesus at the Last Supper when the Eucharist Feast is initiated. Matthew and Mark report this act of betrayal prior to the event of breaking the bread. John (a direct witness) notes Judas being there and leaving shortly after.

In total ignorance as to what was about to unfold, and with astonishing arrogance, the disciples have a bizarre conversation amongst themselves.

Luke 22:24-30 The Disciples Argue about who of them is the Greatest:

24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. 25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. 27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. 28 "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. 29 And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

See notes on Matthew 20:20-24. It's hard to tell if this is the same event, either in substance, as reported in Matthew in a different context, or something totally new to report. (r) Either-way, it shows still how oblivious the disciples were to the impending events. One of the greatest physical impressions of servant leadership is when Jesus washes the Disciples' feet, as reported in John 13:1-20. The juxtaposition of the ignorance of the Disciples and Jesus' acting out of the role of servant leader there and then, for them to dispel any delusions of greatness, could well have proceeded from this event. (i.k) He was also declaring His divinity, as Jesus uses the name of God, "I am" of Exodus 3:14 to show how the Greatest is in fact the servant of us all. Jesus was also teaching that each of His apostles would be getting their own Kingdom to preach in. As far as we know, this is exactly what they did do.

Jesus now focuses on Peter.

Luke 22:31-34 Jesus Foretells Peter's Denials (Matthew 26:31-35, Mark 14:27-31, John 13:36-38):

31 And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." 33 But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." 34 Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

See notes on Matthew. Both Matthew and Mark recall that this was said in the Garden of Gethsemane with Luke and John reporting it as happening at the Last Supper. They could be two different events. It is hard to tell. However, in Luke's report, we have something unique. Just as Satan requested to God, that he could test Job, clearly Satan had asked this also of Peter.

Job 1:12

12 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

Luke 22:35-36 The Re-commissioning of the Disciples:

35 And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing." 36 Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one."

(55) Jesus sent His Disciples out before as recorded in Matthew 10:5-14, Mark 6:8-13, Luke 9:2-6, 12:2-10, but this time, He is counselling that we are on our own and must provide for all our worldly goods from henceforth. What is more, we will need a sword as the mission is dangerous. He is not advocating violence, but self-defence.

Luke 22:37-38 Jesus Foretells of the Coming Conflict:

Towards His very last hours, Jesus discusses the coming conflict that will result from the cause of His death and He advises:

"For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end." So they said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

The scriptural reference comes from Isaiah 53:12:

12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

The disciples' offering of two swords, whilst demonstrating their concern for their Master, shows that they were still not tuned into the enormity of the impending situation.

Jesus and the disciples move on from the Last Supper to their final, private place of gathering.

Luke 22:40-46 Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, John 18:1):

Luke never mentions the name Gethsemane, but it is hard not to think this is the place that re-reports these events now unfolding.

40 When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." 41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." 43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. 46 Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."

See notes to Matthew. The Matthew & Mark witness testimonies place three disciples (Peter, John and James) with Jesus just before He went a "little further" or "about a stone's throw," according to the Lukan account. Luke, being a doctor, is the only Gospel writer to report the blood dropping from the forehead of (I presume) Jesus when He was praying.

The Son of Perdition, Judas, then does his job.

Luke 22:48-53 Judas Betrays Jesus with a Kiss (Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-50, John 18:2-11):

48 But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" 49 When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" 50 And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. 51 But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And He touched his ear and healed him. 52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? 53 When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Luke, is the only Gospel author to record the healing of the severed ear of one of the arresting soldiers. John names this soldier and all of the Gospel writers report this event. (56) In verse 52, Jesus contrasts the fact that men have no power over Him, with verse 53, where He is allowing Satan to have power in this moment, as indicated in the other Gospels, so the prophecies can be fulfilled.

Mark is unique in placing the fleeing disciple, who ends up running away naked from this scene, after a member of the arresting party managed to grab and pull off his robe. No other Gospel writers report this. The early church always assumed this trivial detail, and that the highly personal detail must indicate Mark, the author, as that naked man.

Jesus, arrested and now moved to the High Priest's house. A servant girl identifies Peter as one of Jesus' followers.

Luke 22:61 Peter Remembers the Prophetic Words of Jesus:

61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

Although all the Gospels report the three denials of Jesus by Peter, Luke is unique in recalling that Jesus "turned and looked at Peter." We don't know with what kind of look, an angry one, a forgiving one or a knowing one, or something else, but I

suspect it was a knowing and forgiving look that would have stayed with Peter for the rest of his life.

Luke omits the trial of Caiaphas as he could presumably find no report of it he felt he could include. Again, all the theories that attest to Luke copying other Gospel writes must be seriously questioned on this point. Luke moves to the formal trial straight away.

Luke 22:67-70 Jesus is on Trail by the Sanhedrin (Matthew 27:1, Mark 15:1):

67 "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe. 68 And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go. 69 Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God." 70 Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" So He said to them, "You rightly say that I am."

All Gospel writers report Jesus' trial by the elders. (9.c) The Lukan account records Jesus as saying that He will sit at the right hand of God, and specifically mentions the direct question "Are you the Son of God?" as well as the direct answer, (i.k) "You rightly say that I am." Jesus uses the name for God used in Exodus 3:14 to drive home his point concerning His divinity.

Jesus is now moved by the Jewish authorities to a trial by their overlords, the Romans.

Luke 23:3 Pontius Pilate Tries Jesus (Matthew 27:2, 11-14, Mark 15:1-5, John 18:28-38:

3 Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say."

(i.u) Jesus affirms He is King of the Jews. John is the only Gospel writer to add further detail to this answer of Jesus'.

The next words that Jesus is recorded as saying are at His Crucifixion.

Luke 23:28-34 Jesus is Crucified (Matthew 27:31-56, Mark 15:20-41, John 19:16-30):

28 But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' 30 Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!" 31 For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?" 32 There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. 33 And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. 34 Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots.

The prophet Hosea predicted such a fate for the occupants of Jerusalem.

Hosea 10:8:

Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, Shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!"

Isaiah 2:10,19,21

10 Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, From the terror of the Lord And the glory of His majesty. 19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks, And into the caves of the earth, From the terror of the Lord And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily. 21 To go into the clefts of the rocks, And into the crags of the rugged rocks, From the terror of the Lord And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily.

In the metaphor Jesus was using, the green living wood represented Jesus Himself on the Cross, breathing life into the new Jewish/Christian religion, which was loyal to Rome. The dead wood was the existing Jewish religion, which was far from loyal to Rome. That being the case, terrible calamity would, for sure, follow. Jesus was declaring prophetically the total destruction of the Temple and the Jewish polity.

(53.a) Luke is the only Gospel writer to record the prophetic warning given by Jesus, to the *"daughters of Jerusalem"* who, in AD 70, would see terrible famine in their city, which would lead to cannibalisation and eventually to starvation and death as reported by Josephus The Wars of the Jews, Book 6, Chapter 3:4. See notes to Luke 21:6-23. So terrible was their fate, that Jesus said they would be better off not to bear children to share in that fate.

On the cross, Jesus converses with one of the convicted criminals He had one on either side of Him. Matthew & Mark record that the robbers are taunting Jesus, but does not report His response. Luke adds more to this narrative by recording that one of the robbers asked for forgiveness and acknowledged Jesus' deity, which then warranted the response from Jesus recorded above.

Luke 23:43 At the Crucifixion:

43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

(58) This is the only time Jesus uses the word Paradise, from the word park or garden to mean the Garden of Eden. Jesus is teaching us that such a place does indeed exist. What is more, Jesus is the person to open the gates of that Garden of Eden, to all repentant sinners. Prior to this, the bosom of Abraham was the common term to describe where you would go, if you qualified, of course, for the Jewish people. Suitably Luke in Luke 16:19-31 in the story of the Rich Man, Abraham and Lazarus explains this prior view as Jesus had not yet ascended into Paradise yet to open it up.

Genesis 2:8

⁸The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

The last words of the Lukan account of Jesus at His Crucifixion were based on prior scripture ...

Luke 23:46:

And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last.

... which is taken from Psalm 31:5:

5 Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

(57) These above last words of Jesus are also unique to Luke. These words also do show us that Jesus yielded Himself under His control, up into the hands of the Creator, in sovereign control at all times. The long lingering death, over a couple of days for most who were crucified, did not apply to Jesus.

At the tomb, on the Saturday after sunset, a group of Galilean women, come with oils to anoint the body. Two angels are there in the open tomb and they both remind one of them of the words of Jesus said to them in Galilee concerning this very event.

Luke 24:7 The Report of the Resurrection (Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, John 20:1-10):

At the Resurrection one of the angels repeats to the ladies that Jesus had predicted (Luke 9:22 & 18:31-33) this Resurrection event and that they should not be surprised.

7 saying, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

(www) Mary Magdalene, Joanna, the wife of Herod's Steward, Mary the mother of James, and the other women (presumably not as important, as not named) *were given the first apostolic mission after the Resurrection of Jesus, to go and tell the 11 disciples the Good News that He is alive!*

The next words of Jesus are to some of His disciples walking away from Jerusalem, dejected.

Luke 24:17 Jesus on the Road to Emmaus (Mark 16:12-13):

17 And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

Jesus in person, but not yet recognised by some disciples on their way to Emmaus, inquires as to their state of mind. This is only reported in Luke. Jesus wants to know what had made them sad.

Luke 24:19

19 And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,

The travellers tell their abridged story, after which Jesus rebukes them for their lack of understanding.

Luke 24:25-26:

25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"

Luke 24:36-49 The Resurrection Proved (Mark 16:14, John 20:19-23 1 Corinthian 15:5-8):

36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." 37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." 40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. 41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marvelled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" 42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.

Jesus appears to the 11 remaining Disciples. Mark and John report this event, with John reporting also the absence of Thomas, although both Gospel writers report Thomas' empirical probing of His flesh to satisfy themselves as to its reality. (59) Jesus is very much teaching that there is not only a survival of death by your soul, but also by your body as well. (60) Jesus is also making clear He is no phantom, but a human being, in the flesh like all of us. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:5-8, lists ten distinct appearances of Jesus after His death. (i.k) This is also a divinity teaching, as Jesus uses the name for God, used by God in Exodus 3:14. It is mistranslated here from the Greek to read "I Myself."

Luke 24:43-49 The Disciples Great Commission (Acts 1:3-8):

43 And He took it and ate in their presence. 44 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. 46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And you are witnesses of these things.

Once more, Jesus draws the attention of His Disciples to His own predictions of His death and Resurrection, and to all those in the Old Testament (which are listed in the Appendix).

Luke 24:49 (Mark 16:19, John 14:26, Acts 1:9):

49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

Jesus explains to them the "Promise of My Father" which is the Holy Spirit, predicted in John 14:26, that will come at Pentecost.

Joel 2:28-29:

28 And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. 29 And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

And indeed would be sent out from Jerusalem as predicted 1000 years before.

Psalm 110:2

The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

The Gospel According to St John

It is worth taking a pause here. This is a work exclusively about the words of Jesus and any scriptural antecedents to those words. I have made little comment whether, with reference to, the Gospel authors' (Matthew, Mark and Luke) specific styles or the lenses which use to look at the events they report on and their notable differences. Different that they are, they still present as witnesses reporting on what they had seen and or heard from people who had seen the events narrated²⁷. The Gospel of John, however, is something totally different. The Gospel of John says Jesus is The Word, the very author of creation. John equates Jesus with the God of Genesis 1:3, who says, "*Let there be light*"; *and there was light.*" One part of the Godhead was the Word, according to John. John still narrates his own witness testimony, but his level of understanding of Jesus goes theologically deeper, and this is reflected in how he reports the events the other Gospel authors do. John also chooses to omit many of the events the other Gospel writers report as he was satisfied that they had already been reported sufficiently. John offers supplements involving other events they miss out. His Gospel is deeply spiritual, theological, and in some respects could be mistaken for being philosophical.

²⁷ See my book: *Against Atheism: The Case for Christ* the chapters: "Were the four Gospel Writers Eyewitnesses, or Apprenticed to Eyewitnesses?" and "Controversy Surrounding The Dating Of The Gospels" for a more detailed discussion of the Gospel authors.

John uses the word “λόγος²⁸,” which is sometimes translated from ‘logos’ to ‘word’, or ‘reason’ when he describes Jesus, who was both *with* God and *was* God, from the very beginning. The Jewish “Wisdom” literature in the Bible, particularly Proverbs, describes wisdom as a “she.” This wisdom was there at the creation moment and permeates the entire universe. The Greeks later called it ‘Sophia’, again feminine. John uses ‘logos’ which means the same thing, but has masculine connotations. However, both traditions come out of that Presence at the creation moment and are one and the same. The author of Proverbs majors on the feminine and the author of the Gospel of John on the masculine. John uses the opening five verses of Chapter 1 of his Gospel to blend in the masculine concept of The Word to carry on the older tradition of the feminine wisdom. Undoubtedly, the Gospel infers that these are now one and the same. The five verses are the New Testament “Genesis” or creation moment. It was also the opening of John’s Gospel, leaving no shadow of doubt that this Jesus, in the mind of John the Apostle and witness - that this was God itself that John was writing about. This Word is not the spoken word of reason, but the actual Word creating the universe and all that is in it. This is not the philosophers’ objective reasoning, word, but the acting reality of the creative force responsible for everything. Jesus is not the word of God spoken by the prophets, this is just prophets speaking inspired words, but the Word itself, pre-existent, before space/time/matter and the cause of it all. In John 1:14 this Word becomes flesh in the form of Jesus. It is a transformation in understanding of the meaning of the word. Jesus can never be seen as divinely inspired, or a prophet only. I am not saying the other Gospel authors viewed it any differently; it is just that they have never expressed it as succinctly as John. However, that is not to say that this thought does not trace its history back well into the Old Testament and develops further, sometimes, to suggest the word of God speaks to say, A, B and C individual following which, usually, X, Y and Z happens to something expressed as The Word, indicating that the pre-existent creator of everything is actually doing the happening. It is as the Word, incarnated in the man called Jesus, that is unequivocally the whole basis of the Fourth Gospel.

²⁸ This has a AB-Strong Number of 3056. In the Septuagint it is translated as a word, speech, communication; a reckoning, account; a matter.

For John, there is no doubt that he took this understanding of Jesus as the Word of God, and not from the later Greek philosophical tradition, as its antecedents are embedded in Jewish history that predates the rise of classical Greek philosophy. Logos, as either God talking, God inspiring talking, God's word effecting A, B or C change in the material world, or just God and the Word being interchangeable, are mentioned in these places²⁹ in the Septuagint/Greek Bible (Old Testament part). For a total of 413 times in the Old Testament is Logos used in a context either similar to John, or identical with John. More interestingly, prior to the Gospel of John, we have the first three Gospels in the New Testament where logos is used

²⁹ Exodus 4:28, 19:7-8, 20:1, 24:3, 24:8, 34:27, 35:1. Numbers 11:23, 12:6, Deuteronomy 4:30, 5:28, 9:10, 10:4, 18:19, 28:14, 29:1, 29:9, 31:12, 31:24, 31:28, 32:45-47, 33:3, Joshua 23:14, 1 Samuel 3:19, 8:10, 8:21, 15:10, 15:24, 2 Samuel 7:21, 7:28, 23:2, 1 Kings 2:4, 6:11-12, 8:56, 12:22-24, 13:1, 13:2, 13:5, 13:11, 13:17, 13:20, 13:22, 16:1, 22:19 2 Kings 7:16, 9:36, 6:12, 19:21, 22:16, 22:18, 1 Chronicles 11:10, 12:23, 16:15, 17:3, 17:15, 17:23, 22:8, 25:5, 2 Chronicles 6:10, 10:15, 11:2-4, 12:7, 18:18, 30:12, 34:21, 26-28, 35:6, 35:22, 36:21, Ezra 1:1, Ezra 9:4, Nehemiah 1:8, Job 26:14, Psalms 22:1, 33:4-6, 50:17, 56:4-10, 103:20, 105:8, 105:9, 105:19, 105:27-28, 105:42, 106:12, 106:24, 107:20, 119: 9, 119:16-17, 119:25, 119:28, 119:41-43, 119:49, 119:65, 119:74, 119:81, 119:89, 119:101, 119:107, 119:114, 119:130, 119:139, 119:147, 119:154, 119:160-161, 130:5, 147:15-18, 148:8, Proverbs 1:2, 1:23, 4:4, 5:1-7, 7:1-2, 30:6, Isaiah 1:10, 2:3, 11:4, 28:14, 28:43, 30:12, 30:21, 31:2, 37:22, 38:4, 39:5, 39:8, 45:23, 66:2, 66:5, Jeremiah 1:2, 1:4, 1:9, 1:11-13, 2:4, 2:31, 3:12, 5:13, 5:14, 6:19, 7:2, 7:4, 7:8, 7:27, 8:9, 9:12, 9:20, 10:1, 11:1-3, 11:6, 11:10, 13:2-3, 13:8, 13:10, 13:12, 14:1, 14:17, 15:16, 17:15, 17:20, 18:1-2, 18:5, 19:2-3, 19:15, 20:8, 21:1, 21:11, 22:1-2, 22:5, 22:29, 23:16-18, 23:22, 23:28-30, 24:4, 25:1, 28:8, 25:13, 25:30, 26:1-2, 26:5, 26:7, 26:10, 26:12, 26:15, 26:20, 26:21, 27:18, 28:12, 29:10, 29:20, 29:23, 29:30, 30:1-2, 30:4, 31:10, 31:20, 31:23, 32:1, 32:6, 32:8, 32:26, 33:1, 34:1, 34:6, 34:8, 34:12, 35:1, 35:12, 35:13, 36:1-2, 36:4, 36:8, 36:10, 36:11, 36:13, 36:16, 36:27, 37:2, 37:6, 37:17, 38:20, 38:21, 39:15-16, 40:1, 40:3, 42:7, 42:15, 43:1, 43:8, 44:16, 44:24, 44:26, 44:28, 44:29, 45:1, 50:1, 51:59-61, Ezekiel 1:3, 1:24, 2:6-7, 3:4, 3:6, 3:10, 3:16, 3:17, 6:1, 6:3, 7:1, 11:14, 12:1, 12:8, 12:17, 12:21, 12:23, 12:25, 12:26, 12:28, 13:1, 13:2, 13:6, 13:8, 14:2, 14:9, 14:12, 15:1, 16:1, 16:35, 17:1, 17:11, 18:1, 20:2, 20:45, 20:47, 21:1, 21:8, 21:18, 22:1, 22:17, 22:23, 23:1, 24:1, 24:15, 24:20, 25:1, 25:3, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 28:11, 28:20, 29:1, 29:17, 30:1, 30:2, 31:1, 31:1, 32:17, 33:1, 33:7, 33:23, 34:1, 34:7, 34:9, 35:1, 36:1, 36:4, 36:16, 37:4, 37:15, 38:1, Daniel 4:31, 9:2, 9:12, 9:23, 9:25, 12:4, 12:9, Hosea 1:1-2, 4:1, Joel 1:1, 2:11, Amos 1:1, 3:1, 4:1, 5:1, 5:10, 7:16, 8:11, 8:12, Jonah 1:1, 3:1, Micah 1:1-2, 2:7, 4:2, Zephaniah 1:1, 2:5, Haggai 1:1, 1:3, 1:12, 2:1, 2:5, 2:10, 2:20, Zechariah 1:1, 1:6, 1:7, 1:13, 4:6, 4:8, 6:9, 7:1, 7:4, 7:8, 7:12, 8:1, 8:9, 8:18, 9:1, 12:1, Malachi 1:1, 2:17,

52³⁰ times in a context either similar to John or identical with John. This research did surprise me.

Here is a selection of Biblical verses, prior to John, where 'logos' is used, in similar and slightly different circumstances to John.

Job 26:14:

14 Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways, And how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?

Psalm 22:1 (the words spoken by Jesus on the cross):

1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?

Psalm 33:4-6:

4 For the word of the Lord is right, And all His work is done in truth. 5 He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. 6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Psalm 107:20:

20 He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions.

Psalms 119:89:

89 Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven"

³⁰ Matthew 7:24, 7:26, 7:28, 8:8, 8:16, 13:19-23, 19:1, 19:11, 19:22, 24:35, 26:1, 26:44, Mark 2:2, 4:14-20, 4:33, 7:13, 7:29, 8:32, 8:38, 10:24, 12:13, 13:31, 16:20, Luke 1:2, 4:32, 4:36, 5:1, 5:15, 6:47, 8:11-13, 8:15, 8:21, 9:26, 9:28, 9:44, 10:39, 11:28, 21:33, 22:61, 24:44.

Psalms 119:105:

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

Psalms 147:15-18:

15 He sends out His command to the earth; His word runs very swiftly. 16 He gives snow like wool; He scatters the frost like ashes; 17 He casts out His hail like morsels; Who can stand before His cold? 18 He sends out His word and melts them; He causes His wind to blow, and the waters flow.

Isaiah 40:8:

8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

Isaiah 55:10-11:

10 For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, 11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Jeremiah 23:29:

Is not My word like a fire?" says the Lord, "And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

This next Proverb is worth quoting in full as it is all about the Word of God or Jesus and His pre-existent being:

Proverbs 8:

1 Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice? 2 She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, Beside the way, where the paths meet. 3 She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, At the entrance of the doors: 4 "To you, O men, I call, And my voice is to the sons of men. 5 O you simple ones, understand prudence, And you fools, be of an understanding heart. 6 Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, And from the opening of my lips will come

right things; 7 For my mouth will speak truth; Wickedness is an abomination to my lips. 8 All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; Nothing crooked or perverse is in them. 9 They are all plain to him who understands, And right to those who find knowledge. 10 Receive my instruction, and not silver, And knowledge rather than choice gold; 11 For wisdom is better than rubies, And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her. 12 "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion. 13 The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate. 14 Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, I have strength. 15 By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice. 16 By me princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth. 17 I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. 18 Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and righteousness. 19 My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver. 20 I traverse the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, 21 That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries. 22 "The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. 23 I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth. 24 When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth; 26 While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primal dust of the world. 27 When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep, 28 When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep, 29 When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth, 30 Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, 31 Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight was with the sons of men. 32 "Now therefore, listen to me, my children, For blessed are those who keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction and be wise, And do not disdain it. 34 Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the Lord; 36 But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death."

In the New Testament Gospel of Mark, we can see how in the parable of the sower, the word is none other than that of God.

Mark 4:14-20:

14 The sower sows the word. 15 And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. 16 These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 and they have no root in themselves, and so endure

only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. 18 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

Over the last couple of hundred years, New Testament scholarship has assumed that John, as the author of the 4th Gospel, was massively under the influence of a Jewish/Greek synthesis in philosophy and theology which, for the above reasons, I think has very little to say for itself. The Jewish philosopher Philo, in or around 40 AD, had a very convincing attempt to synthesise the Jewish wisdom literature with the works of Plato and his theory of the forms. The Jewish God blends with the Platonic, eternal conception of the Good. However, the Good is not eternal in Philo's schematic, but spoken into existence by God. The logos or rational word is the middle position between the eternal God and the material things. Logos, for Philo, is God's words in action, akin to how Christians would understand the role of the Holy Spirit, but is not God incarnated. This results in the Alexandrian understanding of the logos as the agent that effects all change in the world. In the New Testament book the Acts of the Apostles, verses 18:24, we read a report that then came the teacher Apollos, from Alexandria, to preach in Ephesus. It is assumed it is he that brought this type of teaching to Ephesus. John, an ignorant fisherman (or so they say) would have picked up on this line of thinking and applied it to his Gospel. Cerinthus, the Jewish-Christian heretic, was also in Ephesus at that time, being heavily influenced by the kind of synthesis of Jewish theology and Greek classical philosophy of Philo. However, John's report in his testimony is that Jesus is not just a transmission mechanism for God, but is also God, incarnated and in the shape of a man: Jesus. It is via this lens applied to Jewish wisdom literature and the Word incarnated, that I understand the Gospel according to John.

John 1:1-5 :

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."

Following the baptism of Jesus, two of John's followers, one named Andrew and un-named disciple, most likely the author in to, now switch from John the Baptist to following Jesus.

John 1:38:

*38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, **"What do you seek?"** They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"*

The seeking that Jesus questions them about, is deep and searching, prising out their motives. Seeking the wise, or wisdom itself, had at least a 1,000 year tradition in the Jewish Bible, especially in the wisdom book of Proverbs. The first words of this Gospel attributed to Jesus shows us how the Word, now anointed by the Holy Spirit, is incarnate in the man Jesus, who is helping his first followers, to think through what the wisdom they seek actually is.

Proverbs 8:17:

I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me.

They follow Him, and gather another, the brother of Andrew, who is moved by the faith of his brother.

John 1:42-43:

*42 And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, **"You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas"** (which, translated, is a stone). 43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, **"Follow Me."***

(i.e) (i.t) Even then Jesus knew the future role of Peter as the foundation of His church, demonstrating His omniscience once more.

At the close of chapter 1 of John, Jesus collects two followers, Nathanael and Phillip. The latter had declared to the former, this was the prophet that Moses had predicted. Nathanael is amazed that this prophet can identify him without meeting him before. Nathanael also re-enforces Phillip's view that Jesus is the Messiah. Collectively, their faith begins to deepen.

John 1:47-51:

*47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "**Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!**" 48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" 49 Jesus answered and said to him, "**Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.**" Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "**Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these.**" 51 And He said to him, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.**"*

In the first instance, Jesus recognises the innocence of Nathanael. Nathanael attests to his belief that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus points out that just this simple demonstration of His omniscience was only the start of things.

Psalm 32:1-2

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. ² Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

However, Jesus references the Old Testament prophecy of how a younger son took the inheritance of the elder son. This younger son, Jacob, became the father of all the nation of Israel while his elder brother Esau became the father of a number of Israel's enemies. Jacob was the younger twin, attached by the firm grasp of his hand at birth, whose name can actually mean 'deceiver'. (i) In life, he uses deceit

to gain his brother's inheritance as the first born. There are various reasons why God choose this outcome, that need not be delved into here. Suffice it to say Jesus is identifying Nathanael as one who is not deceitful, as Jesus can plainly see his intentions.

Genesis 25:23:

And the Lord said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."

As with all the other Gospels, I omit to comment on all the times Jesus refers to the Son of Man.

(ii) The opening of heaven is symbolic of imparting divine grace and generating revelation. Jesus has come to open the gate of heaven, as God had for Jacob.

Genesis 28:10-12, 16-17:

Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it..... Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

Ezekiel 1:1:

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

Malachi 3:10:

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out

for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.

In the opening of Chapter 2, Jesus very publically distinguishes Himself from the desert aesthetic teacher, John the Baptist, by attending a wedding celebration. Mary, the mother of Jesus looks to her son as wisdom itself when she notices that the wine at the wedding is finished and she knows that just like the wisdom spoken about in Proverbs, wine would be provided by Him. (hhh) This physical changing of the water into wine may well be a foretaste of the Eucharist feast where Jesus teaches that the wine is in effect, His own blood. The mother and Son's conversation is blunt and to the point, and Jesus is firmly stating that He is not subjected to His earthly mother's commands.

John 2:2-9:

*2 Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, 3 the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." 4 Jesus said to her, "**Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.**" 5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." 6 Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. 7 Jesus said to them, "**Fill the waterpots with water.**" 8 And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "**Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.**" And they took it. 9 When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom."*

The wisdom reference is Proverbs 9:1-9:

Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars; She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table. She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city, "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him, "Come, eat of my bread, And drink of the wine I have mixed. Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.

Mary, the Virgin, is there with Jesus, her son, when He performs His first miracle³¹ and also during His last moments of life on the cross. She is there at His first sign and at his last sign. It is characteristic of John's Gospel, that the women depicted: The Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, Martha and the Samaritan woman, all believe, whilst more of the men don't believe than do. Jesus refers to the Virgin Mary as "Woman." To us this may sound abrupt, even if He no longer took her command as a son. Perhaps it was more matter of fact as the only thing Jesus was preparing for was His death and Resurrection, which He alludes to when he points out that His hour had yet to come. (qqq) As this event is introduced as happening "on the third day," we have a hint of some symbolism concerning the Resurrection event. (i.b) Jesus demonstrates His divinity with the famous sign of turning water into wine showing that He is in control of all change. If the new wine is considered as representing the ample blood Jesus was soon to shed to establish the New Covenant, then the symbolism could well work. His mother clearly knew He would do something as she instructs the servants to wait on Him; but how she knew, we do not know. He then sends it to the master of the feast in a symbolic offering.

In chapter 2 at the cleansing of the Temple, Jesus is horrified at the lack of religious based activities are going on in this sacred place at the time of Passover.

The Jesus Party move on and up to Jerusalem.

John 2:16-17:

*"And He said to those who sold doves, **"Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"** Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."*

³¹ These on-going miracles in the Book of John are often referred to as signs of which there are 7 including this one. Healing the royal official's son (John 4:46-54); Healing the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem (John 5:1-15); Feeding the 5,000 (John 6:5-14); Walking on water (John 6:16-24); Healing the man born blind (John 6:16-24); and Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-45).

(9.c) Jesus is clearly attesting to being divine and the Son of God. Jesus' understanding had scriptural authority, as shown in Zechariah 14:21

21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.

This prompts the disciples to remember Psalm 69:9:

9 Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

This Psalm was written by David when he, in turn, was trying to defend God's house, which resulted in his persecution. The fear of the disciples was this would now happen to them. (iiii) Jesus, in this act, is clearly demonstrating the fact that a place of worship is for just that - (iii) for worship - and only God can regulate the times, dates and terms and conditions of worship.

The Jews then question His authority to make such a claim. It's a legitimate question to ask and comes from Deuteronomy 13:1-3:

13 If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Another very interesting point to notice, is at this Temple event, Jesus is calling it **"My Father's house."** At the second Temple event, in Matthew 23:38, it is **"Your house."** This demonstrates that by that time Jesus as part of the Godhead, had left that Temple.

John 2:18-22:

*18 So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" 19 Jesus answered and said to them, "**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise***

it up.” 20 Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” **21** But He was speaking of the temple of His body. **22** Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.”

The reference to scripture at the end of this section is to Hosea 6:2:

6 After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.

(qqq) Jesus was ultimately referring to His one death and Resurrection that would take place over three days. (rr.a) There could be a double meaning referring to the future event of the actual physical destruction of the Temple that Titus so comprehensively achieved in 70 AD. John’s Gospel here supplements two of the other Gospel writers (Matthew 26:61 Mark 14:58,) who recalled these words of Jesus and whose foes interpreted this as a threatening statement, to condemn Him at His trial. They did not recognise the authority of Jesus to regulate the practises of Temple worship.

In Chapter 3, Jesus then enters into a debate with Nicodemus, a Pharisee.

John 3:2-3:

2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” **3** Jesus answered and said to him, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”**

To be born again into the Messianic Kingdom was something that was to be expected. This translation is missing the key Greek word ἀνωθεν *anowthen* or “from above.”

Daniel 12:2:

2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

There were six ways a Jew could be born again. At his Bar Mitzvah, his marriage, ordained as a Rabbi, or become head of a Rabbinical school. Nicodemus was all of the above. The other two ways were not applicable to him, as they were to be crowned as King or be a gentile converting to Judaism. So, Nicodemus was rightly confused at what Jesus was teaching. Nicodemus, by coming in the night, sets himself up for Jesus to contrast the visit between the ignorance of darkness and the knowledge of light. (iv) Jesus is teaching that we need to live in the light of day to see the Kingdom. This implies that we need to be born again and not just have knowledge. It supports the Christian practise of being born again via the process of being baptised.

Nicodemus pushes for more information concerning the “how” of this being born again.

John 3:4-7:

*4 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’**”*

(v) Jesus teaches that being born again will involve water. Water was seen as cleansing, especially when coupled with spiritual cleansing.

Numbers 19:17:

And for an unclean person they shall take some of the ashes of the heifer burnt for purification from sin, and running water shall be put on them in a vessel.

Isaiah 44:3-5:

For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.’ One will say, ‘I am the Lord’s’; Another will call himself by

the name of Jacob; Another will write with his hand, 'The Lord's,' And name himself by the name of Israel.

Ezekiel 36:24-27:

For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

(ddd.f.i) (22) (hh) Jesus rebukes Nicodemus as a teacher of Israel for not knowing all these things. (vi) His Holy scripture taught Nicodemus the significance of the need for the Holy Spirit to descend upon us for us to be able to walk with God.

Wisdom 9:17:

17 Who has learned your counsel, unless you have given wisdom and sent your holy spirit from on high? 17New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

(ddd.f.i) Jesus shows that Nicodemus wants to know about heavenly matters, but that he does not know about earthly teachings. Jesus continues:

John 3:8-16:

8 "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." 9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? 11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should

not perish but have everlasting life."

(viii) Jesus is teaching that the Spirit is totally free, like the wind, as are we who are born of it. (mmm.a) What is more, any of us are free to reject these teachings. (vii) He teaches an earthly redemption is the way we may reach heaven, and that as of yet only He has been there and done it. This is Jesus saying He is in both places: teaching that, in essence, He is God. (hh.a) Moses had given his people the God-inspired Law of old, and we would not require heavenly intervention to understand these things now as they were written in the Law, that Nicodemus should have known. So on what warrant does Jesus have to believe Nicodemus will know?

Deuteronomy 30:10-12:

10 if you obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, and if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?"

(vii.a) Jesus makes the point that only the occupier of heaven, God, can comment on Godly matters. By implication, Jesus is saying He is the earthly manifestation of God. The scriptural reference is Proverbs 30:4:

4 Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, If you know?

(i.a) (t) Jesus points out how the Son of Man needed to be lifted up, just as the people of Israel needed to look into the serpent of Moses as he lifted it up to be healed. Like their ancestors, when they see Jesus lifted up on the cross at Calvary, they too may be healed. The serpent and his bite signified Satan's sting.

Numbers 21:5-9:

5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." 6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. 7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us." 8 So Moses prayed for the people. Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

This command of Moses to look at the serpent perplexed many of the Jews of the time, as it would appear to be demanding worship of a false god. Seen in the light of being a vision of the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross, makes more sense of this seemingly out of place command of Moses.

Wisdom 16:5-13:

5 When terrible, fierce snakes attacked your people and were killing them with their poison, you did not remain angry long enough to destroy your people. 6 This trouble lasted for only a little while, as a warning. Then you gave them a healing symbol, the bronze snake, to remind them of what your Law requires. 7 If a person looked at that symbol, he was cured of the snakebite—not by what he saw, but by you, the savior of all mankind. 8 By doing this, you also convinced our enemies that you are the one who rescues people from every evil. 9 Our enemies died from the bites of locusts and flies; no way was found to cure them, because they deserved to be punished by such creatures. 10 But even poisonous snakes could not overcome your people, because you had mercy, helped them, and cured them. 11 They were bitten so that they would remember your commands, but they were quickly rescued, in order to keep them from forgetting you completely and depriving themselves of your kindness. 12 No medicine or ointment cured them. They were restored to health by your word, O Lord, the word which heals all humanity. 13 You have power over life and death; you can bring a person to the brink of death and back again. Good News Translation (GNT)

(ix) Jesus is teaching also that unlike an earthly release from the serpent's sting, scripture did teach the everlasting release that is provided by an acceptance of Wisdom. If we keep our eyes and ears fixed on the message of Jesus on the Cross we will achieve eternal life, but if we follow the serpent, it will be eternal torment. This is the first of ten references to eternal life in John's Gospel.

Wisdom 8:13:

13 Because of her I shall have immortality, and leave an everlasting remembrance to those who come after me. New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

(x) Jesus reminds Nicodemus of the precursor to His own death on the cross, that of the potential son sacrifice of Isaac almost performed by Abraham. This part of Jewish history would be known to Nicodemus, who perhaps may not be expected yet to make the connection in Genesis 22:2:

2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

(xi) Jesus is also teaching that the incarnated Jesus is the gift from God that gives us as believers the ability to transcend death and gain eternal life.

(xii) In the closing words of Jesus in this chapter, Jesus reminds Nicodemus that when we find the truth, or the light, and we live in that light in a Godly way, all will clearly see this. Those in a state of spiritual blindness may see this light and these are the people Jesus has come to save, yet some will purposefully turn off this light and will be condemned by themselves even before Judgment Day.

John 3:17-21:

17" For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Psalm 15:

1 Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? 2 He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart; 3 He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; 4 In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the Lord He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; 5 He who does not put out his money at usury, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved."

(14) Jesus is teaching that He is the light of the world and has come to save the inhabitants of the world because they currently live in a preferred state of darkness, or a life of sin.

Jesus leaves Jerusalem and heads for Galilee via Samaria. Jesus is at the site of Jacob's well and a Samaritan woman approaches and He asks her for water. She can't fathom why a Jew would be asking this a Samaritan woman, viewed to be unclean by the Jews.

John 4:10:

10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

(vii.b) (vii.c) In the Old Testament the 'living water' was God, who entered us spiritually and left goodness in us - not physical water of the kind that quenches thirst. In this dialogue above, Jesus is referring not to the physical water, but the Word of God He is preparing to deliver.

Jeremiah 2:13:

13 For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Zechariah 14:8:

8 And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.

Isaiah 12:3:

3 Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation.

Isaiah 44:3:

3 For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring

Jeremiah 17:13:

13 O Lord, the hope of Israel, All who forsake You shall be ashamed. "Those who depart from Me Shall be written in the earth, Because they have forsaken the Lord, The fountain of living waters.

Ezekiel 36:25-27:

25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

John 4:11-26:

11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? 12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." 15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." 16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a

prophet. **20** Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.” **21** Jesus said to her, **“Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”** **25** The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” **26** Jesus said to her, **“I who speak to you am He.”**

(v.ii.b) The woman misses His point that the better idea is to drink the Living Water and forget about the physical water of the well. Such a matter wafts over her head, so Jesus focuses on her confused life of multiple relationships and reveals that He knows about it all, demonstrating (i.e) His omniscience. She detects His prophetic abilities. She is symbolic for Samaria, who worshiped false Gods, represented by the many husbands. With her sixth husband in tow, Jesus was the 7th and perfect new symbolic bridegroom, the number 7 always indicating perfection. (rr.a) Jesus then points to the future and His impending death as well as the destruction of Jerusalem and the nation of Samaria as a distinct political unit. (xiii) He teaches that true worship will only not take place in specific Temple/Mountain complexes, but when our heart and soul embraces the Lord Jesus Himself. Acts 8:1-25 reports the mass conversion of that region of the world to worshipping the Gospel of Jesus. Jesus teaches that God is Spirit, invisible, and no Temple can contain this Spirit. What is more, just going through the motions and not worshipping with our spirit was as shallow a form of belief as being tied to a Temple only. We need to worship with our entire heart and soul. Temple manifestations are to become obsolete. Jesus in these verses, spells out the Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus notes that the Jews, being the only people exposed to Jesus thus far, are the only ones capable of being saved, and the Samaritan worshipers would not be. The woman knows this Messianic event is on the cards, they accepted the first 5 books of Moses as their Law. Following what she would have known in Deuteronomy 18:15, to expect the Messiah. (i.g) Jesus finishes by firmly telling this woman that He is that Messiah.

Deuteronomy 18:15:

15 The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.

(i.k) What is more, in the Septuagint the words He uses to tell her He is the Messiah are the words of Exodus 3:14, therefore a very firm divinity declaration.

14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'

So by translating the words of Jesus as *"I who speak to you am He,"* this section of the Bible ends with a translation that slightly blunts the use of "I am," the name God chose for Himself in Exodus 3:14 and the name Jesus uses here.

The disciples catch up with Jesus at the well just cited and urged Him to eat.

John 4:31-38

31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." 32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." 33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. 35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! 36 And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' 38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

(vii.d) Jesus points out that *His* 'food' is doing the will of God. As this food is the bread of life, this is ongoing and eternal. (vii.e) What is more, Jesus reminds His followers that although the earthly harvest was four months away, the Son of Man comes and the seeds He has sown can be ready to harvest immediately. This is probably a reference to the quicker conversion of the Samaritans (the crowds coming before him as he spoke) and Gentiles in general, as opposed to the slower

conversion of the Jews. Both the crop of believers and the harvester (Jesus, no less) will be rejoicing together for eternity. But Jesus reminds His disciples that they have not done the sowing as of yet and yet they will reap the early benefits of His work and those of the prophets who came before.

Deuteronomy 8:3:

3 So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

The Jesus Party goes back to Cana in Galilee.

John 4:48-53 The Healing of the Ruler's Son:

48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe." 49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" 50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!" 52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.

(xiv) Jesus was contrasting the Jews, who would not believe even with physical miracles performed in front of them, with the Samaritans, who believed via what they had heard.

Now they all move on and back up to Jerusalem.

John 5:6-16 The Healing of the Cripple at the Pool of Bethesda "house of outpouring."

Inside Jerusalem, at the Pool of Bethesda, Jesus heals a paralytic man with the following words:

6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time,

He said to him, **“Do you want to be made well?”** **7** The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.” **8** Jesus said to him, **“Rise, take up your bed and walk.”** **9** And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. **10** The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.” **11** He answered them, “He who made me well said to me, **“Take up your bed and walk.”**” **12** Then they asked him, “Who is the Man who said to you, “Take up your bed and walk?”” **13** But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. **14** Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, **“See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”** **15** The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. **16** For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

(i.e) Jesus, who has supernatural knowledge, speaks to the man who is healed.
(vii.c) (i.d) At the start of this Gospel, we see Jesus as the Word, speaking creation into existence. The Word did, indeed, breathe new life into this man.

Genesis 1:3:

3 Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

(vvv) The local religious Jews do not like fact that He had commanded a man to work on the Sabbath by picking up his bed. (40) (xv) As Jesus is clear that sin is not to be equated with illness elsewhere, (Luke 13:1-5 for example in the Tower of Siloam story) I view the words of Jesus to in general to mean: maintain a clean life in an ongoing way, because if we don't we are far more likely to suffer even worse things than the physical ailments the man had just been cured of.

Verbally attacked by the Pharisees for doing a healing on the Sabbath, Jesus responds:

John 5:17

*But Jesus answered them, **“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.***

(vvv) The deity never stops working in order to sustain creation. The scriptural

reference is Isaiah 40:28:

28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable.

(9.c) Jesus teaches His total equality with God in this divinity declaration. The Jews seek to kill Him for making this assertion.

Jesus then talks about His intimate connectivity, or oneness, with the Father by using the analogy of an apprentice and a master, something that would be very relevant in 1st Century Judea.

John 5:19:

19 "Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner."

(vii.f) In this verse, Jesus is adding that the output of His work is the same as God's work and indeed it can't be anything different. Christians consider Sophia of the Greeks and of the Jewish Wisdom books as Jesus, so the scriptural reference is Wisdom 8:3-4:

3 She glorifies her noble birth by living with God, and the Lord of all loves her. 4 For she is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and an associate in his works." Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)

What's more, their power is the same. Jesus will show them more powerful things than healing a paralytic, just as God had shown the Jews before.

John 5:20:

"For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel."

Jesus teaches His power is the same as that of the Almighty. We know later that He

has the ability to raise the dead, a more miraculous event. The analogy is with 1 Kings 17:21-22, when Elijah revives the widow's son:

21 And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." 22 Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived."

And when Elisha raises the Shunammite's Son in 2 Kings 4:32-35:

32 When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. 33 He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord. 34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. 35 He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes."

Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:6 tells:

6 The Lord kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up.

(vii.g) Jesus has the power of life over death. This was exclusively the Lord's, or the agents He delegated. Both these prophets quoted were agents of God.

Jesus continues.

John 5:21-22:

21 For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. 22 "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,"

... whose scriptural reference comes from the following:

Psalm 72:1-4:

1 Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. 2 He will

judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice. 3 The mountains will bring peace to the people, And the little hills, by righteousness. He will bring justice to the poor of the people; 4 He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor."

And Proverbs 1:20-31:

20 Wisdom calls aloud outside; She raises her voice in the open squares. 21 She cries out in the chief concourses, At the openings of the gates in the city She speaks her words: 22 "How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning, And fools hate knowledge. 23 Turn at my rebuke; Surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you. 24 Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, 25 Because you disdained all my counsel, And would have none of my rebuke, 26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, 27 When your terror comes like a storm, And your destruction comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you. 28 "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. 29 Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the Lord, 30 They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke. 31 Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, And be filled to the full with their own fancies.

John 5:23-30:

23 that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. 25 Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, 27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. 30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."

(xvi) The believers who hear the words of Jesus will have life eternal. He is teaching that a believer will honour Jesus Himself, just as He does the Lord God. These believers, both now and in the past will have judgement passed on them

and obtain everlasting life in heaven, or death in hell. This must be a spiritual resurrection Jesus refers to, as He then refers to physical resurrection from graves of the dead who, in the future, will also receive the same heaven or hell judgment applied to them. The will of Jesus is understood to be one and the same with that of God. (vii.h) Once again, Jesus is asserting His divinity. (liii) Jesus is also teaching both He and the Father, being one and the same, have self-existence or aseity when He says "*For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself.*"

(vii.i) Jesus in the first instance teaches that the Lord God is the ultimate witness. Then, as he anticipates disbelief, and in full knowledge of the Mosaic Law, Jesus tells how He has an additional witness to his deity: one John the Baptist.

John 5:31-33:

31 "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. 32 There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. 33 You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth."

Moses had long ago, in scripture, laid down the requirement for witness testimony that Jesus was referring to in Deuteronomy 17:6:

6 Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness.

And Deuteronomy 19:15:

15 One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established."

(jjjj) Jesus demonstrates that that witness was John the Baptist and that it was always predicted in scripture that there would be someone to prepare the way.

Psalm 132:17:

17 There I will make the horn of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed.

And, of course, Malachi 4:5-6:

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. 6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

John 5:34-38:

34” Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. 35 He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. 36 But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. 37 And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. 38 But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.”

(xvii) The key point here is that Jesus is saying even though John the Baptist is a good witness, and that people did for a while look up to Him, this is nothing compared to the divine miracles performed by Jesus in front of many people. Jesus then actually reminds His audience to search the scriptures carefully if they really wanted a witness to Him and his ability to sustain eternal life. He also reminds them how hopeless many were in their reading, since if they knew what it is saying they would know that if they believed in Jesus, they could obtain eternal life.

Psalm 132:17:

17 There I will make the horn of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed.

John 5:39-40:

39 “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.”

Psalm 40:6-8:

6 Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. 7 Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.

This next one is about some going to hell and some to heaven for eternity.

Psalm 49:9:

A heavenly final destination for man is what this whole psalm is about.

Psalm 61:4:

4 I will abide in your tabernacle forever.

Man will go to his eternal bode in heaven Ecclesiastes 12:5:

5 Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails. For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.

God will make Jerusalem the eternal Kingdom.

Isaiah 60:15:

15 Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, So that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, A joy of many generations.

Above all, Jesus is teaching: don't think we know it all and are automatically saved; read the scriptures and learn. (liv) More to the point, see the multi melennial time lime with over 400 predictions of the coming of Jesus, to fulfil and complete the law and provide a New Covenant. This is what you should read scripture to understand.

John 5:41-44:

41 I do not receive honor from men. 42 But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in

you. 43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. 44 How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?

(ddd.f.i) Jesus knows He does not receive the honour (or praise) of men who should know their scripture, as they think He ought to manifest as a Jewish military and political superhero. If that type did arrive, as the historian Josephus records, people did follow revolutionaries of this kind at the drop of a hat. But they let themselves down by *not* following Jesus. This reference to a person coming in his own name, could be Jesus foretelling how Barabbas would fulfil this role at His Trial. Or that in later times they will follow false idols like Muhammad.

(t) Jesus then continues to remind all that Moses had written extensively about Him. For a list of comparisons between Moses and Jesus, see the appendix.

John 5:45-47:

45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?

(xviii) Moses records the Shema prayer of the Jews, which is used to establish the oneness of God. Moses used the same word 'one' God, as used for the unity of man and woman in Genesis 2:24 (two persons, man *and* a woman from one flesh) thus, paradoxically, preparing the ground for the Trinity as three persons in one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4:

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!

(t) Jesus reminds His audience that Moses wrote about the Messiah and how He would be a prophet (with evidence of prophecies required to distinguish a good from a false one) in Deuteronomy 18:15:

15 The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

Moses then suggests a test to established the true prophet the Messiah complies with in Deuteronomy 18:20-22:

20 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ 21 And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?’— 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.”

Moses shows how we are all cursed, as it is humanly impossible to obey *all* the Law. But Jesus takes on the universal curse by “hanging on a tree” for all of us, as in Deuteronomy 21:22-23:

22 If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, 23 his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.”

Moses reports how the Messiah will provide redemption for the Gentiles as well - The Messiah, as the anointed one, would have nations and their leaders directly hostile to Him. Deuteronomy 32:43:

43 Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people.

Jesus then leaves Jerusalem for the Sea of Galilee. By now a great multitude of people follow Jesus as a result of His healings and teachings. Jesus sits on a mountain with His disciples. Its Passover time, so Jesus wants to make sure all have ample food to eat.

John 6:4-14 The Feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:11-17):

This physical changing of the bread into more bread may well be a foretaste of the Eucharist feast where Jesus teaches that the bread is in effect, His own bread of life, the subject of which this Gospel is rapidly coming to focus on.

*4 Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. 5 Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, **“Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?”** 6 But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. 7 Philip answered Him, **“Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.”** 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, 9 **“There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?”** 10 Then Jesus said, **“Make the people sit down.”** Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, **“Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.”***

The multitude then acknowledge His status as a prophet. In this recording the food provided comes not from the disciples, but from one of the audience. (vii.d.) (xix) Also Phillip is very much an unbeliever, so Jesus is drawing Him out to again make the point that He is divine. John also adds in the iconic Eucharist phrase “given thanks,” which would suggest that John certainly viewed this as a precursor to the establishment of the Eucharist feast proper at the Last Super. The requirement to “gather up” the remaining pieces of bread, not the crumbs, reminds all that Jesus is an abundant giver, and His gift of a righteous life and eternal salvation should be recognised.

See notes to Matthew, Mark and Luke.

After this spectacular event, the multitude seek to make Him a King, so Jesus departs in haste. His disciples get onto a boat and head for Capernaum, without Him.

John 6:20-21 Jesus Walks on Water (Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52)

(i.b) The disciples encounter a storm. Jesus then walks on the water to them. This story is narrated in the middle of the bread of life discourse. We have to ask ourselves why this is. Although it is historically reported in the other Gospels, it is not part of the bread of life teaching. It would seem that John wants to doubly confirm the point that the physical Jesus is actually supernatural as well, and that when processing the bread of life teachings, this should be at the forefront of their minds.

*20 But He said to them, **"It is I; do not be afraid."** 21 Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.*

(i.b) It should be noted that if the walking on water miracle was not enough, the arrival immediately on land, supernaturally, at the location was the second miracle and the cherry on the cake of this story. (i.k) The translation is in error here as in the Greek it reads "I am" or the name of God chosen by God in Exodus 3:14.

See notes to Matthew and Mark.

The bread of life discourse commences the next day with various people coming to find Jesus. As they did not observe Him departing in a boat with the disciples, they enquire how He got where He was. Jesus answers in **John 6:26-31**:

*26 Jesus answered them and said, **"Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."** 28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered and said to them, **"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."** 30 Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"*

(33) Jesus teaches that He is not some kind of magician performing a conjuring trick here and there. The motivations of this crowd were questionable, feeding their guts as opposed to their spiritual being. They should only seek if they have true spiritual understanding. (fff) Verse 29 has one of the most succinct and clear declarations that we must have faith and believe in God and that works are irrelevant to our salvation.

John 6:32-33:

32 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

Jesus corrects the crowd who had been asking for a sign from heaven to be produced by Him. Suggesting they would like to see a big sign like Moses of old, Jesus points out that the bread came down from heaven, and *not* from Moses, the scriptural reference being Numbers 11:9:

9 And when the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna fell on it.

In Exodus 16:31 the bread came:

31 And the house of Israel called its name Manna. And it was like white coriander seed, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

In Exodus 17:1-2 it is clear they hungered for more i.e., that what was physically sent did not fully satiate them.

1 Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink.

Psalm 78:24:

24 Had rained down manna on them to eat, And given them of the bread of heaven.

Wisdom 16:20:

20 Instead of these things thou didst give thy people food of angels, and without their toil thou didst supply them from heaven with bread ready to eat, providing every pleasure and suited to every taste. Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)

(xx) Jesus would indeed come and He would offer that spiritual and everlasting food of life.

In the Jewish Wisdom passages, it was always understood that Wisdom/Sophia was the provider of bread, so Jesus keeps his metaphor of Bread of Life very much in that tradition. See Proverbs 9:5:

5 Come, eat of my bread. And drink of the wine I have mixed.

John 6:35-40:

35 I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

(vii.d.i) Jesus gives us another one of His clear "I am" divinity declarations here. The bread of life sustains us all. God as the Father has chosen who has the potential to be saved and will urge us to approach, but it does take two to tango. We need to exercise our free will in order to believe in His Son, Christ Jesus. (xxi) It would seem this is a qualified free will, as we are only going down the path of faith in Jesus as we are being drawn and encouraged by the Lord God. If this is done, the

bread of life in turn gives us eternal life. No person of faith will be lost and all of those will be resurrected in the last day.

The Jews question His claim to have come down from heaven and point out that they know Jesus to be the son of Joseph the carpenter and my implication not the Son of God.

John 6:45:

45 "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me."

Jesus also adds the teaching, explicitly, that we need to be drawn by God to Jesus.

Isaiah 54:13:

13 All your children shall be taught by the Lord, And great shall be the peace of your children.

And in Jeremiah 31:33-34:

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

Hosea 11:4:

4 I drew them with gentle cords, With bands of love, And I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them.

Above all, you can't help but be reminded in this passage of the parallel passage from Proverbs 1:20-33 concerning the call of wisdom that is given in full above.

Now we move to the culmination of the “Bread of Life” passage in the Fourth Gospel.

John 6:48-59:

48 “I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” 52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?” 53 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.” These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.”

(i.k) Jesus opens this dialogue with the name of God twice, the “I am” of Exodus 3:14, to make clear His own divinity. Jesus uses the words: “This is the bread” which again would be a (xix) foretaste of the Eucharistic feast that was established at the Last Supper. Jesus clearly distinguishes the supernaturally given physical bread to feed the Israelites in the wilderness at the time of the Exodus, and the living bread of Christ Jesus Himself. This is not the specific bread of the Eucharist service, but the actually living bread of Jesus, which is also represented by the Eucharist bread. So this bread and blood of life refers to the spiritual bread and blood of the Eucharist service. If we don’t eat that bread, we will ultimately die; if we do eat the bread of life, we will live for eternity. If we digest what we can of Jesus, we are also digesting God and claiming our slice of eternity, as (xxii) Jesus teaches, we will abide in Him. (qqq) Jesus also hints at His impending earthly death which is to be seen as an offering for us to very much live. (xxiii) The eating of the body of Christ refers to our realization when we make the digestion that we

attempt to make a portion of our body at one with Him in heaven. By the drinking of His life blood, which was outpoured at Calvary, we share in His sacrifice for our sins. All this is in preparation of uniting with Him and the Father. Above all, Jesus is inviting us to share in His sufferings and to closely imitate His earthly life and teachings. Jesus is also teaching us about His soon to be death. His perfect sacrifice for the entire sins of the world.

Leviticus 17:11-14:

11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.' 12 Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.' 13 "Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; 14 for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.'"

John 6:60-66 A Number of Disciples Desert Him:

60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" 61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. 65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." 66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more."

Jesus is sometimes portrayed in this Gospel of being anti "the Jews," despite being a Jew Himself. Here we see Him having a dispute with some disciples. This suggests that Jesus and John were not anti-Semitic, just anti those who disputed with them and did not understand the teachings of Jesus. Jesus demonstrated His omniscience by knowing that an element of His disciples were still stuck with thinking in terms of the tradition food laws that prevented the consummation of

blood, and had not grasped the fact that Jesus was teaching that the food of eternal life was in consuming His very words. Jesus proceeds to probe His audience. What if Jesus went back to His heavenly abode (via the Ascension reported in Mark, Luke, Paul and the Letter to the Hebrews, curiously not in John other than this oblique reference), He suggests? Jesus alludes to an event that they will see, His Ascension into heaven; now, that will be spectacular. This is to the spiritual abode. The spirit is life itself and the world of flesh ends in death. He reiterates the fact that we need to be chosen or drawn near by the Father to understand the Son. For many, they did not understand this teaching, so radical it did seem to them, so they left.

John 6:67-71 Peter Confirms His Belief and that of the Others

*67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, **“Do you also want to go away?”** 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* 70 Jesus answered them, **“Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?”** 71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.*

(i.e) After hearing Peter’s affirmation of the divine Jesus, Jesus gently takes Peter down a peg or two and reminds Peter and the others that He chose them, and yet one of them will go out of his way to betray Jesus.

Jesus spent time in Galilee teaching His disciples. His brothers were still sceptical of His divine role. They suggest He goes to Judea and perform miracles to prove this, so they knew Jesus was special, but were not convinced concerning His divinity. Perhaps this was foretold ...

Psalm 69:8:

8 I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother’s children;

Jesus responds as follows:

John 7:6-9:

6 Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. 8 You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come." 9 When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

(qqq) The response is similar to that which He gave His mother at the wedding feast at Cana: His time had not yet come. Jesus teaches that as He is aware of the sins and evil in the world, the world hates Him, where it does not His brothers, in this respect, their time in the world is ready and accepted. Jesus teaches that His death, Resurrection and Ascension was part of a divine timetable that could not be accelerated. He was not going to be rushed; Jesus was not yet ready to be put on the cross. He acknowledges that for the others, as unbelievers, anytime would do as they did not recognise His divinity (yet). (xxv) The world will hate us as a believer just as it hates Jesus right then for exposing the evil in the world.

Jesus, in His own time and according to His own agenda, then does go up to Jerusalem, to the Temple, where He openly teaches. He is questioned once more by a sceptical audience as they assume Jesus is untaught - yet He knows scripture. After performing miracles, they still don't believe, and become aggressive.

John 7:16-19:

"Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him. Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"

(9.d) Jesus does not mince His words and teaches that His teachings come from the Lord God. Those listeners who were motivated to live as God would prefer would know this and be willingly drawn in. Jesus teaches that as He is only speaking for God and not His own earthly glory, it should be plain to all that He is not a false Messiah. As it was at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles (indeed the

end of the 7th year) for which Moses had laid out very specific instructions concerning reading the Law which were not being adhered to, Jesus points out the hypocrisy of questioning Him when He was only doing what was required of him by the Law.

Deuteronomy 31:10-11:

10 And Moses commanded them, saying: "At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing."

In reality, Jesus was also giving us a more practical caution about teaching in our own name and actually believing you are imparting great wisdom. Invariably this wisdom is known and or waiting to be discovered and had its origination in the creator of the universe. The latter should always get the real glory. (ddd.f.i) Jesus continues to expose hypocrisy and teach them their own Law.

John 7:20-24:

20 The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?" 21 Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. 22 Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? 24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

Genesis 17:10:

10 This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised

Leviticus 12:1-3:

1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of

her customary impurity she shall be unclean. 3 And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

(vvv) (8) (hh) So what Jesus was pointing out was, in the first instance, that the regulation concerning circumcision predated Moses (it was part of the older Abrahamic covenant that was endorsed by Moses into what became known as Mosaic Law). Following that, if you were a male Jew born on the Sabbath, you would have to be circumcised on the Sabbath (the 8th day falling on the next Sabbath) - thus breaking their own rules of not working on the Sabbath. Jesus completely cures someone on the Sabbath (the paralytic man of Chapter 5) which is far much more important than a ceremonial procedure. Jesus teaches that righteous and wise judgment in the spirit of the Law is the name of the game and not petty legalism.

The closing verse quoted above is a reference to Isaiah 11:3:

3 His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears

More sceptical questions focusing around where Jesus come from, heaven (or Galilee?) result in Jesus responding:

John 7:28-29:

28 Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, 'You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. 29 But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.'

This little verse is quite important theologically as Jesus is for sure attesting to His manhood as one of their own, but also His divinity, two of the three parts of the Godhead. Their spiritual bankruptcy is evident as they should by now know that He was the Messiah foretold of old and divine. Indeed, (i.k) He uses the name of the God of Exodus 3:14 twice, the "I am", to describe Himself.

The authorities already want to kill Him so they try to capture Jesus again, at which He tells them:

John 7:33-34:

33 Then Jesus said to them "I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me. 34 You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come."

(qqq) Jesus was teaching that His impending Crucifixion would place Him back in heaven from whence He came and those seeking to persecute Him would never get access to that place. (i.k) Again, we see the same divinity claim as in the above verses with the use of the name of God: "I am."

On the last part of this particular public ministry, Jesus teaches:

John 7:37-39:

37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." 39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

At the end of the Feast of Tabernacles, the High Priest would take a cup filled with water from the pool of Siloam. Isaiah 12:3 was recited:

3 Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation.

They would also sing Psalms 113-118 (parts of all of these exist in the DSS except 117) known as the "Hallel" (these are too numerous to repeat here). The water was then offered as a sacrifice in the hope of a full flush of rain for the crops. This was the water of life. (vii.b) Jesus was using this symbolism to make all aware that He is the Living Water.

(vii.b) The rivers symbolized in Ezekiel 47 were the living waters that the Jews were expecting at the end of times. Ezekiel 47:7-9 sums it up:

7 When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other. 8 Then he said to me: "This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. 9 And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.

Zechariah 14:8:

8 And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.

Isaiah 55:1:

1 Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

(vii.b) Jesus was teaching that He was the fulfilment of this rite at the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus was the one to feed the thirsty souls that would give eternal life to all who would drink of that Living Water.

At the very end of Chapter 7 and the start of Chapter 8 we have the story of the adulteress and her near stoning. This is a controversial section. Some of the early manuscripts would mark it out as being an addition to this Gospel, or they would mark it out as not to be read during the Pentecost period, as early lectionary cycles are similarly marked. Early church tradition following Augustine says that as this appeared to give license to sin, so it was expunged from the sacred text. Pope Leo the Great in the mid-5th Century was using the story in a sermon. Augustine in the early 5th Century was quoting from it. St Jerome in the late 4th Century had included it in his translation into Latin from the older Greek manuscripts. Eusebius, referring to Papias, was quoting from it. Sometimes it is placed in

chapter 21 of Luke's Gospel. The earliest Greek manuscripts do not have what St Jerome was looking at for his translations as they don't include this section. As we have no reason to doubt the integrity of St Jerome, we can only assume he copied faithfully from prior extant Greek text. The first Greek/Latin manuscript that is extant today, which contains this section, is the Codex Bezae from the early 5th Century. The Coptic Father Didymus the Blind, writing in the late 4th century, confirms that it was a part of the tradition of the Eastern part of the early church. It is unclear whether or not this section was in the original Fourth Gospel, but was certainly in the very early church tradition and as Papias was only one generation removed from Jesus, we must give high credence to there being the broad outline of this story somewhere in the Gospels. If its form we have today is the exact form from the time of Papias, it would seem to be less certain. What would be certain is that there was a moment where Jesus has a woman presented to Him, accused of grave sin, the exact context being less clear. I think we can rule out an out-and-out, brazen interpolation for the above reasons, but also because the opening words of 7:53 suggest a smooth finish from one section and a good way to introduce the next i.e., it looks genuine. We also have no reason not to believe those early Church Fathers, like Jerome and Didymus, who never doubted its place.

Anyway, controversy and dating aside, a woman is caught in the act of adultery (there is no mention of what happened to the man involved, as he would also have to be tried) and brought before Jesus.

Jesus writes something in the dirt that symbolically blows away in the wind, just as He is now about to do the same with this issue. The scribes and Pharisees ask Him what should be done with her. Jesus says:

John 8:7:

*So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, **"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.***

The scriptural references here are as follows:

Deuteronomy 13:9:

9 but you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people.

And:

Deuteronomy 17:7:

7 The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put away the evil from among you.

(hh) Moses had long ago laid down that the first to cast a stone had to be a truthful witness and not be guilty of the same sin; Jesus is refreshing their memories regarding this teaching.

John 8:9-11:

*9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her **“Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?”** 11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, **“Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”***

(ee) The Mosaic Law is perfectly enacted by Jesus as those who were going to stone examined their hearts and knew their own sin and felt compelled to turn away from the stoning. (i.f) Jesus then does not condemn her as He has not come to judge, but to save, and sends her on her way with stern instruction to sin no more. Above all, Jesus is teaching forgiveness and healing.

Jesus announces in the Temple:

John 8:12:

“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

(i.k) Again, we hear the very words that God, “I am,” uses in Exodus 3:14 to say who He is. The Tabernacle Feast was in the evening and typically illuminated with lamps and candles, hence the metaphor of light being deployed. This metaphor is rich with Old Testament history, particularly in Isaiah 60:19:

19 The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory.

(14) (i.g) Here, the Messiah is prophesied as the Light for His people and for the whole Gentile world. Jesus is teaching that He is that light.

Isaiah 9:1-2:

1 Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles. 2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.”

Isaiah 42:6:

6 I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles,

Isaiah 49:6:

6 Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.

Psalms 27:1:

***1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?***

Psalm 119:105:

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

Proverbs 6:23:

***23 For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way
of life,***

Ezekiel 1:26-28:

***26 And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like
a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man
high above it. 27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color
of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His
waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. 28
Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the
brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.***

Habakkuk 3:3-4:

***3 God came from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of His praise. 4 His brightness was like the light; He had rays flashing
from His hand, And there His power was hidden.***

Malachi 4:2:

***2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.***

Jesus is teaching: He who follows me follows the light; is a reference to the cloudy pillar and fire that hovered over the camp of the Israelites in the wilderness, which they followed, and thus He and Jesus are one and the same.

Exodus 13:21

21 And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night.

Jesus is asked to substantiate this again. As the Jewish tradition affirmed, Wisdom, or Sophia's origin, were not known. Jesus points this out.

John 8:14:

Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.

Job 28:20-21:

20 From where then does wisdom come? And where is the place of understanding? 21 It is hidden from the eyes of all living, And concealed from the birds of the air.

"where I am going" is Jesus forecasting His divinity and His going to Calvary for His death and Resurrection.

Still with the Pharisees, the dialogue continues:

John 8:15-16:

15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 16 And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me."

(xxvi) The scribes and Pharisees then say to Jesus effectively: this is just your word, and where are your witnesses? Jesus attests that His other witness is in fact God Himself, who Jesus is "with," or at one with. They clearly doubted the many testimonies of the people who had witnessed the many miracles of Jesus. Jesus is

teaching that He does not judge according to the standards of the flesh. (e) (i.e.) The Jewish Wisdom teachings show that specifically Jesus Himself does not judge, but that as the agent of and an integral part of the Godhead, the Trinity, Wisdom does. The Pharisees would have been aware of what He was teaching. The ancient Jewish understanding of this came from Wisdom 8:11:

11 I shall be found keen in judgment, and in the sight of rulers I shall be admired. (New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE))

Wisdom 9:3:

3 and rule the world in holiness and righteousness, and pronounce judgment in uprightness of soul, (New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE))

(i.k) Weaved into that passage we have a number of “I am” statements as at the burning bush passage of Exodus 3:14 where God in effect names Himself as “I am.” The divine analogy Jesus is creating is unmistakable.

John 8:17:

“It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.”

This is a direct reference to Deuteronomy 17:6:

6 Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness.

There then follow another three “I am” divinity statements from Jesus:

John 8:18-24:

18 I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”
19 Then they said to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.”
20 These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet

come. 21 Then Jesus said to them again, ***“I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.”*** 22 So the Jews said, “Will He kill Himself, because He says, ‘Where I go you cannot come?’” 23 And He said to them, ***“You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”***

(9.c) Jesus teaches that the Father and the Son are one. If they recognised that, their question would have been answered (qqq) He also teaches that He is going away, which points to His preordained death on the cross and Resurrection. Jesus teaches that His opponents reside beneath, or in, hell, and not, like Him, in heaven. They can’t dwell in the same place as Him. Indeed, they never will be able to attain a heavenly abode and they can’t follow His light due to their own spiritual and intellectual blindness. (www.b.) The eternal sin is taught by Jesus to be the sin of not believing in Him, and certainly if we fell into that category, we would die.

The Scribes and Pharisees question Him again:

John 8:25-26:

25 Then they said to Him, “Who are You?” And Jesus said to them, ***“Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning. 26 I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him.”***

(i.h) This ***“from the beginning”*** was understood by the Jewish tradition to be where Wisdom or God incarnate originated from: the beginning, with the Father. (i.k) Jesus is also teaching that just as “I am” God, when I speak as Jesus, I am God.

Proverbs 8:22:

22 The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.

And then in there is another “I am” divinity statement.

John 8:28:

28 Then Jesus said to them, *"When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things."*

(qqq) The event alluded to, the lifting up on the Cross, is His preordained Crucifixion. What is more, Jesus teaches that tragically, they will come to know who it is they have crucified. (9.c) He also once more teaches He is one with the Father.

Immediately following this Jesus says:

John 8:29-30:

29 "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him." 30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him."

This would have been very much in accordance with the scriptural teachings of the Jesus.

Proverbs 8:30-31:

30 Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, 31 Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight was with the sons of men."

John 8:31-38:

31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." 33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free?'" 34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. 37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

(xxii) Jesus teaches that if we understand His word and abide in Him, or in dwell in Him, we are His follower and we know the truth, which will make us free. (xxii.i) Jesus is involved in a dialogue in which He teaches they are slaves (as opposed to being free) to sin, then believe in Him and they will no longer be slaves to sin, but free. (xxii.b) Freedom from sin also rewards us with eternal life. Jesus is also reminding them how their ancestor Isaac (from whom all Jewish people descend) does abide in the Covenant forever, but the slave, Ishmael (from whom all the Arabs descend) does not. Jesus is also only teaching that this truth and this eternal life is only accessed via Him.

Genesis 17:19:

19 Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.

Genesis 21:14 (the expulsion of Ishmael and Hagar):

14 So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba.

The Jews state they are sons of Abraham and that they are not slaves to sin. Jesus points out that actually they are not at all sons of Abraham, as if they were, they would be obeying Jesus as God. (xxvii) So Jesus teaches that in effect, it is not just our blood-line that will guarantee salvation, but our ability to copy the piety and obedience of Abraham, which means, of course, we could be Jew or Gentile to obtain salvation.

John 8:39-40:

39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.40 But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this."

This is a direct scriptural reference to Deuteronomy 31:16:

16 And the Lord said to Moses: "Behold, you will rest with your fathers; and this people will rise and play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go to be among them, and they will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them.

Isaiah 1:21:

21 How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.

Ezekiel 16:15:

15 But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it.

John 8:41-57:

41 You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God." 48 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" 49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. 50 And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges. 51 Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death." 52 Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.' 53 Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?" 54 Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. 55 Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. 56 Your

father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad. 57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

(xxvii) Jesus teaches that despite their blood-line, they were not spiritually descendants of God's chosen people. (e) Jesus also teaches that He has come forth from God, so we see here an early kernel of the teachings of the doctrine of the Trinity. (9.c) Jesus teaches that sons behave like their fathers and at the moment these Jews were behaving like Satan, killing life, the life of Jesus, just as Satan had killed the spiritual life of Adam. Jesus only behaves like the Father as He is at one with God the Father. Believe in His teachings and we will get eternal life. (mmm) (x) Abraham saw his son, Isaac, born and the start of the Covenant (see above Genesis 17:19) being fulfilled, which would culminate in fulfilment in Jesus Himself. Abraham was happy at this birth. Isaac is also the prefigured son-sacrifice that was prevented from happening as only God could sacrifice a son - as He did with His own Son, Jesus. Isaac being the father of all the Jews was the father of Jesus in the Jewish sense (descended/related) and Abraham rejoiced at his own sons life on-going and would enjoy that of his offspring, Jesus, much more.

Genesis 22:2:

2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."

6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. 7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. 9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

So he said, "Here I am." 12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." 13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided."

(x) There is so much to say about this story, but the relevant part in the context of how it relates to what Jesus was teaching is the son symbolism that is pre-figuring Jesus (Isaac) and the Father (Abraham). That this was never going to be the real child/son sacrifice is evident from verse 5, when Abraham knows they *will both return*, i.e., for the avoidance of doubt, the father and son would come back. This does set the scene for the real Son sacrifice by the Father at Calvary. Also in verse 7 and 8, the lamb (Jesus) is conspicuously absent.

John 8:58:

This ends with another "I am" divinity statement.

"Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

(40) Jesus is challenged to identify whether a blind man was the sinner who caused his blindness, or was it his parents who caused his blindness? Whilst this was – and, to a certain extent is still - a commonly held view of the time, it was not that black and white in terms of what the scriptures taught. (i.k) In His response, there is also an "I am" divinity statement, and the answer to the question posed.

John 9:3-5:

3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. 4 I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

The scriptural reference is Job 1:8:

8 Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

We then see how all of this is taken away from Him, despite him being sinless.

Job 1:13-22:

13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; 14 and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, 15 when the Sabeans raided them and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 16 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 17 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 18 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 19 and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord." 22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

Ezekiel 18:20:

20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

(qqq) Jesus also makes another allusion to His death and departure from this world, contrasting the time He will be with them, the daylight, and the time He will not, the darkness. (14) He also reminds all that He is the Light of the World and also the curer of this man's darkness, or blindness.

In a possible allusion to Genesis 2:7, we then have Jesus using His saliva and clay from the ground to cure the blind man's eyes. Jesus then sends Him away.

John 9:7:

7 And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

There follows a dialogue between this man, his parents, and the officials who imply that as Jesus works on the Sabbath, He can't be from God and must be demonic, which the cured man refutes, insisting that Jesus was a prophet. The cured man maintained that common sense would dictate that only a God-like being could cure the blind in an instant, or something doing God's will. Jesus hears of all of this and finds the cured man and says the following:

John 9:35-41:

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" 36 He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" 37 And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." 38 Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him. 39 And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." 40 Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" 41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.

At the culmination of returning sight to this formally blind man Jesus quotes some of Isaiah to the man at the Pool of Siloam (the One Sent):

Isaiah 6:10:

10 Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.

(14) Jesus, viz the name of the venue of this miracle, is clearly saying I am the one sent. Jesus is also teaching that just as He will give Light (Salvation) to some, that others, who reject Him, will be in Darkness (an eternity in Hell). The cured man is not only able to physically see, but he is able to spiritually see. This is what Jesus came to enable on a large scale.

(dddd) The sheep (us) and shepherd (God/Jesus) is used, as discussed above, in many of places in Old Testament scripture. In the next passage, Jesus builds seamlessly on this Good Shepherd/Bad Shepherd distinction.

John 10:1-6:

1 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. 6 Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them."

(dddd) In this parabolic allegory, the sheepfold is the Church of Christ. The voice is the voice of the Holy Spirit calling via the spoken Word or via scripture. At the time of the first century in the Middle East, all sheep brought to market would be left by their shepherds in a communal lot behind one door, watched over by a guard. Voice recognition between the Shepherd and his flock was the key to identifying who owned what. A thief would have to approach not via the door, but by breaking in some other way.

Numbers 27:17:

17 Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying: "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd."

I can't help thinking about the wonderful Psalm 23 when I read this:

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

(dddd) Now Jesus positions Himself not as the Good Shepherd only, but also as the door itself, connecting the sheep (us) and the Good Shepherd (Jesus/God). This is to be contrasted with the sometimes poor shepherd of Israel (and others) itself. We can only be drawn in and allowed into the fold via Jesus.

(i.k) Jesus then makes another clear "I am" divinity statement.

John 10:7-18:

7 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. 11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. 15 As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. 17 "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one takes 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 command I have received from My Father."

(vii.j) Jesus is teaching He was eternal with God, so when He says "*came before Me.*" He is indicating the Devil and the sinful activities of all the various individuals

recorded in scripture were judged there and then by the Godhead, which is both the Father and the Son before His temporal arrival as the incarnate God/man.

The contrasting of poor shepherding was shown in:

1 Kings 22:17

17 Then he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the Lord said, "These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.

Jeremiah 23:1-2:

1 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the Lord. 2 Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the Lord."

Zechariah 11:15-17:

15 And the Lord said to me, "Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd. 16 For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces. 17 "Woe to the worthless shepherd, Who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm And against his right eye; His arm shall completely wither, And his right eye shall be totally blinded.

(qqq) Jesus is once again teaching His self-sacrifice at the time of the Crucifixion, death and Resurrection. (r) Jesus is setting himself up as the servant to us all in that He is the ultimate suffering servant, as was laid out and foretold. This time I quote in full:

Isaiah 53:

1 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? 2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. 9 And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. 10 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You 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. 11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

(i.k) John 10:7,9,11,14 it is replete with “I am” divinity statements.

Jesus is teaching us that He is the door into the Kingdom of Heaven. He has come to give abundant life and is at the same time the source of life. He passes Judgement and those who believe in Him pass through that door. This has its Old Testament scriptural precedent.

Ezekiel 34:11-17:

11 For thus says the Lord God: “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them in good pasture, and their

fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15 I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down,” says the Lord God. 16 “I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment.” 17 ‘And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats.

Isaiah 40:11:

11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

(qqq) Jesus alludes to His death and Resurrection once more, and how He will lay down His life for us (via His control and free will: to His agenda), the sheep. He also points out that unlike fair-weather friends, or the hired hand who guards the gate, He never flees when danger, spiritual temptation, approaches. (dddd) Jesus is also teaching that His mission is to other sheep, not of this fold, i.e., (jjj) the Gentiles. (e) (vii.k) Jesus teaches He has the power over His life and death. The other part of the Trinity, God, gave Him the command to do just that.

Jesus was celebrating Hanukah, in the very same Temple, a handful of generations before, that the Maccabees had rededicated and cleansed it after the sacrilege of Antiochus Epiphanes. This was now celebrated by Jews as a great act of national deliverance as it led to the survival of the Jewish race. Messianic expectations filled the air. This is the background setting to the on going questioning of Jesus by the Jewish authorities. They continue to question Jesus, especially concerning His claims to deity. They wish to stone Him. Jesus asks them to confirm they wish to stone Him for performing supernatural miracles? They respond it is for blasphemy and His declaration of deity. Jesus responds:

John 10:25-39:

25 Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me. 26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as .them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My

hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. 30 I and My Father are one." 31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. **32** Jesus answered them, **"Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" 33** The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God." **34** Jesus answered them, **"Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"?" 35** If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), **36** do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? **37** If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; **38** but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." **39** Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

(hhh) Jesus teaches that He is divine and that they should know it as the miracles He conducted can only issue from the divine. (ooo.a) (dddd) Jesus teaches that God has already chosen His sheep, or those that are saved, and this is the early start of the doctrine of divine grace and that they hear His Voice. Jesus teaches that they will follow Him and get eternal life. Once chosen, we can never be "snatched" away. (9.c) Jesus teaches that He and the Father are one and the same in essence. For this apparent blasphemy, Jesus queries for which miracles of goodness is He being stoned? Jesus makes the point that the use of a small "g" for gods (as unjust judges) was permitted in scripture, so why is He being singled out, when he was manifestly not unjust and did perform to what scriptures had predicted anyway?

Psalm 82:6:

6 I said, "You are gods, And all of you are children of the Most High.

John 11:2 names Mary, the sister of Martha, and Lazarus, both of Bethany, as the woman who anointed the feet of the Lord with fragrant oil and by gently wiping with her hair. This woman had remained unidentified until this verse. See comments in Luke 7:40-50 and Luke 8:1-4. The opening dialogue assumes we know this relationship.

John 11:4-24 The Raising of Lazarus from the Dead (Third Raising of the Dead)

4 When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. 7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." 8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?" 9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." 11 These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." 12 Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." 13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. 14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him." 16 Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." 17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. 19 And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. 20 Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. 21 Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

(qqq) Jesus demonstrates his omniscience. The ending of the Lazarus story ends with his own death and resurrection – as, of course, does that of the Jesus story. This event was designed in Jesus's own way to glorify Himself, the actual temporary death of Lazarus is an event in the divine calendar to glorify the Lord. Going to Judea or back to Judea was emphasised as in the preceding teachings concerning the Shepherd rescuing His sheep from death was very relevant to the event that was just about to happen, even though it took Him close to peril with the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem. Jesus decides to take His time and not rush off to see His ill friend. This is to make sure the death of Lazarus, followed by the miracle He was set to perform, is even more spectacular, seeing that he will be four days in the ground. The significance of four days is that for three days (the Jews believed, at the time) that the soul could still be in the body and thus there was

hope of a revival. After that, there was definitely no hope. His disciples are worried that His visit to Bethany, so near to Jerusalem, would put Him within easy reach of the Jews who had already announced their intention to kill Him. (qqq) (xxviii) Jesus points out that like a man working in the day, He was working in the light of the Business of the Lord, and so long as this was the case He was OK. He was also making sure His inner circle was aware that soon His night would come and that He would stumble as the light was extinguished, just as it did happen at Calvary. Mary and Martha are characterised as in Luke 10:38-42 with Mary sitting, rapt, and Martha busy. Martha displays her belief that He is the Lord and Jesus reassures her that Lazarus would indeed leave his tomb after four days of being stone cold dead in there.

(i.k) At the raising of Lazarus, we have another “I am” statement.

John 11:25-26:

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

Jesus makes another “I am” divinity statement. Lazarus and his family were dear friends of Christ (qqq) (oooo)(10) (xvi) Jesus gently progresses her understanding of the Resurrection - as something that would happen in the “last days” - to something that would happen only via the risen Jesus. Jesus affirms Himself as the Lord. He affirms that such a belief in Him is the gateway to eternal salvation.

(xxix) Martha confirms her belief and acknowledges Jesus as the Christ and thus Son of God. Jesus is demonstrating to us that Martha, like the Virgin Mary and the Magdalene, do believe, unlike Peter who does not quite ‘get it’ at first. Jesus positions the faith of His female disciples always as being instantly more faithful than the key male disciples. Martha goes to fetch her sister Mary and make it known that the Lord wants to see her. Mary finds Him and laments at the missed opportunity for Jesus to save Lazarus there and then; however, she still believes He will. Jesus is emotionally moved by the depth of the grieving for Lazarus, much

as we are in any funeral when we can feel the emotion in the air emanating from all the mourning.

John 11:34-39:

34 And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" 37 And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" 38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.

Lazarus is raised from the dead.

Now although Jesus says nothing from scripture, the grief is predicted.

Isaiah 53:3:

3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

Proverbs 8:35:

For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the Lord

John 11:40-44

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

(vii.l) Martha, via her not so perfect faith does see the “glory of God” in Jesus Himself. This is another declaration of divinity by Jesus. (9.c) The prayer is a public petition to the Father, so that those in any doubt will at least believe He is the Son of God who has been sent by the Father. (vii.c) This is the power of prayer by the very Word of God that Jesus is displaying at this moment of action. Jesus is teaching: The Word is the life- giving and life-sustaining force.

Jesus is back in Bethany with the sisters. The risen Lazarus is there and they are joyously feasting. The contrast of Jesus as The Life is for all to see. Here, Mary Magdalene is shown anointing the feet of Jesus and wiping His feet with her hair in the same fashion reported in Matthew and Mark.

John 12:7:8 (Matthew 26:6-12, Mark 14:3-9, Luke 7:36-50) Foretelling of the Resurrection

7 But Jesus said, “Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. 8 For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.”

See notes to Matthew, Mark and Luke. The introduction of Judas, stiff, angry and cold, as opposed to the deeply devotional, emotional Mary is evident. There is irony as Lazarus, once dead, then risen and now alive, sees his sister giving the Lord the seal of His own death with the tender anointing. Jesus also knew Judas was being wound up by the fact that this oil was not being sold for the benefit of the poor, so Jesus mentions this to contrast the unique use of anointing the Lord with the oil with the fact that the poor will always require our attention if the oil is sold for cash to relieve them or not. The anointing oil is the Holy oil used to anoint kings. This is The King from Heaven. The oil flows from Him down through the body of The Church and to all of us, so we can benefit from some of that heavenly flow. Jesus needed to be broken on the Cross so that flow could truly reach out and infect lots of swathes of humanity with His redeeming risen grace.

Some Reasoned Speculation: Is Mary Named Here the Magdalene and Indeed the Prodigal Daughter?

Mary Magdalene has her own Saints Day on the 22nd of July. She was plagued by seven Demons, traditionally seven implies completion. The implication was that Mary was completely lost. That is, until she her encounter with Jesus. What is even more important, what that Mary was the only apostle to keep the faith and observe Jesus on Resurrection morning. No one else believed her until she found them and alerted them and showed them. She is arguably, after Mary mother of Jesus, the second most important woman and person in the New Testament, other than the Lord.

John in John 2 has named the woman who anoints Jesus as Mary, sister of Martha. So we now know her name as she who also had her sins forgiven as reported by Luke in Luke 7:40-50. That name is Mary. Chapter 8:1-3 of Luke tells us how Jesus went with his 12 apostles, preaching to all the towns and villages, with not only the 12 disciples, but Mary called Magdalene (who he just assumes we know without any introduction), who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. More than likely, these are one and the same person. What is more, Mary Magdalene, as sister of Martha, draws to my attention that there is a story being told that is latent in the Gospel of Luke, where the Prodigal Son story features so prominently. In John's Gospel, we can join up some dots and conclude that if the Mary mentioned is the same Mary Magdalene, then she is a repentant sinner, akin to the Prodigal Son, who has returned to her parental home just as the Prodigal returned to his. Martha is like the 'good son' in the Prodigal Son story: always doing right, but feeling hard done by as a result of her sister's seemingly preferred status with Jesus: that of getting her portion of salvation, whilst Martha was run off her feet trying to be the good host. Jesus loved her, so in reality, what would it matter how He is treating some else, since the love of Jesus is all you need for a life of blissful eternity anyway? Mary's story continues, as we shall see. She is the first person to witness the risen Lord and is thus the first person to receive most probably the most important message in history: that Jesus is risen. The Prodigal Daughter receives her earthly glory.

Jesus is sought after in Jerusalem by some visiting Greeks who ask His disciples where He is. Jesus responds.

John 12:23:36 The Spread of the Gospels Amongst the Gentiles:

23 But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. 24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. 25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. 27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." 29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." 30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." 33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die. 34 The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" 35 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

(qqq) Jesus was now moving His foretelling of His death and Resurrection into the present and away from the future tense. (r) Jesus is again teaching that those who serve will find the Servant Leader in Himself. (jjj) He teaches that just as a seed husk and kernel has to die so the seed can burst into life as a plant, so does Jesus, who will bring salvation to many. Once more, Jesus is teaching that if you lead your life to better your glory, then you will lose your life in eternity. If you lead your life in a way that glories God, you will find eternal life (15) Jesus is also teaching that the divine Law of Nature causing this to happen works on Jesus Himself to make sure the divinely ordained event of His death and Resurrection take place. (i.k) He teaches that His time was coming, and opens it with an "I am" divinity attestation. Jesus teaches that He is troubled by all of this. This echoes

Psalm 6:3:

6 My soul also is greatly troubled; But You, O Lord—how long?

Psalm 25:17:

17 The troubles of my heart have enlarged; Bring me out of my distresses!

Psalm 69:1:

1 Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck.

(rrr.a) Jesus teaches that if we love our life at the expense of all else, we will lose our eternal life, and vice versa. (xxx) Jesus is feeling troubled, as He knows the human Jesus is going to have to suffer the wrath of God as He redeems the life of Jesus for the sins of all mankind. As with His baptism and Transfiguration, the voice of the Father - another part of the Trinity - then confirms the glorification of His name. (oooo) Jesus was also teaching that there will be judgement. In Greek the word is κρίση (Krisis) or our word for crisis. (10) That the Devil is the ruler of the world and he will be cast out by Jesus after His death and Resurrection is now taught by Jesus. The lifting up of Jesus at his death, Resurrection and Ascension is sharply contrasted with the Satanic casting out of this world. (ooo) Doubly important is Jesus teaching He will draw all people to Him. (jjj) This is a clear statement that the Ministry of Christ is universal. What is more, before the Resurrection, (xxx.i) God draws people directly to Himself, while following it it is to be according to Jesus, exclusively. In the closing sections of this narrative, the audience might reference the following Psalm:

Psalm 89:36:

36 His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me;

(14) Jesus is teaching: believe in the Light so we can become a son of that Light and gain our salvation and forever endure. The Passion of Jesus is that descent into darkness, when even the closest disciples will doubt. However, it is His ultimate victory, as the light of His life has never left the world and, indeed, has only grown since.

The Gospel of John places the last teachings of Jesus here.

John 12:44-50 Proof of the Guilt of Unbelief

45 Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. 45 And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. 46 I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. 47 And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. 48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. 49 For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. 50 And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.

(9.c) Jesus teaches that He and the Father are the same in another characteristic divinity attestation. (35) The themes of light, and Jesus the Judge of individuals, or the Judge, and Saviour of the whole world, as well as His rejection, is all discussed in preceding passages with the corresponding Old Testament references. Jesus teaches that to reject Him is to reject life itself.

Also, this speech of Jesus is made almost as a cry out aloud, like how Wisdom or Sophia is portrayed in Proverbs at times.

Proverbs 1:20-21:

21 Wisdom calls aloud outside; She raises her voice in the open squares. 21 She cries out in the chief concourses, At the openings of the gates in the city She speaks her words

Proverbs 8:1-3:

1 Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice? 2 She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, Beside the way, where the paths meet. 3 She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, At the entrance of the doors:

(xvi) This verse is replete with teaching that if we did hear the voice of Christ and did not take on board what was said, although Jesus came as the light of the world to save all in it we would be judged on the last day - Judgment Day - and presumably not saved.

After this dialogue, Jesus, then at the communal meal in Jerusalem known as the Last Super, teaches servant-leadership and, in effect, a new commandment.

John 13:7-11 The Humility of Jesus as He Washes the Feet of the Disciples

7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." 8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

(i.h) Jesus is teaching that He is Wisdom itself. Proverbs 9 is all about the ways of Wisdom and prefigures of the Last Supper.

Proverbs 9:5-6:

5 Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed. 6 Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.

(r) (q) (mm.b) Jesus knows that the symbolism He is messaging to His most intimate disciples is that He will clear away sins. This was the whole point of His Ministry. Jesus is teaching humility and love. (xxxii) Here we see how the washing via the Holy Spirit will cleanse the *soul* of the participant. Peter wants his whole *body* washed so none of it is excluded from Jesus, thus demonstrating that Peter

has so far missed the point of what Jesus was doing. If Peter did not allow Him figuratively to do so, then His Ministry would be meaningless. Jesus notes that one of them at the table is certainly not clean: Judas. Whilst it was customary to wash yourself before going to a big feast, your feet, by the time you arrived, would have been the only part of the body that would be in need of cleaning. The symbolic feet only washing, in this circumstance, indicates that we always need some element of forgiveness, for our sin is on-going.

John 13:12-13:

2 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.

(i.k) The now familiar classic divinity “I am” statement ends this verse.

John 13:14-17

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

(q) Jesus teaches humility as he washes His disciples' feet. He provides a fine example to all on how to behave. (32) Jesus goes that extra mile: unlike the Jew passing by the wounded person in the narrative of the Good Samaritan, Jesus positively goes out of His way to serve and lead others by example. He declares (e) His divinity as an equal with God as one part of what we now know as the Trinity, and all are blessed who know this.

Jesus then reminds them all that He has chosen them (they are sent, *apostolos*) all knowing all their perfections and imperfections. More specifically, Jesus teaches He has specifically chosen Judas so that the psalm He quoted could be fulfilled.

John 13:18-20:

18 I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.' 19 Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He. 20 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

(i.k) There is another "I am" divinity statement in this passage as well and a declaration of His divine equality with the father.

Psalm 41:9:

9 Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

(vii.m) The disciples would have been familiar with the Jewish literature of the day and the start of Proverbs does indicate, in very similar terms and meaning, that the relationship between the sender and the sent is one of reciprocity. More importantly, if we do receive Jesus, we have received God.

Proverbs 9:1-6:

1 Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars; 2 She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table. 3 She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city, 4 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him, 5 "Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed. 6 Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.

John 13:21-30 (Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23) Judas is Revealed as the Betrayer of Jesus

21 When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." 22 Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. 23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom

Jesus loved. **24** Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. **25** Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, **"Lord, who is it?"****26** Jesus answered, **"It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it."** And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. **27** Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, **"What you do, do quickly."** **28** But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. **29** For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, **"Buy those things we need for the feast,"** or that he should give something to the poor.**30** Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

The tastiest part of the food was eaten first. (xxxiii) So as an act of love and honor, Jesus does this for Judas, despite knowing the satanic role in the closing part of His life that Judas would play.

(i.a) Close to the end of the Last Super, we are first treated to some Son of Man imagery designed to glorify Jesus as the Godhead. Once more, Jesus is teaching His co-equality with God. This will be revealed in His death, Resurrection and Ascension. The Gospel of John reports how Jesus introduces a new commandment. Jesus is also teaching that His departure was imminent. (32) It is a build on the Golden Rule well-known and understood by the Jew, but it adds the very important "as I have loved you." This means the bar is raised higher to mean: love your neighbour as you love yourself, but also do this in a sacrificial way, as Jesus demonstrably did for us.

John 13:31-35 Jesus Again Tells of His Immanent Departure from the World & Introduces a New Commandment

*31 So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, **"Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. 32 If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. 33 Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. 34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."***

The glorifying of the Lord was a repetition of the command to do so in Deuteronomy 6:5. Tenderly Jesus points out that He knows they will try to come

and find Him (post His death) but they would not be able to go to His heavenly abode (yet). Leviticus 19:18 which has already been quoted is the Old Testament Jewish Golden Rule. Jesus as we have seen adds on the command to fulfil this command in service to others. This is one of the central messages of all the teaching of Jesus that apply to us here on earth, happily serve your neighbour.

John opens chapter 14 with Jesus using Old Testament imagery of God dwelling above and looking at those on earth, including the classic “I am” divinity formula.

John 14:1-4 Compassion of Jesus for His Disciples, His Second Coming and Unity with God

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

(xxxiv) Jesus comforts His disciples following His revelation to them of the treachery of Judas and His death. He teaches that this should be good news, as He is going to prepare the way to take His disciples into a heavenly dwelling. Jesus is also teaching His *Parousia*, or next visit (Pentecost), and that this will need to take place so He can then welcome them to His heavenly abode. (lv) Jesus is also teaching that we will abide in Him in heaven should we achieve salvation, something the latter Pauline letters where very prominent in teaching. The Way is via the emerging church, and Christianity itself.

Psalm 23:6

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell^{at} in the house of the Lord Forever.

Psalm 33:13-14:

13 The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. 14 From the place of His dwelling He looks On all the inhabitants of the earth

Isaiah 63:15:

15 Look down from heaven, And see from Your habitation, holy and glorious. Where are Your zeal and Your strength, The yearning of Your heart and Your mercies toward me? Are they restrained?

As the disciples did believe in Jesus, they did indeed know the way to the heavenly realm.

Two further “I am” divinity statements are contained in the next narrative with Thomas.

John 14:6-7 Thomas Wavers, Jesus Clarifies

6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. 7 “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

(ix) Jesus is clearly teaching that the only way to eternal life is via Him. (vii.p.i) He is teaching that He is the truth itself. The Godhead, or Logos is the Truth.

John 14: 8-21 Philip Wavers and Jesus Clarifies and Announces the Help of the Holy Spirit

8 Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” 9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. 12 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. 13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I

will do it. 15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. 19 "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. 20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

(hhh) Jesus teaches Philip that as Philip has observed all the miracles and various teachings, He must know that God is incarnate within Jesus and indeed that God and Jesus are equal. (xxxv) Jesus then teaches that those left after His Resurrection will indeed do greater deeds. The greater deeds are the conversion of the Gentile western world to Christianity.

Isaiah 43:6

I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth—

Psalms 72:11

Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.

These deeds were greater as there were more of them, as Jesus would send the Helper (Advocate or Comforter), or the indwelling Holy Spirit (or Spirit of Truth), to do make these things come to pass. (pp.e) Jesus teaches them how to pray (to Him to reveal the full glory of God) and ask for His assistance and that if they did as he said He would grant that assistance, as this will be no selfish prayer, but a prayer to glorify the Godhead. Jesus teaches that in this process, they must keep the commandments. Jesus teaches He will intercede for them via the Holy Spirit and will not leave them to be like orphans, or Fatherless. He teaches that very shortly, after His death and Resurrection, He will be seeing them again and that no one else will - or no unbelievers will. The Acts of the Apostles confirm this, as in these days, at the start of Pentecost, the indwelling Spirit was reported to be both

with and in them. (9.g) They will also see Him for an eternity, as they believe and now possess the indwelling Holy Spirit.

John 14:22-30 Jesus Offers More Clarity

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me. 25 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. 29 "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. 30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. 31 But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

(9.c) The teaching here is that if focus is maintained on what Jesus taught us will be loved and we will acquire Salvation with God. Jesus' and God's words are indistinguishable, so Jesus once more teaches His co-equality with the Father. Jesus is also teaching that in unison with all parts of the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, if you do truly believe, the Godhead will dwell in you. Assuredly, Jesus *as a man* is lesser than the Father. But this does not imply that Jesus is separate from and a lesser thing than the Father, just that His earthly manifestation as a man, even incarnated by God, is less than the unfettered Godhead, from whence He has come. (xxxvii) The Holy Spirit will help to make all the disciples remember the teachings of Jesus. It is quite possible to deduce this as a reference to the help of the Holy Spirit in writing the Gospels, 2 letters of St Paul and the Book of Revelation, where these teachings of Jesus are the sole extant source. (xxvi) Towards his final parting words in the Upper Room during the Last Super, Jesus talks about peace. This peace was not the polite peace of shalom we may exchange

as pleasantries with one another, but a complete and meaningful heavenly peace. There are great scriptural precedents for this, as we see in Numbers 6:26:

26 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.

1 Samuel 1:17:

17 Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.

Psalms 29:11:

11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace.

Isaiah 54:13:

13 All your children shall be taught by the Lord, And great shall be the peace of your children.

Haggai 2:9:

9 The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the Lord of hosts.

Jesus then declares that He is in effect going to heaven, a much greater place and better for Him than earth; in this sense, the Father is greater than the Son occupying His earthly position. The Father is greater there as He is not going to suffer any humiliation on earth as Jesus was just about to do. As Satan was about to assume his rulership of the world and as Satan has no part in the Godhead, it was time for Jesus to go. God's will is being done.

This section contains two more classic "I am" divinity statements.

John 15:1-11 The Parable of the Vine:

(vii.n) Jesus, in parable format, attributes various roles: the vinedresser (God), non-fruiting branches (unbelievers) and fruiting branches (believers - who also need constant pruning.) The culmination of this suggests that if we believe and nurture the word of Jesus in us, our splendour glorifies His name. (lvi) The vine is the entire reality, or the oneness of reality. Jesus is teaching us His Monism.

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. 9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."

Psalm 80:9-16:

9 You prepared room for it, And caused it to take deep root, And it filled the land. 10 The hills were covered with its shadow, And the mighty cedars with its boughs. 11 She sent out her boughs to the Sea, And her branches to the River. 12 Why have You broken down her hedges, So that all who pass by the way pluck her fruit? 13 The boar out of the woods uproots it, And the wild beast of the field devours it. 14 Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts; Look down from heaven and see, And visit this vine 15 And the vineyard which Your right hand has planted, And the branch that You made strong for Yourself. 16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down. They perish at the rebuke of Your countenance.

There are many Old Testament teachings in a very similar vein, such as Isaiah 5:1-7,27:2-6, Jeremiah 2:21,12:10, Ezekiel 15:1-8, 17:1-21,19:10-14, Hosea 10:1-2

(vii.n) All the life of the plant is derived from this vine. It teaches us that whether we believe or not, our life has still come from our creator: we abide in Him and are

one with Him. (xxi) (xxii.c) Jesus teaches that if we exercise our free will and we do not believe in Him, or do not abide in Him, and do not have faith in Him, our vine will bear no fruit and, what's more, we will be cast out, withered, into the fire, pointing to an eternity of fiery hell. If we abide in His love, just as he abides in the love of the Father, then the love or joy of Jesus will reside in us. This no doubt explains why Christians are, overall, happy and contented people. With regard to the pruning, this is a warning that we can fall out of favour, or out of Grace, during this journey through life if we do not stay focused on doing your best to live as closely as we can to the teachings of Jesus. There is no place for supralapsarianism³² in this parable. It was directed at His disciples, but it would seem that it applies to the whole of humanity.

(r) Jesus now confronts them with probably the hardest of all His teachings: to love each other as He has loved them. (32) This means, as we have seen, loving as a *servant*. The Golden Rule turns into a very positive, go-out-of-our-way to do good injunction. In effect, you lay down your life for our friends.

John 15:12-17 The New Relationship & New Golden Rule

12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. 17 These things I command you, that you love one another."

See notes to John 13:21-30 for an explanation of this New Golden Rule.

The Lord taught that there was no greater love than laying down your life for others. This saying had scriptural precedent. This is of course the ultimate act of

³² This teaches that prior to the Fall of Adam, your fate as saved or not saved is already determined.

servant leadership and an almost unattainable thought for most of us imperfect members of mankind, but maybe not so unattainable when we think what we might do to save our children.

Isaiah 53:10

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You 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.

Exodus 22:21

21 "You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Jesus is actually reminding them that love all, even strangers, just as they were when they were in Egypt.

(xxxviii) Abraham had this distinction of being a friend, as he was so close and trusted by God. Jesus, in His final teachings was stepping down from being the teacher and actually expressing His union and solidarity with His disciples, as friends. A modern day professor often becomes friends in this way with his PhD students. Their teaching was coming to an end.

2 Chronicles 20:7

7 Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?

(ooo.a) Jesus reminds them that it was He who chose them rather than they being special in themselves. This divine choosing has scriptural precedent: God choosing Israel, but not for any merit, as in Deuteronomy 7:7:

7 The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples

And Deuteronomy 9:4-6:

4 Do not think in your heart, after the Lord your God has cast them out before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land'; but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is driving them out from before you. 5 It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the word which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 6 Therefore understand that the Lord your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people.

They were chosen as they bear fruit, as in the Parable of the Vine.

John 15:18-25

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates Me hates My Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. 25 But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

(xxxix) Jesus teaches by contrasting a world where we only love ourselves or our own, which is, in the end, a world of hate. (xxv) The unbelievers did not recognise the Father, so they likewise did not recognise the Son or the disciples. All would be hated, and hated despite Jesus teaching all He taught. There is another divinity declaration tucked into verse 21. (vii.o) His "namesake" is, of course, the name of God or Yahweh. Jesus is saying: we will all be hated because of this name and our association with it.

Psalm 69:9:

9 Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

After pointing out that a certain type of person will always reject Him, as they did at the time of Moses and the miraculous events described in Exodus, *even if they have seen the miracles and teachings* - but that was OK. It was OK as it was meant to be so, in order to fulfil scripture. The hatred for David, His servant, was nothing compared to Jesus.

Psalm 69:4

4 Those who hate me without a cause Are more than the hairs of my head; They are mighty who would destroy me, Being my enemies wrongfully; Though I have stolen nothing, I still must restore it.

Psalm 35:19:

19 Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies; Nor let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause.

(xxiv) Jesus then once more assures His Disciples that the Holy Spirit helping in the writing and proclaiming of the Gospels and that this was predestined to be.

John 15:26-27 Come the Holy Spirit

26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

(xxiv) Jesus takes time to introduce the fact that another would come after Him, a Spirit who would guide and that Jesus, the Son, would send the Spirit from the Father. This is fulfilled at Pentecost. Jesus teaches that the Spirit comes forth from the Father and is thus post the Father and the Son. (e) The teaching of the Trinity

is clear. (xxxvii) The Spirit will assist and guide those early disciples in spreading the Good News about Jesus. These disciples, who Jesus had chosen from the beginning of time, now, in turn, bring back to the fold those believers who were also chosen at the beginning of time.

John 16:1-15 The Purpose of the Holy Spirit

1 "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. 3 And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. 4 But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you. 5 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. 8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. 12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."

(xxxiv) Jesus in this next narrative, moves on to further draw out what the role of the Holy Spirit is to be. He reminds them that they will be shunned by traditional Judaism and indeed, like the future Apostle Paul thinking he was acting in the service of God, will in fact be persecuted with vigour. (xxxiv.a) Jesus teaches that when He was with the disciples, He did not need to say all of this as He was their protector. In His absence, after His death and Resurrection, they needed to be reminded of this. Jesus is surprised that none ask where He is going in this narrative, since they are full of sorrow. This contrasts with their utter joy at His Resurrection. Jesus teaches that He must go away so that the Holy Spirit can come. (e) The triune nature of the Godhead as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is fully brought to life. (ooo.a) Once here, the Holy Spirit will draw some, the righteous to Him and

some away. Sin will be exposed, as will self-righteous pomposity. (xl) This is a new way for the Holy Spirit to permanently enter the world as a Living Presence and all will know what is right and what is wrong. The Spirit is seen here to bring people out of unbelief and into Christ Jesus. (xxxiv.b) Jesus moves the notion of the Old Testament version of the Holy Spirit along to be fully active in the world, and ongoing. Standing by unbelief is the biggest barrier to being righteous. The judgment of the world's ruler, Satan, and all his emissaries, will be contrasted with the spiritual judgement of righteousness. The comparisons with Jesus as Wisdom are striking. Indeed, most Christians would hold that Jesus is the manifestation of Wisdom of the Jewish scriptures.

Wisdom 9:9-11:

9 With you is wisdom, she who knows your work and was present when you made the world; she understands what is pleasing in your sight and what is right according to your commandments. 10 Send her forth from the holy heavens, and from the throne of your glory send her, that she may labor at my side, and that I may learn what is pleasing to you. 11 For she knows and understands all things, and she will guide me wisely in my actions and guard me with her glory. New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

Wisdom 10:10:

10 When a righteous man fled from his brother's wrath, she guided him on straight paths; she showed him the kingdom of God, and gave him knowledge of holy things; she prospered him in his labors, and increased the fruit of his toil. Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

(e) The Holy Spirit will speak with the authority of the Lord. He will tell us how to glorify the Lord, and how Jesus and the Father are indeed one. In this closing part of this narrative, Jesus is teaching as clearly as He can the notion of the triune God of the Trinity. The Spirit shows the Truth, the Son is the truth and all the Son does is glorify the Father, the author of the Truth.

(qqq) Jesus Foretells His death and Resurrection.

John 16:16-22 His Death, Resurrection and Ascension Foretold

16 “A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father. 17 Then some of His disciples said among themselves, “What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father?’” 18 They said therefore, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.” 19 Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, “Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’? 20 Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. 21 A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22 Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.”

The imagery used is in Isaiah 26:17:

17 As a woman with child Is in pain and cries out in her pangs, When she draws near the time of her delivery, So have we been in Your sight, O Lord.

The birth Jesus refers to is His “re birth” post His death and Resurrection and who that re-birth will infect most of humanity and precipitate one of the biggest miracles of all times, the mass conversion of the Western World and indeed other parts of the world, to Christianity.

(xli) Jesus foretells of His first earthly visit after His death at Pentecost and His second at the time of His Ascension. Jesus is clearly telling all that He is both the same as they see Him pre (xlii) His Ascension and after His death and (38) He will dwell in them as the Holy Spirit. A lot of mankind may rejoice at His death, and the disciples will be bereft, but with the arrival of the Holy Spirit the roles will be reversed.

Jesus then warns that all His followers, after His death, will be scattered, as was predicted in scripture. There is also another “I am” divinity statement in this narrative.

John 16:22-33

22 Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. 23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. 25 "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. 26 In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; 27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. 28 I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father." 29 His disciples said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! 30 Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God." 31 Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? 32 Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. 33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

(xlii) Jesus teaches that He will see the disciples again, as He did after His death, but He really means after His death, Resurrection and Ascension - during the eternity that a believer will occupy in the heavenly kingdom. They will be joyful. (xliv) They will need to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus (which they could only do after His death and physical departure from the world) and to be able to both ask and receive. The teaching is not to pray to Jesus alone, but to pray to the Father, bearing in mind that praying to Jesus implies praying to the Father. (9.c) He teaches His equality with the Father again. He teaches that He came from the Father and will return to the Father - a key teaching of the Nicene Creed. Jesus is speaking as if that hour were right now. Then, Jesus is teaching them, what Jesus has been saying historically to them will become much clearer. (qqq) He foretells His Resurrection once again.(dddd) The scattering of the flock was predicted in the Old Testament.

Zechariah 13:7:

17 Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion," Says the Lord of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.

(9.c) And finally, after teaching His equality with God again, (xlv) Jesus teaches that He in them will mean they will be joyful, despite the trials and tribulations of the world.

Not until His last hours does Jesus pray for Himself.

John 17:1-5 Jesus Prays for Himself

17 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

Jesus lifts His eyes up to heaven. This is not a hidden region somewhere above the clouds; rather, He teaches us to lift up our prayers to that which is, in magnitude, far above us and, indeed, transcending us: the Godhead itself. (qqq) Jesus knows His death and Resurrection are imminent: His hour is in the now. Jesus teaches all that this event will glorify both Him and the Father. (9.c) Jesus is teaching His divinity, and his pre-existence with, and co-equality with, God. In fact, He references *"the only true God"* which would appeal to His monotheistic Jewish followers, and is pointing the finger towards Himself as being that one true God. Jesus teaches that His authority comes from the Father and that it is beyond mankind to decide who does and who does not gain Salvation. Knowing that the work He was sent to accomplish was nearly done, (vii.j) Jesus teaches us that He will go back to the glory He possessed in that eternal union with the Father, before the foundation of the universe. (i.h) This was, of course, a direct scriptural reference to the fact that the Jews understood Wisdom to have been there at the Beginning, sharing in God's glory before creation.

Proverbs 8:22-31:

22 The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. 23 I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth. 24 When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth; 26 While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primal dust of the world. 27 When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep, 28 When He established the clouds above. When He strengthened the fountains of the deep, 29 When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth, 30 Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, 31 Rejoicing always before Him, Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight was with the sons of men.

John 17:6-7 Jesus Prayer for His disciples

6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word 7 Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You."

Jesus mediates for His disciples with the Father. Jesus confirm that the disciples, now certainly know of His divine equality with the Father.

Jesus also confirms that as scripture had predicted, He had been sent.

John 17:8

8 "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me."

The disciples very much believed the Word.

Deuteronomy 18:18-19:

18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put my words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

(i.k) Jesus uses His God-like name of “I am” to declare He is with the Father. (xlvi) Again, Jesus makes a divinity claim. He points out how He has looked after them in the world, except for the Son of Perdition (Judas) who was meant to have been lost in accordance with the scriptures of the Old Testament.

Jesus teaches now as if His death has already taken place, so he will not be able to directly keep them from temptation as before therefore He prays for their eternal protection, and also for all of those who believed and believe, as these are the property of God. Indeed, all believers are secure for eternity in Jesus Christ.

John 17:9-12:

9 “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. 10 And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”

Psalm 41:9:

9 Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

(i.k) (vii.c) In keeping with the prophetic tradition of teaching the Word of God, Jesus confirms He has maintained that tradition and He also makes two divinity “I am” statements at the same time. However, Jesus does teach that He will sanctify or separate out Himself, in their minds, so they can concentrate on the worship of Jesus and thus God, via the scriptures, and His Word. He prays that God keeps them away from the devil. This will help keep His flock in the way and in the Word of Truth.

John 17:13-19:

13 But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.”

Isaiah 45:22-23:

22 Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. 23 I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.

There is one more divinity “I am” attestation in this narrative.

John 17:20-26 Jesus Prays for all Believers

20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. 24 “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

(xxii) Jesus teaches that all believers will be one with Him and the Father, their glory magnifies your glory. (jjj) There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile; this Gospel is for the whole of humanity. That they will believe in Him and that the

glory Jesus received from the Father, indwells in all believers, for their combined glory. (vii.j) Once more Jesus teaches of His pre-existence before the universe was made, eternal and in unity with the Father.

(i.k) At the arrest of Jesus, he makes three very forceful “I am” statements (which repel the immediate audience around Him) in John 18:5, John 18:6 and John 18:8.

(i.e) Jesus displays His omniscience, as He knew who they were looking for.

John 18:4-8 Jesus is Arrested (Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-52, Luke 22:47-53)

*“4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, **“Whom are you seeking?”**5 They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, **“I am He.”** And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. 6 Now when He said to them, **“I am He,”** they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”8 Jesus answered, **“I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,”***

(xlvi) He wished to make it clear it was Him they were looking for and not His disciples, thus showing His protective nature towards His followers. This was said to underscore in their minds that they came for Him alone and not the disciples as well.

John 18:9:

9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”

John 17:12 had mentioned this fact and also said that it therefore fulfilled prior scripture of Psalm 41:9. Both texts are mentioned above.

Jesus then rebukes Peter who courageously sought to protect his master, not by attempting to kill this person, but by disfiguring this servant of the High Priest, he would be disqualified from Temple service as a warning shot to the arresting

party. The fact that Peter was armed was mentioned in Luke 22:38. The naming of the victim would suggest this is a direct witness testimony.

John 18:10-11:

10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"

(xlvii) The cup of divine wrath is often used in scripture that Jesus would have been aware of, this is evidenced by Isaiah 51:17, Isaiah 51:22, Isaiah 53:10-11, Jeremiah 25:15-16, , Jeremiah 25:27-29, Lamentations 4:21-22, Ezekiel 23:31-34, Habakkuk 2:16, all of whose quotes.

At His first in person trial in-front of the Jews, Jesus is asked about His disciples and his doctrine.

John 18:20-21 The Trial in Person Before Annas (Matthew 26:69-70, Mark 14:66-68, Luke 22:55-57)

20 Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. 21 Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said."

The prior scripture He is fulfilling is Isaiah 45:19:

19 I have not spoken in secret, In a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek Me in vain'; I, the Lord, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

And Isaiah 48:16:

16 Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me.

Jesus was also fulfilling the understanding of the role of Wisdom

Proverbs 8:1-3:

1 Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice? 3 She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, Beside the way, where the paths meet. 3 She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, At the entrance of the doors

Jesus is then assaulted by the court official.

John 18:23:

Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?"

Jesus simply responds by asking for a fair trial. In the following section He asks for witnesses. His teaching is to calmly resist unfair and unjust situations. We know that Peter was present and the other disciple not named (though probably the author of this Gospel), so at all times the two witnesses needed under Mosaic Law could have been provided.

John 18:33-38 The First Trial by Pilate (Matthew 27:2-14, Mark 15:1-5, Luke 23:1-5)

33 Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" 35 Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." 37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." 38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all.

As Jesus and Sophia/Wisdom are so heavily intermingled in the Gospel of John. One parallel part of scripture I would draw to light now is the extraordinary foretelling of the trial of Jesus.

Wisdom 2:12-24:

12 Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions; he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training. 13 He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord. 14 He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; 15 the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his manner of life is unlike that of others, and his ways are strange. 16 We are considered by him as something base, and he avoids our ways as unclean; he calls the last end of the righteous happy, and boasts that God is his father. 17 Let us see if his words are true, and let us test what will happen at the end of his life; 18 for if the righteous man is God's child, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries. 19 Let us test him with insult and torture, so that we may find out how gentle he is, and make trial of his forbearance. 20 Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to what he says, he will be protected." 21 Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray, for their wickedness blinded them, 22 and they did not know the secret purposes of God, nor hoped for the wages of holiness, nor discerned the prize for blameless souls; 23 for God created us for incorruption, and made us in the image of his own eternity, 24 but through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his company experience it.

(xlvii) Jesus teaches that His Kingdom is spiritual and not of this world, the implication being He is here as the incarnate God. Day-to-day earthly political affairs are neither here nor there for Him, hence no earthly army will come to rescue Him. (vii.p) Jesus teaches, though, that He has come into this world to teach the truth to all, and that His voice is the truth. Once more, the only ultimate truth is God and Jesus was teaching that He was one and the same with God, or co-equal with His divinity. Pilate, miffed, not understanding Jesus, asks the enigmatic question on the lips of most thinking people "what is truth?"

The last "I am" divinity statement of Jesus is declared here.

At the second trial with Pilate, Jesus a number of questions to which He gives no answers. Frustrated, Pilate reminds Jesus that he has the power to execute Him.

John 19:11 The Second Trial by Pilate (Matthew 27:15-31, Mark 15:6-20, Luke 23:13-25)

11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

(vii.q) Jesus is declaring Himself sovereign over even the greatest sin of killing the Son of Man. (bbbb) Any power over Jesus could only come from the Father, which would suggest that Pilate was working, who for sure was committing a great sin, unbeknown to himself, to the divine plan. Jesus also points out that the real sinner, or the biggest sinner, was the one who delivered Him up to the authorities. Caiaphas would seem the most natural person for this as he had indeed just delivered Jesus to Pilate; however, it could also be a reference to Judas.

At the foot of cross stood the Virgin Mary, Salome, her sister, and mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, the fishermen, Mary, the wife of James the Younger and Joses and finally Mary Magdalene. In front of them, concerning His mother, he says to the "disciple whom He loved," John, the author of this Gospel ...

John 19:27 The Death of Jesus on the Cross (Matthew 27:32-38, 48-50, Mark 15:21-37, Luke 22:26-46)

*"Then He said to the disciple, "**Behold your mother!**" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."*

Proverbs 4:6:

6 Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you.

(mm.b) Out of a sense of care and compassion, Jesus directs the Beloved Disciple John to adopt Mary as his mother, that is, for John to now look after her. It would appear that John took Mary back to his home or lodgings in Jerusalem so she did not witness the final moments of the death of her son.

On the cross Jesus says ...

John 19:28-30:

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" 29 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. 30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Psalm 22:16:

16 Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet.

Psalm 69:21:

21 They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink

The opening of Jesus' Ministry in Cana, in this Gospel, has Jesus giving wedding guests good wine. It now ends with Jesus receiving shockingly poor wine as, collectively, a large part of humanity rejects Him.

(xxx) Jesus now shows us that the debt is paid in full. Jesus' earthly death was complete, and our sins and those of all those before and after us that we exchanged for His death, as he makes the ultimate sacrifice. This part of the ministry of Jesus is finished. The taking the pain, on the cross, for all the sins of mankind now and forever more, was complete. The total victory is nearly complete, there are a few more things for Jesus to do.

But after His death and Resurrection, He is alive!

Mary Magdalene is the first to encounter Jesus. Outside the empty tomb, looking in, Mary sees two angels who question why she is weeping, as indeed does the (vii.r) risen Lord Himself.

John 20:11-18 The Resurrection Event (Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12):

11 But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13 Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." 14 Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, **"Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"** She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." 16 Jesus said to her, **"Mary!"** She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, **"Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"** 18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

A tearful Mary may not have recognised Jesus. (vii.r.i) His appearance, now risen, was restored to physical perfection, in contrast to the messy death of the recent Roman flogging and the Crucifixion itself. However, His voice was enough to snap her into recognition straight away, as He had predicted. (dddd) The Shepherd's voice is enough to grab the attention of one of His sheep. The scriptural references to the Shepherd have already been mentioned at length. With desperation, Mary tries to hold onto Him and not let Him go. Jesus reminds her that He won't be there for long - as we know retrospectively, it is only 40 days until His Ascension. Not having risen yet to the spiritual world, His spirit had not yet been glorified. (9.c) Jesus emphasizes His oneness with the Father and, in fact, all of our ultimate oneness with God. (xlix) This is amplified by His first use of the phrase "My brethren." As Jesus stands in place of all of us - now, in the past and in the future - He could call His disciples, brethren. (wwww) Mary receives the first apostolic task: she *is the* apostle to the apostles, to tell the disciples of the good news, of the risen Lord.

There are other appearances.

John 20:21-23 Jesus Appears to the Disciples Excluding Thomas (Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36-43)

21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

This is the scriptural fulfilment of Psalm 33:6:

6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Job 33:4:

4 The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

God used the same method to breathe life into the first human, as we see in Genesis 2:7

7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

This is also how the Jews would have understood Wisdom to operate, as can be seen from Wisdom 15:11:

11 because they failed to know the one who formed them and inspired them with active souls and breathed a living spirit into them. New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

And Wisdom 7:25-27:

25 For she is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. 26 For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness. 27 Although she is but one, she can do all things, and while remaining in herself, she renews all things; in every

generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets *New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)*

The first peace is the given peace of the New Revelation by Jesus of Himself. In the second aspect of the peace, (31) Jesus reminded them of their divinely inspired commission to go out and spread the Good News. (vii.c) Jesus came as in incarnate part of the Godhead. He now, via His Grace, commissions His disciples to go out and spread the word. Jesus demonstrated His ability to create via His word or breath, as at the great creation event at the start of the universe itself. (9.f) Jesus was teaching that His Disciples could identify those who had truly repented and therefore know their sins would be forgiven, and those who had not truly repented and thus would not have their sins forgiven. This is the initial process of the Holy Spirit arriving in the Acts of the Apostles in its full sense of giving them more divine powers to spread the message of the Gospel more quickly and throughout a great amount of territory across the known world.

John 20:26-29 Jesus Appears to the Disciples Including Thomas (1 Corinthians 15:5)

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." 28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

(1) Cognisant that it will be startling to see a man raised from the dead, Jesus greets his disciples with the words *"Peace to you!"* Knowing the weakness of Thomas, Jesus helps Thomas understand the truth that Jesus was resurrected in His full body and that there was no illusion at play. Thomas moves from being the doubter to giving the most forthright and positive exclamation of the deity of Jesus, calling Him "My Lord and my God." (vii.c) As the Prologue to this Gospel opened with Jesus described as the Word, so it now ends with Thomas confirming Jesus as the Word - indeed as God. (xiv) Jesus finishes by teaching that after His departure from the

world, many will believe without this need for personal confirmation or a physical encounter with the incarnated Jesus, and they will be truly blessed.

John 21:5-12 Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

5 Then Jesus said to them, **“Children, have you any food?”** They answered Him, “No.” 6 And He said to them, **“Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.”** So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. 8 But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. 9 Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, **“Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.”** 11 Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. 12 Jesus said to them, **“Come and eat breakfast.”** Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, “Who are You?”—knowing that it was the Lord.

Jesus creates the breakfast much as He did when feeding the 5000 and 4000.

John 21:15-23 Jesus Speaks to Peter

15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, **“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”** He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, **“Feed My lambs.”** 16 He said to him again a second time, **“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?”** He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, **“Tend My sheep.”** 17 He said to him the third time, **“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?”** Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, **“Do you love Me?”** And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, **“Feed My sheep. 18 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.”** 19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, **“Follow Me.”** 20 Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” 21 Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?” 22 Jesus said to him, **“If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.”** 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?”**

(li) The key teaching of Jesus to Peter (where three repetitive questions are asked by Jesus, perhaps to remind Peter of his three denials of Him), and to all future believers, is that whilst we can love someone individually, where Jesus is concerned this must be total love and devotion to all His works and teachings. (lii) Jesus alludes to the future death of Peter, taken to be crucified ('stretch out your hands' was the euphemism for Crucifixion – church history has Peter crucified upside down in Rome in the mid 60s) himself and this would be the kind of price we must be prepared to pay for our total love. Jesus teaches He will be coming again. Peter asks about the fate of John, to which Jesus essentially replies it is none of your business, Peter, and just focus on your own divinely ordained task at hand. Peter is clearly also set up by Jesus to be the founder of the church. There is then some expectation set by Jesus that John would see Him again, which of course John does when he records the events of Jesus appearing to him in the Book of Revelation.

We now move to the early days of the emerging Jewish/Christian Church as recorded by St Luke.

The Acts of the Apostles

Luke, as author of the Acts of the Apostles opens Acts with reminding his audience what Jesus had promised in Luke 24:49 ***Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.***

Acts 1:4-8 Luke Reminds us of the Promise of the Holy Spirit:

4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."
6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit

has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The prophets Micah 4:2 (the younger prophet repeating Isaiah) and Isaiah 2:3 had predicted 700 years before that the Promise of the Law, or the Gospel would go forth from Jerusalem, where the disciples were now assembled.

Isaiah 2:3

Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Jesus is teaching his disciples to be patient, to wait and to obey. Lessons all very much relevant to us today (ooo.a). (A) Jesus foretold that they would be baptised with the Holy Spirit, as indeed they were ten days later. Jesus is also saying He is sending the Holy Spirit ie it is proceeding from Him. The disciples were expecting the physical restoration of the Kingdom, as prophesised in Ezekiel 36, where this same Holy Spirit is poured out. (oooo.b) Jesus then reiterates that it is not any of their business when the Second Coming will be; this does not mean He does not know, but that they don't and won't, and no-one will until it happens. This was much like what was said in Matthew 24:36 & Mark 13:32, the exact time being in the possession of the Father and very much His business. (xxxiv.b) The power they were about to receive was the indwelling Holy Spirit which would allow them to be His witness by performing miracles, not only to the Jews, but also the Gentiles. (B) The Gospel was going global.

The next appearance by Jesus is when Saul is traveling to Damascus to continue his persecution of the Jewish Christians. The Lord had away of calling His servants, with a double evocation

Genesis 22:11

But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

1 Samuel 3:10

Now the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."

Luke 22:31

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

He does this now to Saul/Paul

Acts 9:4-9 The Conversion of Saul/Paul:

4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads³³." 6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." 7 And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. 8 Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

(i.k) Saul is now referring to Jesus exclusively as The Lord, a title only used for God. Jesus responds with confirming He indeed is by using the "I am" divinity declaration. Paul in this moment, does a spiritual and intellectual 360 degree turn and immediately submits, trustingly to the will of the Lord, as we all must do if we want that gateway to eternal life open to us. Jesus teaches how it is futile to go

³³ A stick to prod cattle with.

against His will, just as it is an Ox to fight against the cattle prod (Q) Paul may have realised at that moment, that the Goad of God, your own consciousness could no longer continue the persecution of the early followers of Jesus. It is important to note here that Saul did physically see the risen Lord. (vii.r) His travel companions did not and this is another evidential testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus. Saul goes into the City, blinded to the new world, but fully trusting in Jesus that what awaited him, would be a magnificent new life.

Acts 9:10-16 The Baptism of Saul:

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." 11 So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. 12 And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight." 13 Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

Jesus instructs his follower Ananias to go and administer to someone Ananias quite justifiably fears most. Here we learn why we can be called sometimes to do things that we think are unthinkable to us in the moment, however, the command to love your enemies (ll) is clear here: we, like Ananias should be obedient at doing this. Further to this, Jesus is teaching Ananias the great power of forgiveness (rrrr) between adversaries. (C) Jesus is teaching that Paul will be His champion messenger to the Gentile people as well as to the Jews. Jesus teaches that He has chosen Paul to expand His Gospel to all the corners of the globe. (C.a) Jesus is teaching that during this process, Paul will suffer. This we see laid out in 1 Corinthians discussed later. (C.b) Jesus teaches that His on-going grace will suffice, and that the physical weakness of Paul would help amplify the grace of the Lord emanating from Him.

(D) Jesus then appears to Peter to give him guidance concerning food laws and the Gentile world. Peter describes a vision of all the various animals, clean and unclean, given to him in a vision from heaven, and Jesus says to him: slay and eat them.

People in Judea have heard that the Holy Spirit had come to the Gentiles. Hitherto, this had only been presumed to be a solely Jewish thing by the disciples, despite the specific signalling by Jesus otherwise. Peter had gone to investigate and had interacted with unclean people, which would have been a total shock to the Jewish religious folk of the day. Peter explains the vision that overcame him.

Acts 11:7-9 Peter and the Food Laws, Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit:

7 And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' 8 But I said, 'Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.' 9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, 'What God has cleansed you must not call common.'

(D) Now, prior to this, some Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit, taking the Gospel outside of the disciples' Jewish world. These initial converts go and eat with Peter. This news gets back to Judea and some are in shock that a Jew like St Peter could be eating and associating with 'unclean' people. Peter then explains the vision that came to him concerning the eating of forbidden food. Now it was clear that all God's creations could be eaten.

Meanwhile, Peter explains how three Gentile men had come looking for him -and a remarkable thing happened ...

Acts 11:15-17:

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?"

(38) Like Peter and the other disciples, these Gentiles were not baptised by water, but baptised by the Holy Spirit. (B) Peter quite rightly does not contest God and accepts that this is the divine plan, to open the Gospels up to the Gentiles. Jesus is very much emphasising that (R) sectarian divisions mean nothing to Him and should therefore mean nothing to us.

Paul is then on the move, pressing forward his mission to convert the Gentile world in the City of Corinth. Jesus comes to Paul in a vision.

Acts 18:9-10 Paul at Corinth:

9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

(C.c) Jesus comforts Paul and gives him strength and encouragement to continue his ever-expanding ministry to the Gentile world. This shows Paul in his very human self, struggling under intense pressure, having doubts and uncertainty about his mission, but Jesus comforts and helps him along the way.

The words of Jesus are remembered by Paul when he was talking to the Ephesian Elders.

Acts 20:35:

35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

(r) (q) This is a direct quote from Jesus. It is not cited in the three former Gospels but, as John 21:25 records, there are many sayings and doings that were never recorded. The thrust of the teaching is directly the same theme of all of the teachings of Jesus, especially concerning servant-leadership and the merits of humility and giving, as opposed to taking, being of the higher order. Jesus gave everything He had, including His life to and for mankind. The bar is very high

indeed for us mortals, but not as high as Jesus set as this is particularly directed so that we can focus our energies on helping the poorest.

Paul is in Jerusalem next, and in trouble with the authorities before whom he offers a defence which includes some recollection of the words of Jesus at the point of Paul's conversion.

Acts 22:7-10 Paul's Defence:

7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' 8 So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.' 9 "And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. 10 So I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.'

Paul continues to tell his story to the authorities in his defence. He recollects, to the surrounding mob, another vision where Jesus speaks

Acts 22:18-21

18 and saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.' 19 So I said, 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. 20 And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.' 21 Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.'"

(C.d) Jesus tells Paul to leave Jerusalem as they have too many enemies. Paul knows for sure that Jesus does not want him in Jerusalem, but out there converting the Gentiles. Paul tries to resist this by suggesting that as he is known as the biggest persecutor of the new faith, his conversion to it would only be seen as a miracle. This episode was viewed as blasphemous Jesus gives him short shrift and gets him on his way to his new mission, that of converting the Gentiles.

The Jewish authorities nearly kill Paul. He is 'rescued' by the Roman authorities and detained and has a visit from Jesus in the night.

Acts 23:11 Paul is Comforted by Jesus:

11 But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

(C.c) In this magnificent but short intervention by Jesus, Paul is assured of his safe passage and that he will get to Rome and preach the Gospel but not just in Jerusalem. Paul knew that with all the uncertainties that lay ahead on the road to Rome (as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles) he would get to Rome and preach the Gospel there - arrests, beatings, storms, shipwrecks, multiple near death experiences aside.

Paul then eventually gets passed over to the Jewish/Roman client King, Herod Agrippa, and recounts his story again, choosing to abridge it. Paul recounts that Jesus had called him for a purpose, to be a witness to things that have already happened but are not known yet, although they will be happening. Paul adds a reference about how he knows that his own teachings concerning Jesus would turn people previously not looking towards Him as their spiritual master - he was to "open their eyes" and make them not Satan's servants, but God's.

Acts 26:14-18:

14 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads³⁴.' 15 So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17 I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and

³⁴ This was a stick to prod cattle. Cattle could not resist it, just as any of us can't resist the divine will.

from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

(54) Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthian Christians, reminds them of how the Lord's Supper, as a ceremonial feast, came into existence, and that it should be the dominant way they celebrate communal feasts which had become corrupted. (32) By saying that this must be done in remembrance of Jesus, Paul is reminding us that Jesus was reminding *us* to remember His service to others as the cornerstone to understanding the Golden Rule that Jesus positively modified. Memory then is the first well spring of our faith. Each time we remember this event, we bring Jesus to the forefront of our minds. The bread is our spiritual food, the blood that He shed to cleanse us of our sins is represented by the wine. This way Jesus gives us support for both the body and the soul by us being encouraged, each week to remember His teachings, miracles, unilateral unconditional love, servant leadership and much more. The sacrifice of Jesus must be remembered, as this delivers us from sin and death to eternal life. Jesus is reminding us that He is the worlds greatest benefactors.

The next two section are from the only two letters in the Bible of St Paul, where Jesus is recorded as speaking.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 Paul Recalls the Establishment of the Eucharist Feast:

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Paul is teaching that Jesus taught via this ceremony the physical incarnation of His death, Resurrection, and His coming again.

In his second letter to the same church, Paul recounts his physical burden (a satanic thorn in his side) and his request to Jesus to get rid of it. (C.b) Jesus teaches that His on-going grace will suffice, and that the physical weakness of Paul would help amplify the grace of the Lord emanating from Him.

2 Corinthians 12:9:

9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

(cccc) This is a reminder that Jesus does not deliver His grace to those who are proud and boastful, only to those who fully recognise their dependence on Jesus for their own apparent glory. This grace is sufficient and all you need to navigate the tempestuous moments of life. This is also another divinity declaration as only God could claim this.

Revelations of John The Divine³⁵

(E) On the Island of Patmos Jesus announces Himself to John as the start and the finish of our reality. (E.a) Alpha and Omega (i.z.i) are the first and the last letters of the Greek Alphabet. An alphabet allows us to express all known knowledge, hence Jesus, as the Word, was declaring that He is the entirety of everything, divine and the Godhead itself, the (i.z) Almighty. (i.e) Jesus is teaching His omnipotence as well as His divinity (i) He is a transcendent being (S), not some white bearded grandad in the sky.

Revelation 1:8:

8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

³⁵ I call John divine as was transported to and he saw heaven (chapter 4)

This whole revelation may have been what the prophet Zechariah was predicting when he says the following:

Zechariah 12:10:

10 And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

Daniel 7:13:

13 I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

Jesus continues, and John receives this magnificent vision which starts with the following:

Revelation 1:11:

11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

Once more we have the divinity declaration of Jesus, He is the First and the Last (i.z.ii). Jesus is transcendent over everything (S). John describes more of what he is seeing revealed before his eyes. He is divinely instructed to write this down. Overwhelmed, he falls to his feet, a characteristic of many a Godly encounter in the Bible. Also, it was generally held that if you were sinful and died you would see God, so John, being sinful (as are we all) may well have assumed he had died.

Exodus 19:21:

21 And the Lord said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the Lord, and many of them perish.

Judges 6:22-23:

22 Now Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the Lord. So Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord God! For I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face." 23 Then the Lord said to him, "Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die."

Revelation 1:17-20:

17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. 19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

(E.b) The "Alpha and Omega" is now rendered "First and the Last", and the (i.k) additional "I am" divinity declaration is made by Jesus. (E.c). Jesus also declares that He is very much alive (i.z.iii). Jesus reminds John that He has the "keys of Hades" or the dwelling place of the dead and full command over death itself. Jesus commands that John records the vision he is now receiving, to record the things which are, or the letters to the churches just mentioned, and the things that will be revealed later to John: he must write them down. Jesus then explains part of this initial vision as the seven stars being the seven messengers, or guardian elders, of the seven churches, with the lampstands being those churches. These churches are the light-bearers. (T) The church, simply put, is the light to the world. These letters follow the same broad pattern. Firstly, there is the general opening address to the senior elder of the church in question. Secondly, there follows a laying out of the general problem and a call to genuine repentance. Thirdly, a call to return to real faith. Fourthly, the finish contains a prophetic announcement. All of these letters have great relevance to us today in our own churches across the globe.

Jesus then communicates His messages to the various churches.

The Message to Ephesus: The Loveless Church

(F) Addressing His message to the head of the Church, Jesus is clearly showing compassion and empathy with their persecuted situation under the Romans. Jesus is aware that they have been good at discriminating between true and false apostles, but in establishing their church Jesus is reminding them that they have forgotten to love Him. (G) Jesus tells them to repent and get back to basics and love the Lord Jesus, or their church will fall since Jesus will remove their “lampstand”, or Himself, from their presence. There is a Nicolas who was made a deacon in Acts 6:5 and it is assumed that he is our man. As Nicolas is recorded by Ignatius, Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria as leading a decadent life and encouraging other of his followers, the Nicolaitans, to do the same, it is assumed to be him. This was clearly an affront to Jesus and His Gospel teachings. (H) Jesus is then teaching: overcome all of this, by (1) repenting, and be a true Christian and we will book our place in an eternal paradise, where we can eat, or be sustained by the Tree of Life.

Revelation 2:1-7:

2 “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. 4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. 6 But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

Genesis 2:9:

9 And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

St Ignatius in his Letter to the Philadelphians³⁶:

If anyone confesses these things, and that God the Word did dwell in a human body, being within it as the Word, even as the soul also is in the body, because it was God that inhabited it, and not a human soul, but affirms that unlawful unions are a good thing, and places the highest happiness in pleasure, as does the man who is falsely called a Nicolaitan, this person can neither be a lover of God, nor a lover of Christ, but is a corrupter of his own flesh, and therefore void of the Holy Spirit, and a stranger to Christ. All such persons are but monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are written only the names of dead men.

That the Lord hates has scriptural antecedents:

Isaiah 61:8:

8 For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, And will make with them an everlasting covenant.

Amos 5:21:

21 I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies.

Zachariah 8:17;

17 Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate,' Says the Lord.

The Message to Smyrna: The Persecuted Church

(E.b) Jesus announces Himself as the deity and, what is more, as the resurrected deity. (tt) Jesus is pointing out that in this church there were good works but they were not good enough, as they still were overtly rich. (ddd) There were in their congregation pagans masquerading as Jews, who were in effect the death of the

³⁶ <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/ignatius-philadelphians-longer.html>

church, and all must be vigilant towards those people. In the coming persecutions, (I) Jesus foretells, they must have the confidence to stand firm in their faith and they are assured of the crown of life, or eternal life, therefore the complete avoidance of their second death or the ultimate death an unbeliever will be given at the Day of Judgment. The references to crown of life' was Jesus' method of choosing a metaphor that people of the time could easily relate to: the winner's crown at the legendary sporting events.

Revelation 2:8-11:

8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: 9 "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

It is worth noting that ten days, in this context, may be like the liberally used 'forty days' and the 'seven days' of creation, which don't seem to have any relationship with the way that we count today. Maybe there is also a prophetic element to this section as Bishop Polycarp was martyred here in the middle of the Second Century, now a saint, he has the crown of life and has indeed overcome death.

The Message to Pergamos: The Compromising Church

(eee) Pergamos, more so that Ephesus was the seat of pagan worship. Jesus is directing His message to the Church elder as before. Jesus reminds him that He is the bearer of the two edged sword of judgment, sorting the good from the bad. (bb0) Pergamos was a centre that was big enough to have the presence of a Magistrate, so the judgment of a fellow named Antipas (slow roasted on a spit!), presumably happened there and Jesus knew about it. Jesus positively congratulates them for staying firm in faith despite a notable churchman being

martyred. (ddd) However, despite this, Jesus notes that like at the time of the false prophet Balaam, they are mixing in marriage with pagans and getting involved in all sorts of wrong practises. Balaam had been engaged by a foreign (idolatrous/bad sexual practises in the Temple etc) king to use his powers against God's chosen people. We don't know what was going on at this church in this time, but can only presume it was something similar. (1) (d.i) Jesus teaches them to repent or they will get an unfavourable judgment against them. Jesus reminds all of the Exodus story, when the Isrealites were sustained with the bread of heaven, both materially and the hidden references being to spiritual healing and very much to be juxtaposed between this every day sustaining bread and that of the dead to life bread of the idolatry practiced in the pagan Temples. The hidden mamma could well be that of Jesus Himself as he has ascended into heaven. The white stone could be a reference to the winners stone, given to the winner of a sporting event, which acted like their ticket into the celebratory party post the event. Anyway, if it does have a historical parallel that we don't yet know, its imagery used by Jesus is urging us to repent, or correct these aberrations and we will get our ticket into eternal life with our name and the Lords on it, a son of God and the Son of God's name. The early Christian church built on the Old Testament understanding that we would need a new name to move closer to God. In ancient culture, if we were naming something, we were claiming dominion over it. We see this in Genesis 1:5 were God starts naming parts of His creation.

Genesis 1:5:

5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Genesis 17:5:

5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations.

God is going to rename all believers.

Revelation 2:12-17:

12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: 13 "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. 15 Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. 16 Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. 17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

Numbers 22:11-13:

11 Look, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come now, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out." 12 And God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed." 13 So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go back to your land, for the Lord has refused to give me permission to go with you.

Isaiah 49:2:

2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; In the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me, And made Me a polished shaft; In His quiver He has hidden Me.

Isaiah 62:2:

2 The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the Lord will name.

Isaiah 65:10:

10 You shall leave your name as a curse to My chosen; For the Lord God will slay you, And call His servants by another name;

The Message to Thyatira: The Corrupt Church

(9.c) Jesus' address commences with an open declaration of His divinity as the Son of God. (i.e) Jesus opens this dialogue by reminding all that He has penetrating vision, indeed that He is omniscient, and His feet are like the burning feet of the sacrificial altars of old. (eee) This is a clear reference to His ability to pass judgment on sin. Whilst Jesus recognises there is much good going on, much love in this church, there are also false doctrines and bad practises being taught. (J) Jesus uses the Old Testament story of Jezebel to remind this church of her fate of death for encouraging all the practices listed by Jesus, and by implication what would happen to them if they carried on with these practises. The practical Jezebels may well have been the traders the early Christians would have had to associate with in the trade guilds they needed to join to sell anything. (i.k) Jesus makes His "I am" divinity declaration with a reminder all that (i.e) He is omniscient and the One with the power to Judge as He can search our hearts and know our true motives. (K) Jesus is teaching that those who hold the faith until He comes again will have dominion over all nations. (K.a)) Jesus is also teaching that that Judgment will be firm and absolute at His Second Coming, when He will rule with a "rod or iron," as was predicted by King David in a Psalm 1,000-odd years before this message. Church members who pass the test of faith will reap the rewards then and rule over all others. (10) The gift of the Morning Star, possibly Jesus Himself, that could well be the gift of command over Satan, no less, whose former dominion we, as believers, will now have dominion over.

Revelation 2:18-29:

18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: 19 "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. 20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent 22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery

with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. 24 "Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. 25 But hold fast what you have till I come. 26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— 27 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'— as I also have received from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star. 29 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

1 Kings 21:23:

23 And concerning Jezebel the Lord also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'

1 Kings 21:25:

25 But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up.

2 Kings 30-37:

30 Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. 31 Then, as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?" 32 And he looked up at the window, and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" So two or three eunuchs looked out at him. 33 Then he said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot. 34 And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, "Go now, see to this accursed woman, and bury her, for she was a king's daughter." 35 So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. 36 Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, "This is the word of the Lord, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; 37 and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, "Here lies Jezebel."'"

1 Samuel 16:7:

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Psalm 2:9:

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

Isaiah 14:12:

12 How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!

The Message to Sardis: The Dead Church

This church receives no praise from Jesus at all! (xxxiv) The important theological point to note is that Jesus has command of the Holy Spirit, i.e, it proceeds from Him as well as from the Father as the Nicene Creed says. Jesus the human had the Holy Spirit placed in Him in His earthly ministry. In His on going ministry, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son.(G) In this message Jesus is using imagery from Isaiah 11:1-2 and Zechariah 4:1-10 to symbolise the Holy Spirit. The number seven always biblically symbolises completeness as well, and in the earlier vision is identified as Jesus. The workings of this church have become spiritually bankrupt. Jesus warned them to repent of their ways, adding that He could visit them at any time. (H.a) Jesus notes that some of the church here are pure (white) and these will obtain eternal life i.e., their names will remain in the Book of Life, the heavenly record of all those who are saved, and will be saved. This demonstrates that Jesus is no judger of communities, (10.a) but he will judge individually, indeed He has an individual relationship with each and everyone of us.

Revelation 3:1-6:

3 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. 4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. 6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

Isaiah 11:1-2:

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Zechariah 3:3:

3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

Zechariah 4:1-10:

4 Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. 3 Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." 4 So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 6 So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts. 7 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"' 8 Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying: 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you. 10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the Lord, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

Daniel 12:1:

1 At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.

The Message to Philadelphia : The Faithful Church

(E.d) Jesus is Holy and True, which is another Alpha and Omega, First and Last stylistic introduction. Eliakim held the keys to access to King David. Jesus uses this imagery here to remind all that Jesus is the only doorway to eternal salvation. (i.e) Jesus then reminds all of His omniscience, His all-knowing ability. Jesus warns of pagans masquerading as Jews and Jews who do not eventually convert. The latter will only be a small minority. In many ways, this was of course prophetic as the destruction of the Second Temple in AD70 and the total elimination of the Jews in Palestine, by the middle of the second century, did insure that this mass conversion, as they dispersed, did take place. (L) Those who stand firm in faith will survive the hour of trial and have their foes worshiping at their feet. The pillars Jesus refers to could well be Boaz (in him strength) and Jarchin (he will establish), the two major columns in Solomon's Temple. This would signify the undoubted strength believers receive from Jesus. In Hebrew culture of the time, to write the name of someone upon anything, was to claim it as yours. Jesus is claiming His people. So in saying He would in effect re claim us, from His heavenly abode, for Heaven, as His, for us to live in a New Jerusalem, Jesus was messaging the importance of baptism, when we got a Christian name, we claimed by Jesus and lived for the New Jerusalem. This is the 70th week of the prophecy spoken of in the Book of Daniel. Jesus will save His church from these terrible times and each believer will stand fast as a pillar of heaven and receive their new identity and eternal life in a heavenly dwelling.

Revelation 3:7-13:

7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens': 8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it: for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. 12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Isaiah 22:21-23:

21 I will clothe him with your robe And strengthen him with your belt; I will commit your responsibility into his hand. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem And to the house of Judah. 22 The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut; And he shall shut, and no one shall open. 23 I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place, And he will become a glorious throne to his father's house.

Daniel 9:24-27:

24 Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. 25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.

Isaiah 60:14:

14 Also the sons of those who afflicted you Shall come bowing to you, And all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; And they shall call you The City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

The Message to Laodicea: The Lukewarm Church

(E.e) Jesus introduces Himself as the Amen, that his words will never pass away. Jesus is the eternal Word. Jesus finds it necessary to remind those of this church that although they were professing what they viewed as the faith, they did not hold that Jesus was pre-existent. (vii.j) His divine eternal element was denied or not understood, hence Jesus teaches of His pre-existence. The lukewarm nature of their belief was like the tepid waters from the aquifer that flowed underneath them and would be spat out by a drinker unused to it. (cccc) Their complacency would be their downfall as it prevented them from knowing how utterly dependent on God they were for their existence. (50) (tt.b) Jesus viewed them as physically rich, but spiritually poor. (M) They are told by Jesus to clothe themselves in His spiritual clothes. Jesus was teaching: don't buy the earthly gold of offer, but His gold. Don't buy the eye salve that this town is famous for, but His eye salve. Above all the message is clear: forget the earthly chattels we accumulating and don't mess about but get on and 'buy' Jesus: that is the ultimate trade in this trading city. By doing so, they could buy themselves abundant life with Jesus, as Isaiah had taught of old. Jesus observes that in reality this church was spiritually empty and temporally full. (G) Jesus was teaching that if any of them saw the error of his ways and repented, He would welcome them in. If they did that, all would share in the eternal kingdom. (N) *Jesus is teaching that if we hear His voice, He will knock at our door, we will let Him in and He will dwell in us.* Much as in Luke 13:24-30 and John 10, we see Jesus referring to Himself, as that divine door to our salvation. His love is always there, we just need to open up our heart, soul and mind, and open our door to let Him into our life to receive this love. As the ultimate servant, He is patiently waiting to serve us (ooo.a) This implies that it is for us to exercise our free will by accepting His Grace. Once we do that, we too will accept our guest, who will in-fact become also our host, and together, us in

Him, we can enjoy the eternal banquet. Jesus is also teaching that just as He was resurrected and overcame the sting of death and sits on the same throne as the Father, that come our own resurrection we, too, as believers, will sit ***on that*** heavenly throne spiritually in Christ Jesus. The Church militant truly moves on to become the Church triumphant. This is by far the highest accolade any of us human beings could ever wish for, to share in the throne of Jesus.

Revelation 3:14-22:

14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Isaiah 40:8:

8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."

Proverbs 8:22:

22 The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.

John 1:1-5:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was

made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Isaiah 55:1:

1 Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

The Heavenly Worship in the Throne Room of Heaven

John is given a glimpse of heaven. What John is now shown in the next big vision is what life would be like after the age of the church.

As this is the last letter to the Churches, this is a very fitting ending to the series.

Revelation 4:1:

1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

The seven angels then pour out Jesus' (the first voice) wrath towards the world and He reminds us to always remain vigilant: (O) always make sure we are clothed in the garments of faith as the arrival of Jesus at His second coming will take us by surprise. This is a mix of the tough warning to the church at Sardis and the blessing to the church at Laodicea.

Revelation 16:15:

15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

Jesus came at His incarnation. He comes as wisdom itself, our moral dimension, he comes as our spiritual guide. Then He will come to finally judge. Jesus blesses John,

to whom He has revealed these visions and teachings, and to anyone on going who is aware and understands them.

Revelation 22:7:

7 Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.

Jesus Testifies to the Church

(0000.a) Jesus warns us all to be very faithful as we don't know when He will come again to judge each of us. This is His clear warning, not to be indifferent to Jesus, or to put off thinking about your relationship with Jesus, but to get yourself in a right relationship with Jesus. (E) Jesus teaches His divinity and omnipotence again with His Alpha and Omega statement. (vii.j) Jesus also makes sure He underscores His pre-existent status as the divine. Blessed with eternal life are those who keep the commands of Jesus, whilst condemned are those who don't. Jesus is also teaching us that we do have free will in the matter of our destiny. (i.g) (i.i) Jesus reaffirms His status as the Messiah, born of the Davidic line. (H) Jesus teaches that believers will regain access to the Tree of Life, lost to us when Adam sinned. Jesus, in His known closing words, circles majestically back to the first creation story in the Bible in order to complete it. Fully circled, and enclosed: this is the journey or revelation across all these books with undoubtedly powerful signalling always pointing toward Jesus being the be all and end all of everything.

Genesis 2:9:

9 And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 3:17:

17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.

Genesis 3:22:

22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—

Genesis 3:24:

24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Ezekiel 47:7-12:

7 When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other. 8 Then he said to me: "This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. 9 And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes. 10 It shall be that fishermen will stand by it from En Gedi to En Eglaim; they will be places for spreading their nets. Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish of the Great Sea, exceedingly many. 11 But its swamps and marshes will not be healed; they will be given over to salt. 12 Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine."

(14) (E.f) He is the Light of the World and its Bright and Morning Star, who will come quickly when he comes again. Although the Morning Star does also mean Satan, here it has the prefix "Bright" to indicate it is Jesus. Jesus ends with giving we believers assurance that He will indeed come quickly to us if we remain faithful. (P) This is not a reference to His second coming, but to His ability to indwell in His penitent believers and become a life-time partner alongside them.

Psalm 1:1-3:

1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

Proverb 3:18:

18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her.

Revelation 22:12-21:

*12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." 14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. 16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." 17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. 18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. 20 He who testifies to these things says, "**Surely I am coming quickly.**" Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

(H.b) Jesus teaches us that whoever holds the Tree of Life in themselves will be able to go through the city gate. In ancient times, he who controlled the city gate, controlled the city.

Genesis 24:60:

60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, may you become The mother of thousands of ten thousands; And may your descendants possess

The gates of those who hate them.”

So important were the city gates that legal cases were always tried there as were the sentences passed down. Also, the elders sat there in honour.

Deuteronomy 22:15:

15 then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the evidence of the young woman’s virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.

Deuteronomy 17:5:

5 then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has committed that wicked thing, and shall stone to death that man or woman with stones.

Proverbs 31:23:

23 Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.

Job 29:7-8:

7 When I went out to the gate by the city, When I took my seat in the open square, 8 The young men saw me and hid, And the aged arose and stood;

Numbers 24:17:

17 I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.

Isaiah 11:1:

1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

Isaiah 11:10:

*10 And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious.*

Isaiah 40:10:

*10 Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him;
Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.*

Psalms 118:19-20:

*19 Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise the Lord.
20 This is the gate of the Lord, through which the righteous shall enter.*

Jesus, in His final words, above all, was giving mankind the final way back to paradise, away from sin, and to eternal life. His message of blessedness echoes His first teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, so we come full circle in this last message to us all. Those who choose this path, which is open for all, are truly blessed. So ends the written words of Jesus Christ (and His prophets), Son of God, co-equal with God, pre-existent with God, indeed very much God.

Appendix 1

In my reading of the Bible I have found that there are 386 prophecies concerning Jesus Christ hinted at or pointed to in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. This is leaving aside all those that relate to the second coming of Jesus. Also, the Bible is full of prophecies relating to invasions of Israel/Judah, of various cities being destroyed, the rise and fall of a number of Empires, specific naming of some of their Kings well in advance of their coming and much more. For now, in plain text, here are just the prophetic versus written with regard to Jesus and his first coming that I have gleaned from my own reading of the Old Testament. In italic text, I have placed inside this list, the Holy Spirit specific prophetic pronouncements. The latter, I feel, can only be seen as prophetic when we look back, with our lens of understanding, gleaned via the revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament. In the “reflection” font, I have added some

Messianic verses that have been viewed that way exclusively by the Jews, that have come from the work of Alfred Edersheim. His “The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah” documents 456 Messianic references in the Old Testament. He takes these from 558 quotations from various Rabbinic writings that he lists in detail. On my read of the Old Testament, must I had, but I have added those I don’t have. I have also decided to add the passages in the books known as the Apocrypha, that are demonstrably Messianic.

The very Spirit of God is the creative agent at the Creation Event

Genesis 1:2

Messiah is already implied in God

Genesis 1:26

Viewed as Messianic when read with Genesis 3:15 and Ruth 4:18. The word “generation” written in Hebrew includes the symbol for the number 6. All other times it is absent. Subsequent to The Fall of Adam, Adam lost these key 6 things, his glorious sheen, life, stature, fruit of the land, of the trees and the heavenly lights. The symbol re appears in Ruth at the exact verse where the ancestors of the Messiah, Jesus is being proclaimed.

Genesis 2:4

The Lord God walks in the Garden, implying physical attributes or the second part of the Trinity

Genesis 3:8

Messiah would be born of a woman who would crush Satan. Genesis 3:15

The Lord grants Adam and Eve another “seed” that redeems the loss of Abel and becomes the ancestor, Seth of the Messiah

Genesis 4:25

The Spirit of God tried to encourage men to repent of their evil ways

Genesis 6:3

Messiah would come from the blessed line of Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3

Genesis 21:12 Genesis 22:18

Messiah suggested as Angel of the Lord

Genesis 16:7

Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac and not Ishmael's line. Genesis 17:19

First suggestion of the ultimate son sacrifice Genesis 22:13

The continued blessing of God on the Seed of Seth via Abraham and on to the Messiah is assured by God once more.

Genesis 22:18

Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham, reaffirmed with Isaac

Genesis 26:2-5

Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham, reaffirmed with Jacob

Genesis 28:10-17

Messiah is first suggested as a saviour and redeemer Genesis 48:16

Messiah would come from only the tribe of Judah. Genesis 49:10

Moses sounds like he equates Israel's with God's Son, but this is the foreseeing of the Messiah

Exodus 4:2

First suggestion that the ultimate Passover sacrifice, Christ, would have no bones broken

Exodus 12:46

The Spirit of Wisdom (of God) fills Aaron and his priests/relatives

Exodus 28:3

The Spirit of God fills the artisans with "wisdom, and understanding, in knowledge and manner of workmanship"

Exodus 35:1

Burt offerings of unblemished animals are done for atonement of sins

Leviticus 1:3-17

Grain offering as an additional devotional offering as the Messiah was devoted to his father

Leviticus 2:1-16

Peace offering to represent the free choice of peace between the Messiah and the father

Leviticus 3:1-17

Sin offering establishes that the Messiah will propitiator for all sins

Leviticus 4:1-5

The repentance offering as the Messiah paid for all redemption Leviticus 5:14

Messiah would be the ultimate scapegoat

Leviticus 16:8

The veil of the tabernacle separates Holy from un-Holy. Herod's veil was ripped asunder to show Christ was the way to God

Leviticus 16:12

The Messiah's life blood makes atonement

Leviticus 17:11

Concerning all the various Jewish feasts. It is the Christian contention that Jesus fulfils all of these as he taught he came to fulfil The Law (Matthew 5:17). Leviticus covers these and the MacArthur Study Bible shows how this takes place.

Christ in the Levitical Offerings

Burnt Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's atonement and is observed by his sinless nature.

Grain Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's dedication and consecration and is observed by his dedication to His Father's wishes.

Peace Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's reconciliation and fellowship and is observed by the fact he was at peace with God.

Sin Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's propitiation and is observed by his substitutionary death.

Trespass Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's repentance and is observed by Christ paid for all redemption.

Old Testament Feasts

Passover is the death of the Christ,

Unleavened Bread is the sinlessness of the Christ,

Firstfruits is the resurrection of the Christ,

Pentecost is the outpouring of the Christ,

Trumpets is the gathering of Israel by Christ,

Atonement is for the sacrifice of Christ,

Tabernacles is for the reunion with Christ

Leviticus 23 (all

of it) (MacArthur, The Bible , 1997)

The blessings last at The Fall, we to be restored by the son of Nahshon, or the
Messiah, Jesus was of that line Numbers
7:12

No bones shall be broken of the Messiah's Numbers 9:12
*The Spirit of God that was on Moses would be extended by God to his seventy elders
to support with the administration of the nation of Israel Numbers 11:17,
26*

The Red Heifer sacrifice for purification shall be unblemished as the Messiah was
Number
19:2

It shall be slaughtered outside of the camp, as the Messiah was
Numbers
19:3

Moses nails a serpent figure to a wooden pool, if you look up at it, you are cured of
your infection. The crucifixion and the healing of are sins by the Messiah are
foretold

Numbers 21:8

The reference to King is viewed to be Messianic Numbers 23:21

The ultimate Messianic King will come from Judah out of Egypt Numbers 24:8

Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob Numbers 24:17

The Nativity Star is proclaimed to come with the future King for all dominion
Numbers 24:15-
19

*Moses asks the Lord to put His Spirit on the next leader of Israel and God does exactly
that and chooses Joshua Numbers
27:16-18*

The Shema prayer of the Jews, which is used to establish the oneness of God, used
the same word 'one' God, as used for the unity of man and woman in Genesis 2:24

(two persons, man *and* a woman from one flesh) thus, paradoxically, preparing the ground for the Trinity as three persons in one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4

Messiah would be a prophet (with evidence of prophecies required to distinguish a good from a false one)

Deuteronomy 18:15

The test suggested by Moses to establish the true prophet the Messiah complies with

Deuteronomy

18:20-22

The Messiah would offer peace to the non Jewish cities, those of the Gentiles

Deuteronomy

20:10

You are cursed, as you can't obey all the law. But Jesus takes on the universal curse by "hanging on a tree" for all of us

Deuteronomy

21:22-23

The Messiah will provide redemption for the Gentiles as well - The Messiah, as the anointed one would have nations and their leaders directly hostile to Him

Deuteronomy

32:43

Moses tells of the Messiah as the King in Jerusalem

Deuteronomy

33:5

That same Spirit as Moses, is confirmed to reside in Joshua

Deuteronomy

34:9

Messiah appears as the Commander of the Army of the Lord

Joshua 5:13-15

Messiah as Angel of the Lord to reaffirm God's

Judges 2:1

Othniel has the Spirit of the Lord placed upon him to deliver his repenting people from servitude

Judges

3:10

Angel of the Lord (Messiah) identified as the Lord Himself

Judges 6:11

God, via His Spirit gives similar powers to Gideon

Judges 6:34

God, via His Spirit gives similar powers to Jephtah

Judges 11:29

<i>Samson receives the Spirit of the Lord</i>	<i>Judges 13:25</i>
<i>The Spirit of the Lord allows Samson to perform super human tasks</i>	<i>Judges 14:6</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Judges 14:19</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Judges 15:14</i>
<i>Eating and dipping the bread apes the future Messianic Kingdom. Keeping some of it back was a foretaste of life post the Messianic 1st Coming</i>	<i>Ruth 2:14</i>
<i>The Messiah's line is prepared pre-David</i>	<i>Ruth 4:1-22</i>
<i>Hannah advances the above</i>	<i>1 Samuel 2:1-10</i>
<i>The Lord will rule via the Messiah through this line</i>	<i>1 Samuel 2:10</i>
<i>The priest hood will be established to be ruled by the Messiah as son of God forever</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Samuel 2:35</i>	
<i>David as prime King of Israel is image of the later Messiah , the King who also came from the same humble start</i>	<i>1 Samuel 6:11</i>
<i>The Spirit of the Lord anoints Saul, the first Jewish King</i>	<i>1 Samuel 10:6</i>
<i>The Spirit of God gives Saul prophetic powers</i>	<i>1 Samuel 10:10</i>
<i>The Spirit of God makes Saul indignant with rage to sort out some problems</i>	<i>1 Samuel 11:6</i>
<i>The Spirit of the Lord anoints David</i>	<i>1 Samuel 16:13</i>
<i>The Spirit of the Lord removes itself from Saul</i>	<i>1 Samuel 16:14</i>
<i>The servants of Saul are convinced that the God has sent Saul a distressing Spirit</i>	<i>1 Samuel 16:15-16,23</i>
<i>More witness to the "distressing Spirit" from God infecting Saul</i>	<i>1 Samuel 18:10</i>
<i>Much as above, but the distressing Spirit is from the Lord this time</i>	<i>1 Samuel 19:19</i>
<i>The messengers of Saul are given the power of prophecy by the Spirit of God</i>	<i>1 Samuel 19:20</i>
<i>Saul regains his prophetic gift from the Spirit of God</i>	<i>1 Samuel 19:23</i>

The Davidic Covenant established (7:12) with Messiah foretold of this line as son of God (7:14) forever (7:16) 2 Samuel 7:1-17

The Messiah would save the humble and bring down the mighty 2 Samuel 22:28

Messiah is salvation to King David and his descendants forever 2 Samuel 22:51

In David's dying words he acknowledges that he has been the instrument of the Spirit of the Lord 2 Samuel 23:2

David's last words predict the most perfect and just King Messiah 2 Samuel 23:3-4

Everlasting covenant only fulfilled in the Messiah 2 Samuel 23:5

As the above regarding David's last words 1 Kings 2:4

Obadiah was afraid that the Spirit of the Lord would carry Elijah away again 1 Kings 18:12

The Lord puts a "lying Spirit" or Satan into the mix to cause trouble 1 Kings 22:23

Solomon wrongly believes he is the most perfect and this the fulfilment of the Davidic promise 1 Kings 2:24

Concerned people go a look for Elijah as the Spirit of the Lord may have "cast him" upon some mountain 2 Kings 2:16

The Lord would send a Spirit upon Sennacherib so he would leave Jerusalem 2 Kings 19:7

Line of Messiah established from Adam via David 1 Chronicles 3:1

Line of Messiah not cursed as it is not via Solomon but via Nathan through Mary 1

Chronicles 3:16

Messiah's line prevails	1 Chronicles 5:2
<i>The Spirit (of God) comes upon additional troop converts for David's growing army</i>	1
<i>Chronicles 12:18</i>	
<i>David shares the plans for the Temple, given by the Spirit (of God) to his son Solomon</i>	1 Chronicles 28:12
The Temple is built in preparation for the true Messiah/Lamb sacrifice	2 Chronicles 5:1
Where they fail, the Messiah will set up the glorious kingdom	2 Chronicles 7:17-18
<i>The Spirit of God allows Azariah, a servant of God, to speak for Him</i>	2 Chronicles 15:1
<i>The prophet Jahaziel is filled with the Spirit of the Lord to speak His word</i>	2 Chronicles 20:14
The Davidic line reduced to one only; the Lord's Covenant continues despite the imperfections of the genealogical line to the Messiah	Chronicles 23:3
<i>As with Jahaziel, so for Zachariah, this time it is the Spirit of God</i>	2 Chronicles 24:20
<i>In captivity, God gives His "good Spirit" to instruct those who repented and returned to faith</i>	Nehemiah 9:20
<i>During this period, the Spirit of God worked through the Prophets</i>	Nehemiah 9:30
<i>Job acknowledges His Spirit as the creative force</i>	Job 26:13
<i>Elihu recognizes that the Spirit of God created him</i>	Job 33:4
All Kings would be against the anointed Messiah	Psalms 2:2
Messiah would be called King and crowned in Jerusalem	Psalms 2:6
Messiah would be declared the Son of God	Psalms 2:7
Messiah's rule would be all over the world	Psalms 2:8
Messiah would be praised by little children	Psalms 8:2
The Messiah will have all things put under his feet	Psalms 8:6
The Messiah will be resurrected from the grave	Psalms 16:10

The Messiah will be served by the Gentiles that He did not know in His earthly Ministry	Psalm 18:43
The Davidic line confirmed in everlasting kingship	Psalm 18:50
The Messiah is revealed as the Word of God	Psalm 19:7-14
The Messiah will reign for ever and ever, this can't be David	Psalm 21:4
The Messiah will be forsaken by God in His moment of agony	Psalm 22:1
The Messiah will be ridiculed and scorned	Psalm 22: 7,8
The Messiah's feet will be pierced as will His hands	Psalm 22:16
The Messiah's bones will be left intact	Psalm 22:17
The Messiah's clothes will be gambled for	Psalm 22:18
The Messiah will be seen as a Shepherd (as is frequently attributed to Jesus in the New Testament)	Psalm 23:1
The Messiah would ascend to heaven	Psalm 24:7-10
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 28:9
No bone of the Messiah will be broken	Psalm 34:20
Messiah would be falsely accused.	Psalm 35:11
The Messiah will be hated unjustly	Psalm 35:19
It is written (Genesis 4:25) that the Messiah will come to do God's will	Psalm 40:7-8
Messiah would be betrayed (by Judas).	Psalm 41:9
Messiah's throne will be anointed and eternal.	Psalm 45:6-7 (89:4, 89:34-37, 132:12)
The Messiah will come out of Zion	Psalm 50:2
<i>David asks to be restored by His "generous Spirit"</i>	<i>Psalm 51:12</i>
<i>The Messiah, or lawgiver will be Judean</i>	<i>Psalm 60:7</i>
<i>The Davidic line will produce the line of the Messiah which will reside with God forever</i>	<i>Psalm 61:6-7</i>
The Messiah will ascend into Heaven	Psalm 68:18

Messiah would be rejected by his own people and Apostles	Psalm 69:8
The Messiah will be consumed by zeal for God's temple	Psalm 69:9
The Messiah will be given gall and vinegar	Psalm 69:21
The desolate place of Judas predicted	Psalm 69:25
The Messiah will suffer	Psalm 69:26
Commonly thought to mean Solomon, but can't as righteousness anticipated refers to his son, anticipating the reign of the righteous Messiah	
Psalm 72:1	
The Messiah will reign as a righteous King forever	Psalm 72:7
Gifts will be brought	Psalm 72:10
All Kings shall bow down to this Messiah, again demonstrating this cant refer to Solomon	Psalm
72:11	
The Messiah will save the souls of the needy	Psalm 72:13
The Messiah will have everlasting prayer addressed to him	Psalm 72:15
The Messiah's name will be blessed and known forever	Psalm 72:17
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 74:1
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 77:20
Messiah would speak in parables.	Psalm 78:2-4
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 78:52
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 79:13
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 80:1
The Messiah is the Branch	Psalm 80:15
The Messiah is the Son of Man of that Branch	Psalm 80:18
The Messiah will spring out of the earth as the truth and not be sired by a man in the conventional sense	Psalm
85:11	
All of these verses relate to the Messiah defeating His enemies	Psalm 89:22-26
Messiah is the firstborn of all creation	Psalm 89:27
Messiah answers Satan	Psalm 91:11-12
Revelation via scripture is very sure	Psalm 93:5
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 95:7

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalm 100:3
<i>God's Spirit as "Your Spirit" is recognised as that creative breath of Creation itself</i>	
	<i>Psalm 104:30</i>
<i>At the time of Moses, it is acknowledged that the Israelites rebelled against God's Spirit</i>	
	<i>Psalm 106:33</i>
God will still the sea as the Messiah did	Psalm 107:29
Messiah would pray for his enemies.	Psalm 109:4
The Messiah betrayer will be replaced	Psalm 109:8
"The Lord said to My Lord" The Messiah sits above King David who addresses the Messiah as "My Lord."	
	Psalm 110:1
The Messiah is the Rod sent out of Jerusalem and He will be reunited with the rod of Moses, Jacob and the staff of Aaron	Psalm
110:2	
The Messiah's followers will be volunteers	Psalm 110:3
The Messiah will be born from a virgin womb	Psalm 110:3
Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek	Psalm 110:4
The Messiah will be the cornerstone to replace the stone (Moses) that was rejected, as Moses said	
Psalm 118:22	
The Messiah will come in the name of the Lord and will be blessed	
	Psalm
118:26	
<i>David, recognizing God knows everything about him, asks rhetorically "Where can I go from Your Spirit?"</i>	<i>Psalm</i>
139:7	
<i>In a prayer of penitence, David recognizes that God's Spirit is good</i>	
	<i>Psalm 143:10</i>
<i>Wisdom (of God) pours out her Spirit on us</i>	<i>Proverb 1:23</i>
The Messiah was with God at creation, and the foundation of wisdom	
	Proverbs 8:23-31

The Messiah is the son of God and his name is asked for Proverbs 30:4
Israel would not know its Master, only the Gentiles would as they did the Messiah

The Messiah was viewed to come an re-enact the miracles of the past
Ecclesiastes 1:9

Related to above, the last clause “by those who will come after” was assumed to
be Messianic. Also, the other verses were said to have been only capable of being
fulfilled by the Messiah Ecclesiastes
1:11,7:24, 11:8, 12:1

The Song of Solomon or Canticle of Canticle

In Edersheim’s research of all the Jewish sayings and texts, he finds a whole host
of passages that are traditionally viewed as Messianic. I don’t see the direct
connection with Jesus the Messiah, so I don’t list, but a close consultation of them
is worthwhile for sure.

Isaiah 1:3

The Messiah is the Law that will proceed forth from Jerusalem Isaiah 2:3

The Messiah will deliver His Kingdom of Peace with no weapons of man

Isaiah 2:4

The Messiah will appear as the branch of the Lord Isaiah 4:2

The Branch or Messiah will judge the “Daughters of Jerusalem” which arguably
happened at the destruction of Jerusalem Isaiah 4:4

The Messiah will “cover” the whole of Jerusalem thereafter Isaiah 4:5-6

The Messiah affirmed in the Trinity Isaiah 6:3

The Messiah affirmed as a different manifestation of God Isaiah 6:8

The Messiah will have to use parables Isaiah 6:9

The threefold nature of the Godhead, with the Messiah implied is sung in the
trihagion Isaiah

6:13

The Messiah will be born of a Virgin	Isaiah 7:14
The Messiah will be called Immanuel	Isaiah 7:14 ³⁷
The Messiah as Immanuel 'God is with us' will save the remnant of Israel	Isaiah
8:10	
The Messiah will be rejected by His people	Isaiah 8:14
The Messiah will be rejected by Israel	Isaiah 8:15
The Messiah will start his ministry in Zebulun, Naphtali and Galilee (land of the Gentiles)	Isaiah 9:1-2
The Messiah will be the Virgin's Son called Immanuel, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace – of the Davidic line	Isaiah 9:6-7
The Messiah (Branch) will be of the Davidic line, (through both via Mary and his step father is this traced)	Isaiah
11:1	
The Trinity suggested again, The Spirit, the Lord and Him	Isaiah 11:2
The Messiah will not Judge as an earthly King, but spiritually	Isaiah 11:3
The Messiah will put the poor centre stage	Isaiah 11:4
The Gentiles will seek the Messiah	Isaiah 11:10
The Messiah will determine who goes into Heaven	Isaiah 22:22
The Messiah will be the stone for a foundation to build	Isaiah 28:16
The Messiah as the Holy one of Jacob will cleanse Israel	Isaiah 29:23
<i>Hezekiah ignores the Counsel of God's Spirit at his peril</i>	<i>Isaiah 30:1</i>
The Messiah will have his princes or apostles	Isaiah 32:1
<i>The Spirit of God pours out to create fruitful fields</i>	<i>Isaiah 32:15</i>
<i>Isaiah refers to his prophecies being as certain as His Spirit</i>	<i>Isaiah 34:16</i>
The Messiah will cure the lame	Isaiah 35:6
The Messiah will be preceded by a man from the wilderness to prepare the way (John the Baptist)	Isaiah
40:3	

³⁷ See next section

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Isaiah 40:11
<i>No wisdom compares to the spirit of the Lord</i>	<i>Isaiah 40:13</i>
The God who sent Cyrus to liberate Jerusalem is the Messiah	Isaiah 41:4
The Messiah will be the redeemer for God and he will be held in contempt as the “worm” was on the cross	Isaiah 41:14
The Messiah would come from the North (Galilee)	Isaiah 41:25
The Messiah is the personal servant of the Lord	Isaiah 42:1
The Messiah will bring justice to the gentiles	Isaiah 42:1
The Messiah will be polite and subtle in his worldly endeavours	Isaiah 42:2
The Messiah will be very helpful to the poor	Isaiah 42:3
<i>Isaiah describes God as creating via His breath (implies some physicality) and His Spirit implying the Trinity</i>	<i>Isaiah 42:5</i>
The Messiah will be a light to the Gentiles	Isaiah 42:6
The Messiah will come after a long period of God’s silence	Isaiah 42:14
The Messiah is the Lord’s witness	Isaiah 43:10
<i>God’s Spirit will be poured out into the descendants of Jacob ie, the Messiah</i>	<i>Isaiah 44:3</i>
The Messiah is the redeemer	Isaiah 44:7
The Messiah is affirmed as integral to the Trinity	Isaiah 48:16
The Messiah will be born of a human womb	Isaiah 49:1
The Messiah will speak very effectively (evidenced by the conversion of large sections of the world to Christianity 2000 year hence) and will be hidden until he comes	Isaiah 49:2
The Messiah will appear to labour in vain; however his achievements will become manifest to most	Isaiah 49:4
The Messiah will draw in the gentiles	Isaiah 49:6
The Messiah is the redeemer and will be rejected by Israel	Isaiah 49:7
The Messiah will grant grace for sinners	Isaiah 49:8

The Lord will forsake the Messiah	Isaiah 49:14
The Messiah will have unspeakably violent things done to his face and he will turn his cheek	Isaiah 50:6
The Messiah will be resolute in his Mission	Isaiah 50:7
The New Law (the law laid out in the Gospels) will proceed from the Messiah	Isaiah 51:4-5
The Messiah will start to plant the seeds of his Kingdom by giving his followers the just and wise words	Isaiah 51:16
The Messiah kicks starts the spreading of the good news	Isaiah 52:7
The Messiah will come to be internationally recognised at the highest level	Isaiah 52:13
The Messiah will go through unbelievable torture	Isaiah 52:14
The Messiah in his disfigured state will cleanse all nations	Isaiah 52:15
Only a few would recognise the Messianic Prophecy at first	Isaiah 53:1
The Messiah would be presented to the world in humble guise	Isaiah 53:2
The Messiah would be despised and rejected on the whole	Isaiah 53:3
The Messiah would shoulder our sins	Isaiah 53:4
The Messiah would be a substitute for sinners	Isaiah 53:5
By His physical scars and Passion we will be healed	Isaiah 53:5
The Messiah would be beaten for taken all our sins upon His shoulders	Isaiah 53:5
The Messiah takes away all our iniquity	Isaiah 53:6
The Messiah was the lamb led silently to slaughter	Isaiah 53:7
The Messiah was taken from judgment and prison and sacrificed despite shouldering our iniquities/sins	Isaiah 53:8
It was God's will that the Messiah would die	Isaiah 53:10
It was God's will to prolong His life after death	Isaiah 53:10
The Messiah's sacrifice is a one off event for all iniquities	Isaiah 53:11
The Messiah will be associated with criminals, as he was on the Cross. He will die, he will shoulder the sins for all and act as the intermediary with heaven	Isaiah 53:12

The Messiah will come first from the North	Jeremiah 23:8
The Messiah will come as the Branch of the Davidic line	Jeremiah 30:9
The Messiah will come up from among the people to govern	Jeremiah 30:21
The New Covenant will be forged in the Messiah	Jeremiah 31:31-34
The above is known with certainty	Jeremiah 31:35-37
The Messiah will give individual spiritual salvation	Jeremiah 33:8
The Messianic salvation is open for all individuals of all nations	Jeremiah 33:9
The Messiah will be from David, will judge with righteousness	Jeremiah 33:15
The Messiah will be called The Lord Our Righteousness	Jeremiah 33:16
The Messiah is referred to as the Comforter who brings salvation	Lamentations 1:16
The Messiah as God will come as King	Ezekiel 1:26
<i>The Spirit of God enters Ezekiel the prophet</i>	<i>Ezekiel 2:2</i>
<i>The Spirit of God gives Ezekiel heavenly visions</i>	<i>Ezekiel 3:12</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Ezekiel 3:14</i>
<i>Ditto, however the Lord requires Ezekiel to his work from his home</i>	<i>Ezekiel 3:24</i>
<i>The Spirit of God gives more heavenly visions to Ezekiel</i>	<i>Ezekiel 8:3</i>
The pre-incarnate Messiah's supremacy over all angels is established	Ezekiel 9:2
<i>The Spirit of God gives more heavenly visions to Ezekiel</i>	<i>Ezekiel 11:1</i>
<i>The Spirit of the Lord gives Ezekiel prophetic abilities</i>	<i>Ezekiel 11:5</i>
The New Covenant will be established by the Messiah	Ezekiel 11:19-20
<i>The Spirit of God gives more heavenly visions to Ezekiel</i>	<i>Ezekiel 11:24</i>
The Messiah will be established from the Davidic line	Ezekiel 17:23-23
The Messiah will come from a lowly family of this line	Ezekiel 17:24
The Messiah as God acts as the shepherd for his sheep	Ezekiel 34:11

The Messiah will (spiritually) feed his flock	Ezekiel 34:16-16
The Messiah will judge his flock	Ezekiel 34:17-22
The Messiah will be the one servant	Ezekiel 34:23
The Messiah will show the peaceful way	Ezekiel 34:25
<i>When the Messiah returns (verse 25-31) and redeems His chosen people, He will put His Spirit upon them</i>	<i>Ezekiel 36:27</i>
<i>The Spirit of God gives Ezekiel heavenly visions</i>	<i>Ezekiel 37:1</i>
The physical resurrection of dead bodies at the Messiah's Second Coming is predicted	Ezekiel 37:7-8
<i>When the Messiah returns and redeems His chosen people, He will put His Spirit upon them</i>	<i>Ezekiel 37:14</i>
The Messiah will be the King-Shepherd of the Davidic line	Ezekiel 37:22-25
<i>At the restoration of Israel, God's Spirit is poured out on His people</i>	<i>Ezekiel 39:29</i>
<i>God's Spirit shows Ezekiel the Temple vision</i>	<i>Ezekiel 43:5</i>
The Messiah will come from God of supernatural origin	Daniel 2:45
The Messiah will be a King and Son of God	Daniel 3:25
<i>The Spirit of the Holy God resides in Daniel</i>	<i>Daniel 4:8</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Daniel 4:9</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Daniel 4:18</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Daniel 5:11</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Daniel 5:14</i>
The Messiah as Son of Man & establish his dominion	Daniel 7:13-14
The Messiah will be followed in all nations of the earth	Daniel 7:14
The Messiah will come at the predicted point in time	Daniel 7:24-26
The Messiah will bring in the path to everlasting righteousness	Daniel 7:24
After the Messiah, there will be no more visions	Daniel 7:24
The Messiah will die	Daniel 7:26
When the above happens, the city will be destroyed	Daniel 7:26
The Messiah not be sought by the Jews first time around	Hosea 3:5
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd to tend His lamb	Hosea 4:16
The Messiah was God's son and he was to be from his chosen people out of Egypt	

	Hosea 11:1
The Messiah will have power over death	Hosea 13:14
<i>God's Spirit will pour out into His redeemed people at their salvation</i>	
	<i>Joel 2:28</i>
<i>Ditto</i>	<i>Joel 2:29</i>
The Messiah will include the gentiles in his redemption plans	Amos 9:11
<i>The Spirit of the Lord is not restricted</i>	<i>Micah 2:7</i>
<i>Micah speaks by the power of the Spirit of the Lord</i>	<i>Micah 3:8</i>
The Messiah will come out of Bethlehem	Micah 5:2
The Messiah will be rejected in the first advent	Micah 5:3
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Micah 5:4
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Micah 7:14
<i>God confirms His Spirit is still with them, despite all their transgressions, since their time in Egypt</i>	<i>Haggai 2:5</i>
The Messiah as Angel of the Lord is identified as the Lord	Zechariah 3:2
The Messiah is depicted as Servant and of the Davidic line	Zechariah 3:8
The Messiah is depicted as the cornerstone as he was at Calvary	
	Zechariah 3:9
<i>God's Spirit will help Zerubbabel build the Temple</i>	<i>Zechariah 4:6</i>
The cornerstone or the Messiah is the foundation on which the Kingdom is built	
	Zechariah 4:10
<i>God's judgment is complete, therefore His Spirit can rest until the events specified play out</i>	<i>Zechariah</i>
	<i>6:8</i>
"The Branch (Messiah)" (of Jesse) is predicted as King over existing Kings	
	Zechariah 6:12
The Messiah will be glorious	Zechariah 6:13
The Messiah will bring peace	Zechariah 6:13
The Messiah will be a priest king	Zechariah 6:13
The Messiah will appeal to the gentiles	Zechariah 6:15
The Messiah will need all to have faith first before his second advent	
	Zechariah 6:15

<i>God's Spirit speaks through the Prophets of old</i>	<i>Zechariah 7:12</i>
The Messiah is to arrive in Jerusalem on a donkey	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is King	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is just	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is humble	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is to bring salvation	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah will deliver His victory of peace, with no weapons	Zechariah 9:10
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Zechariah 9:16
The Messiah will feed the flock with truth	Zechariah 11:7
When the Messiah departs His earthly life, the unbelievers will perish and some will resort to cannibalism (destruction of Judah)	Zechariah 11:9
The Messiah would be deemed worth 30 pieces of silver	Zechariah 11:12
The Messiah knew this would buy a potter's field	Zechariah 11:13
After the departure of the Messiah from this world, Jew would fight Jew (as also told by Josephus)	Zechariah 11:14
The Messiah as the Lord was pierced	Zechariah 12:10
The Messiah is the equal companion of God	Zechariah 13:7
The Messiah's death is foretold	Zechariah 13:7
The Messiah's disciples will be scattered	Zechariah 13:7
The Messiah's initial followers will suffer persecution	Zechariah 13:7
The Messiah's name will be great among the Gentiles	Malachi 1:11
<i>Malachi remembers the power of the Spirit in uniting a single man and woman together in marriage to safely bring up families</i>	<i>Malachi 2:15</i>
The Messiah will come with no notice, suddenly	Malachi 3:1
The Messiah will be calling Himself the Son of God	Wisdom 2:13
The Messiah will censure the established ways of thinking	Wisdom 2:14
The Messiah will view some of their lives as debased	Wisdom 2:16
The Messiah would be put through trial and tribulation to see if He is the Son of God and that God would help Him	Wisdom 2:17-19
Solomon's Prayer introduces the Triune God, Lord, Wisdom and Holy Spirit	Wisdom 9:1-3, 9, 16-18

Wisdom is given to the Servant, considered the Messiah and was there before
creation

Baruch 3:36

Appendix II

Moses's Prophecy of a Prophet Like Unto Himself

Eusebius, treating of the prophecies concerning Christ, produced this of Moses, and then asked: "which of the prophets after Moses, Isaiah, for instance, or Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, or Daniel, or any other of the twelve prophets was a Law-giver, and performed things like unto Moses? The same could be applied to Muhammed, who of course arrived 300-odd years after the writings of Eusebius and claimed to be the prophet whom Moses foretold. I have made some additions to Eusebius' work where I thought it prudent to do so.

1. Moses first rescued the Jewish nation from Egyptian superstition and idolatry and taught them the true theology; Jesus Christ, in like manner, was the first teacher of true religion and virtue to the Gentiles.
2. Moses confirmed his religion by miracles; so, likewise, did Christ.
3. Moses delivered the Jewish nation from Egyptian servitude; Jesus Christ: all mankind from the power of evil demons.
4. Moses promised a holy land and therein a happy life to those who kept the Law: Jesus Christ: a better country, that is, a heavenly one, to all righteous souls.
5. Moses fasted forty days; so, likewise, did Christ.
6. Moses supplied the people with bread in the wilderness; our Saviour fed five thousand at one time, and four thousand at another, with a few loaves.
7. Moses went out himself and led the people through the the sea; Jesus Christ walked on the sea, and enabled Peter to walk likewise.
8. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; the Lord caused the sea to go backwards; also, our Saviour rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm.

9. Moses' face shone when he descended from the mountain; our Saviour's shone like the sun, during his transfiguration.
10. Moses, by his prayers, cured Miriam of her leprosy; Christ, possessing greater power, by a word healed several lepers.
11. Moses performed wonders by the finger of God; Jesus Christ, by the finger of God, cast out devils.
12. Moses changed Oshea's name to Joshua; our Saviour re-named Simon to be Peter.
13. Moses constituted seventy rulers over the people; our Saviour appointed seventy disciples.
14. Moses sent forth twelve men to spy out the land; our Saviour, twelve apostles to visit all nations.
15. Moses gave a number of excellent moral precepts; our Saviour carried them to the highest perfection.
16. Moses in his infancy was wonderfully preserved from the destruction of all the male children; so was Christ in his time.
17. Moses fled from his country to escape the hands of the king : so did Christ, when his parents carried him into Egypt.
18. Afterwards, the Lord said to Moses in Midian: "Go, return into Egypt; for all the men are dead which sought thy life" Exodus 4:19; so the angel of the Lord said to Joseph, in almost the same words: "Arise, and take the young child, and go into the land of Israel for they are dead which sought the young child's life"; Matthew 2:20 points him out, as it were, as that prophet who should arise like unto Moses.
19. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction. Christ refused to be made king, choosing rather to suffer affliction.
20. Moses, says St. Stephen, "was learned, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians", and Josephus (Ant. Jud. ii. 9.) says that he was a very forward and accomplished youth, and had wisdom and knowledge beyond his years ; St. Luke observes of Christ that he "increased betimes in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man", and his discourses in the temple with the doctors, when he was twelve years old, were proof of this.

21. Moses contended with magicians, who were forced to acknowledge the divine power by which he was assisted; Christ ejected evil spirits and received the same acknowledgments from them.
22. Moses was not only a Lawgiver, a prophet, and a worker of miracles, but a king and a priest: in all these offices the resemblance between Moses and Christ is clear.
23. Moses brought darkness over the land; the sun withdrew his light at Christ's Crucifixion. And as the darkness which was spread over Egypt was followed by the destruction of their first born, and of Pharaoh and his host, so the darkness at Christ's death was the forerunner of the destruction of the Jews.
24. Moses foretold the calamities which would befall the nation for their disobedience; so did Christ.
25. The spirit which was in Moses was conferred in some degree upon the seventy elders, and they prophesized; Christ conferred miraculous powers upon his seventy disciples.
26. Moses was victorious over powerful kings and great nations; so was Christ through the effects of his religion, and by the fall of those who persecuted his church.
27. Moses conquered Amalek by holding up both his hands; Christ overcame his, and our, enemies when his hands were fastened to the cross.
28. Moses interceded for transgressors, and caused an atonement to be made for them, forestalling the wrath of God; so did Christ.
29. Moses ratified a Covenant between God and the people by sprinkling them with blood; Christ's own blood was sacrificed.
30. Moses desired to die for the people, and prayed that God would forgive them or blot him out of His book; Christ did more than that: he died for sinners.
31. Moses instituted the Passover when a lamb was sacrificed, none of whose bones were to be broken, and whose blood protected the people from destruction; Christ was that paschal lamb.
32. Moses lifted up the serpent, that they who looked upon him might be healed of their mortal wounds; Christ was that serpent.

33. All Moses' affection towards the people, all his cares and toils on their account, were repaid with ingratitude, murmuring, and rebellion; the same returns the Jews made to Christ for all his generosity.
34. Moses was ill-used by his own family: his brother and sister rebelled against him; there was a time when Christ's own brethren did not believe in him.
35. Moses found himself with a very wicked and perverse generation committed to his care and conduct and to enable him to rule them, miraculous powers were given to him. He used his utmost endeavours to make the people obedient to God and to save them from ruin, but in vain: in the space of forty years they all fell in the wilderness, except two; Christ, also, was presented with a generation no less wicked and perverse and his instructions and miracles were largely lost on them. In about the same space of time, after they had rejected him, they were destroyed.
36. Moses was very meek beside all who were on the face of the earth; so was Christ.
37. The people could not enter into the land of promise until till Moses was dead; by the death of Christ, the kingdom of heaven was opened to believers.
38. Moses was rejected by his people once when he had killed an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, and again when he took them to the wilderness only to be chased by the Egyptians. And again when they were fed up of eating bread in the wilderness, and again in God's presence at the foot of the mountain, where they rejected their cornerstone. Christ was rejected on the Cross at Calvary.
39. In the death of Moses and Christ there is also a resemblance of some circumstances: Moses died, in one sense, for the iniquities of the people; it was their rebellion which was the occasion of it, which drew down the displeasure of God upon them and upon him. Moses went up, in the sight of the people, to the top of mount Nebo, and there he died, when he was in perfect health, when his eyes was not dim, nor his natural force abated. Christ suffered for the sins of men and was led up, in the presence of the

people, to mount Calvary, where he died in the flowering of his youth, and when he was at his full, natural strength.

40. Neither Moses nor Christ, as far as we may deduce from sacred history, were ever sick, or felt any bodily decay or infirmity, which would have rendered them unfit for the toils they underwent; their sufferings were of another kind.
41. Moses was buried, and no man knew where his body lay; nor could the Jews find the body of Christ.
42. Lastly, as Moses a little before death promised another prophet, so in Christ, another comforter.

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