

THE DAY CHRIST DIED



THY WILL BE DONE

*'Each day Jesus had left Bethany
in the morning and had gone to Jerusalem.
Why did he not go on that day? Did he suspect treachery?
He spent the day prior to the Passover in deep seclusion;
so far as we know, in perfect rest and silence.
He prepared himself in peace and prayer
for the awfulness of his coming struggle.
It may be that he wandered alone to the hilly uplands above
and around the quiet village, and there, under the vernal sunshine,
held high communing with his Father.
But how the day was passed by him we do not know.
A veil of holy silence falls over it.
He was surrounded by the few who loved him
and believed in him. To them he may have spoken,
but his work as a teacher in life's brief day was done.
And on that night he lay down for the last time on earth.
On the Thursday morning, he woke never to sleep again ...'*



**BC YOUTH CONFERENCE
2014**

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Introduction

Dear young person,

This workbook was first compiled for a Youth Conference in New Zealand in 2005. As you now embark on the study, it is our prayer that the workbook will help you to appreciate our Lord for what we learn of him, on the day he died. We will come together in July for one week, to focus on one man, on one day, the most important day in the history of the world since Adam's disobedience. There has never been another day its equal since.

Our studies will take us through the last day that our Lord spent as a mortal being. He begins it in secluded session with his closest friends where he institutes the Last Supper. He then departs for a few hours of heartfelt meditation and prayer on the stony slopes of Olivet. Here amongst the olive groves he steadied himself for the ordeal ahead. The betrayal by his familiar friend. The denial by another. The awful feeling of loneliness. Then the trials. The injustice and hypocrisy, the torture and abuse, the hatred and spite. The pain of the crown of thorns, the torture of carrying the cross, and the agony of a death almost incomprehensible in its brutality. And in all this, his mind was clear, his character consistent.

We come to study the mind of the greatest man to grace Israel's soil. To see him in some of his darkest moments, yet ultimately, top the pinnacle of his greatest triumph.

Our study is like no other, because we are not learning the mere historical facts, or entering the mind of a dead man, but that of the Lord Jesus Christ who is alive now. This makes this subject unique and powerful to affect and change our lives.

There are some things in particular which we will see as we study the mind of our Lord. We want to see and appreciate the challenge of obedience to the will of the Father, so that we can follow our Lord and honestly say '*Not my will, but thine be done.*'

To this end we have sent you an interactive Workbook, to help you to prepare for Conference. The subject has been broken into 6 sections. We believe that this Workbook will engage you practically in the topic, stimulate your meditation, familiarize you with the whole scope of the day, present questions and challenges to your mind and provoke discussion with others. We would recommend that you *read Appendix 1 before you begin the study*, as it provides helpful background and paints the scene in which the study is set.

You will notice as you progress through the Workbook that it is not comprehensive, and that there are things left out. This is deliberate, both to encourage your own personal study and to save some discoveries for Conference.

We are very excited about Conference and hope that you are too. We look forward to spending a week together learning the meaning of **Thy Will Be Done.**'






The Youth Conference Committee

Navigating the Workbook

We believe that completing the Workbook is the best basic preparation for Conference. The best way to complete the Workbook is to make time each week and do a little, often. Below are a few tips, for that time each week, when you sit down and open your Workbook.

- Seek the Father's blessing in prayer. Never underestimate the power of prayer.
- Read the passage in Matthew's Gospel (noted at the top of each section) to establish the context.
- Do attempt all the questions. If stuck, note the question on the study timetable, and come back to it at the end of the section.
- Discuss questions with friends, others going to Conference, your parents, and others.
- Write down any questions you have, and bring them to Conference.

Below is a list of the different icons used for some of the questions, to help guide you through the workbook.

	<p>Reading</p> <p>We have suggested some additional readings for those interested, which are from well-known books that you (or your ecclesial library) may have. Many of these extracts give you a good background to the sections covered in the Workbook.</p>
	<p>Bible-Marking</p> <p>These questions contain information that would be valuable to have in your Bible. Feel free to mark in your Bible whatever you find suitable: don't limit yourselves to our suggestions.</p>
	<p>Concordance</p> <p>Occasionally it is necessary to look up a word in a Concordance to find out the meaning. Strong's Concordance will be good for these questions. Usage of Concordances is explained in more detail on the next page.</p>
	<p>Group Discussion</p> <p>Some of the questions lend themselves to discussion with friends or brothers and sisters, so take the opportunity to get others' ideas on these ones.</p>
	<p>Thought Question</p> <p>Having completed the section you may wish to sink your teeth into one of the tougher questions included in the workbook.</p>

Study Tools

You may find the following works helpful in your study...

Christadelphian Works (recommended)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ▪ <i>Guidebook to the Gospels</i> | HP Mansfield |
| ▪ <i>Mark: The Son of God</i> | L.G. Sargent |
| ▪ <i>The Life of Jesus</i> | Melva Purkis |
| ▪ <i>Nazareth Revisited</i> | Robert Roberts |
| ▪ <i>The Gospel of John</i> | John Carter |
| ▪ <i>Studies in the Gospels</i> | Harry Whittaker |
| ▪ <i>Life of Christ MP3, studies 161-190</i> | John Martin |
| ▪ <i>Jerusalem in the Year 30 A.D.</i> | Leen & Kathleen Ritmeyer |
| ▪ <i>The Ritual of the Temple in the Time of Christ</i> | Leen & Kathleen Ritmeyer |

Non-Christadelphian Works (please use with care)

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| ▪ <i>The Easter Enigma</i> | John Wenham |
| ▪ <i>Speaker's Commentary</i> | |
| ▪ <i>Tyndale series on the Gospels</i> | |
| ▪ <i>The Life of Christ</i> | Dean Farrar |
| ▪ <i>The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah</i> | Alfred Edersheim |
| ▪ <i>The Temple</i> | Alfred Edersheim |
| ▪ <i>Smith's Bible Dictionary</i> | |
| ▪ <i>Bible Manners and Customs</i> | James M Freeman |
| ▪ <i>Jesus and his Times</i> | Reader's Digest |



THE DAY CHRIST DIED

Here begins the last day of our Lord Jesus Christ as a mortal being. In the next 24 hours, before the sun sets again over Jerusalem, he will be betrayed, denied, accused, beaten, scourged, spat upon, tried six times, crucified, and buried in a tomb hewn out of the rock. What a day this would turn out to be. Betrayed by Judas. Misunderstood and forsaken by the disciples. Denied by the disciple whose confession had led Christ to deliver to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Mocked by ignorant soldiers. Made a scapegoat by Herod and Pilate. And yet, deprived of sleep, under enormous mental pressure, and physically beaten until exhausted, he met every challenge and provocation that flesh could throw at him, 'triumphing over them in himself' (Col 2:14-15).

Everything that had ever gone before pointed forward to this day. The Law of Moses with its highly detailed Tabernacle, priestly duties, sacrifices and offerings, pointed forward as a schoolteacher to this day. Every type, every shadow, every allusion only prefigures this day. Every known instance of redemption wrought before now had been conformed to Christ's pattern.

Everything that ever came after pointed back to this day. The simple Memorial feast, commemorated every first day of the week, remembers this day and its inaugural Last Supper. The way we endeavour to live, the basis of so much of our doctrine, the sacrifices and offerings to be reinstated in the Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy in the Kingdom, all look back to this day.

This day, the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, is the day upon which the history of the world's 7000 years, hangs.

The vital importance of this day, the day Christ died, is reflected in the space the Gospel writers devote to its retelling.

Find where this day begins in the four Gospels and note down the extent of verses that covers this day from start to finish.

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Chapters	ch 26:17-27:66			
Total Verses				

A **total** of chapters, orverses on this one day!!

THE UPPER ROOM



The Upper Room

(Matt 26:17-30)

'Jesus saith to him, He that is bathed hath no need save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit. And ye are clean'; and then he was forced to add with a deep sigh, 'but not all'. The last words were an allusion to his consciousness of one traitorous presence; for he knew, what as yet they knew not, that the hands of the Lord of life had just washed the traitor's feet. Oh, strange unfathomable depth of human infatuation and ingratitude! That traitor, with all the black and accursed treachery in his false heart, had seen, had known, had suffered it; had felt the touch of those kind and gentle hands, had been refreshed by the cleansing water, had seen that sacred head bent over his feet, stained as they yet were with the hurried secret walk which had taken him into the throng of sanctimonious murderers over the shoulder of Olivet. For him there had been no purification in that lustral water; neither was the devil within him exorcised by that gentle voice, nor the leprosy of his heart healed by that miracle-producing touch...

... And as the meal began, Jesus taught them what his act had meant. Rightly, and with proper respect, they call him 'Master' and 'Lord,' for so he was; yet, though the Lord is greater than the slave, the sender greater than his apostle, he their Lord and Master had washed their feet. It was a kind and gracious task, and such ought to be the nature of all their dealings with each other. He had done it to teach them humility, to teach them self-denial, to teach them love: blessed they if they learnt the lesson! Blessed if they learnt that the struggles for precedence, the assertions of claims, the standings upon dignity, the fondness for the display of authority, marked the tyrannies and immaturities of heathendom, and that the greatest Christian is ever the humblest. He should be chief among them who, for the sake of others, gladly laid on himself the lowliest burdens, and sought for himself the humblest services...

...There, close by him, hearing all these words unmoved, full of spite and hatred, utterly hardening his heart, and leaning the whole weight of his demoniac possession against that door of mercy which even now and even here his saviour would have opened to him, sat Judas, the false smile of hypocrisy on his face, but rage, and shame, and greed, and anguish, and treachery in his heart. The near presence of that black iniquity, the failure of even his pathetic lowliness to move or touch the man's hideous purpose, troubled the human heart of Jesus to its inmost depths - wrung from him his agony of yet plainer prediction, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, that *one* of you shall betray me!' That night *all*, even the best beloved, were to forsake him, but it was not *that*; that night even the boldest-hearted was to deny him with oaths, but it was not *that*; nay, but one of them was to *betray* him.'

Extracts from *The Life of Christ*, Dean Farrar, pages 535-537



Readings

A Life of Jesus
Nazareth Revisited
Elpis Israel
The New Life

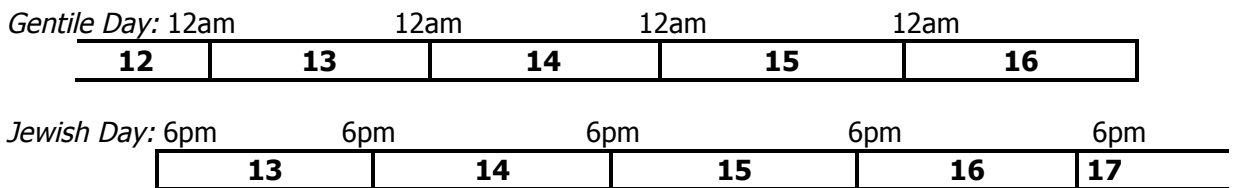
Melva Purkis
Robert Roberts
John Thomas
John Marshall

chapters 9-10
chapters 101-102
pages 295-298
chapter 4

**Matthew
26:17**

'Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?'

We start our study in Matthew 26:17. The last day of our Lord's mortal life begins on what Matthew calls 'the first day of unleavened bread' (Matt 26:17). This was one of the great feasts of the Jewish people, as laid out in the Law. To properly understand the dates of this feast and when the Last Supper was held, it is vital to know that the Jewish day was different to our Gentile day. Our day goes from midnight to midnight (12 am to 12 am). It is at midnight that we change to the next date of the month. In the Jewish calendar, however, the Jewish day was from 6 pm to 6 pm, and the date of the month switched at 6 pm. See the diagram below.



So basically the Jewish day *began 6 hours earlier* than our Gentile day and *finished 6 hours earlier* too. This is important to keep in mind, because when we talk about events that happened during an evening, the date will be different to what we naturally would assume from our Gentile calendar. It also shows us that the Last Supper and the crucifixion of Christ, whatever date it was, happened on the same Jewish day. It is important to get the dates in this question clear in our mind, so read the records carefully when you fill in the information below!

Before we look at the Last Supper, let us familiarise ourselves with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Have a look at Exodus 12 to complete the information below.



Passover slain: Date:

Time of Day: 'between the two evenings' (AV marg. v6)

Date Feast began:

Date Feast finished:

Total Time of Feast:



We have looked at the Law in the Old Testament and now we come to the New Testament and the Last Supper held by our Lord. We have established that the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on the Abib.

So when was the Last Supper held? On which day of Abib did Christ gather together with his disciples for the last time?

Mark 14:12 reads '*And the first day of unleavened bread, **when they killed the Passover**, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover?*'

Luke 22:7 reads '*Then cometh the day of unleavened bread **when the Passover must be killed.***'



This presents us with a problem. The gospels above tell us that the first day of unleavened bread was the day that they killed the Passover. Yet from our previous question, we have learnt that the first day of the Feast was the *next* Jewish day, the

This also creates a problem in the working out of the type of the Passover Lamb. Christ is the sacrificial Passover Lamb and must therefore be slain on the 14th, to fulfil the Law. If he only had the last Supper on the *next* Jewish day, the, then he would be killed a day later than the Passover Lamb was killed throughout the Land, thus not fulfilling the type.

So the question remains. On which Jewish day of Abib was the Last Supper held?

To help understand the problem, write in each column what the record or book says about **when the first day of unleavened bread was**.

Exodus 12	Mark 14:12	Luke 22:7



The answer to the apparent problem is found in the fact that, in Jewish history, because of the very close association between the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Passover was actually counted by the Jews as the first day of the Feast (and as a result the feast was sometimes counted to be 8 days total). Ancient writers like Josephus and Edersheim corroborate this fact.

Given that this is the case, the Last Supper being held on the "first day of the feast" (Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7) was actually what day of Abib?

The importance of this fact will become increasingly clear as you continue through the study.



During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, there was one special thing that the people were particularly instructed to do. This custom is picked up by Christ in the New Testament to teach a spiritual lesson to his disciples. Using Exodus 12:15-20, 13:3, and Zephaniah 1:12 find out what it was that the children of Israel were instructed to do.

Exodus 12:15-20

Exodus 13:3

Zephaniah 1:12

This practice becomes the basis for a spiritual lesson that Christ teaches his disciples. Read the following passages and record any details or phrases that are related to the OT practice we saw in Exodus.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

1 Corinthians 11:28

So what was the spiritual lesson that the disciples were meant to learn based on the command from God at the time of this Feast?

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Sometimes we forget that the last day of our Lord's life came at the end of a week full of activity, as outlined in the Gospels. The last week of Christ's mortal life was a very busy one. When you read the Gospels, they give you an indication of what our Lord did in the days leading up to the Last Supper. See if you can fill in the blank boxes in the table below to get a picture of Christ's last week.

Where there is a gap in the column 'Events of Day' use the quote/s given to find the event. Where there is a gap in the Gospel Columns, find the relevant quotations for the events in the 'Events of Day' column.

Where there is an X in a row/column, you don't need to fill it in.

Matthe w	Mark	Luke	John	Days before feast	Events of Day	Day of Month Abib	Time of Day
X	X	X	12:1	6		9 Abib	6 pm Evening
X	X	X	X	6	Weekly Sabbath	9 Abib	Morning
X	X	X	12:2	5	Feast at Bethany?	10 Abib	6 pm Evening
X		X		5	Entry into Jerusalem	10 Abib	Morning
					Return to Bethany		
X	X	X	X	4	X	11 Abib	6 pm Evening
X	11:12-19	X	X	4		11 Abib	Morning
					Return to Bethany		
X	X	X	X	3	X	12 Abib	6 pm Evening
			X	3	Fig Tree Withered Jesus in the Temple Giving of the Olivet Prophecy	12 Abib	Morning
		X	X	2	Feast at Bethany	13 Abib	6 pm Evening
26:17	14:12	22:7-12	X	2		13 Abib	Morning
X	X	X	X	1	The Last Supper	14 Abib	6 pm Evening
X	X	X	X	1	Crucifixion	14 Abib	Morning

**Matthew
26:18**

'And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand, I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.'



We think that Christ possibly spent the night of the Last Supper in the house of one of his disciples. Whoever the owner of the house was seems to have had a prior arrangement with Christ, because the room was already furnished and prepared (Mark 14:15). Christ told his disciples to follow a man carrying a waterpot. In fact, fetching water was customarily the work of women (Gen 24:11; John 4:7). Thus, it was probably a pre-arranged signal. Christ told the disciples to say to the man 'The **Master** saith, My time is at hand.' Only a disciple would recognise Christ as his master. Use the following quotations to write an explanation for who may have owned the Upper Room. Jot down what you pick up from the following quotations, then give a possible explanation for who owned the Upper Room.

Acts 12:12

Acts 1:12-14

Possible owner of Upper Room?

The room was obviously large enough to hold one hundred and twenty disciples, and could therefore quite comfortably accommodate the Lord and his twelve special disciples!



When we first read the Gospel record it appears that the Last Supper was the true Passover Meal. Below are a few reasons why this seems so.

1. The words of Luke 22:7-8, 'Go and prepare us the Passover' imply the preparation was the real Passover.
2. The use of the word 'Passover' (Matt 26:18-19, Luke 22:15).
3. During the Passover, it was tradition to drink from **four** cups during the proceedings. Luke 22:17,20 mentions **two** cups which is suggestive of this tradition.

But on looking closer, this cannot be so. Use each of the following quotations to give a reason for why the Last Supper cannot be a real Passover meal. Have another look at Questions 1 and 2 regarding the time of the Jewish day, and when we assume the Last Supper was.

1. Compare Exod 12:6 with 1 Cor 5:7

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2. John 13:1

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3. Compare John 13:29 ('against the feast' = 'in preparation for the feast') with Lev 23:6-7

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4. Mark 15:46

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5. Compare Mark 15:42 with Matt 27:62

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6. John 18:28

7. John 19:14,31,42

There are other reasons why the Last Supper cannot be a real Passover Meal, so don't assume this is an exhaustive list. Try and find some more!!

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It is sometimes hard when we read four different Gospels, to piece together the events of the Last Day in the order that they occurred. We are helped however by some of the time references mentioned in the Gospels. There are three Jewish hours mentioned during the day Christ died. Historians record for us that the 6th Jewish hour corresponds to 12pm in Gentile time. Fill in the other 2 Jewish hours that are mentioned, in the column on the left (Mark 15:25; Luke 23:44). Then try and fill in the incidents that occurred at other times in the day to give a **rough estimate** of what happened on this eventful day.

Jewish Time	Gentile Time
	6pm Peter and John inquire as to arrangements for the evening meal
	9pm
	12am
	3am
	6pm Trial and condemnation by Pilate
	9am
6 th hour	12pm
	3pm
	6pm Feast of Unleavened Bread begins. Passover meal eaten by the nation.



It is moving to reflect upon the fact that Christ on that unique day so long ago, once and for all time became the Passover Lamb for the salvation of both Jew and Gentile. He willingly submitted to that pattern laid down, fulfilling the Law, whilst the rest of the nation were in complete ignorance of what was really happening and without any gratitude whatsoever. As the Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7), it is exciting to discover in the Gospels that everything that happened to him conformed to the pattern of the Lamb slain for the Passover meal. Everything that was outlined for the literal Passover Lamb is followed through in the type of Christ. Read Exodus 12 very carefully before you see how the ideas are picked up in the New Testament. Explain how the following quotations are linked, in regard to Christ as the Passover Lamb. If your memory needs refreshing with the days of Abib, have another look at the table of Question 4.

1. Exod 12:3 and Matt 21:7-11

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2. Exod 12:3,6 and Matt 21:10, 26:17

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3. Exod 12:5 and Matt 22:15-46

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4. Exod 12:6 and Matt 27:45-50

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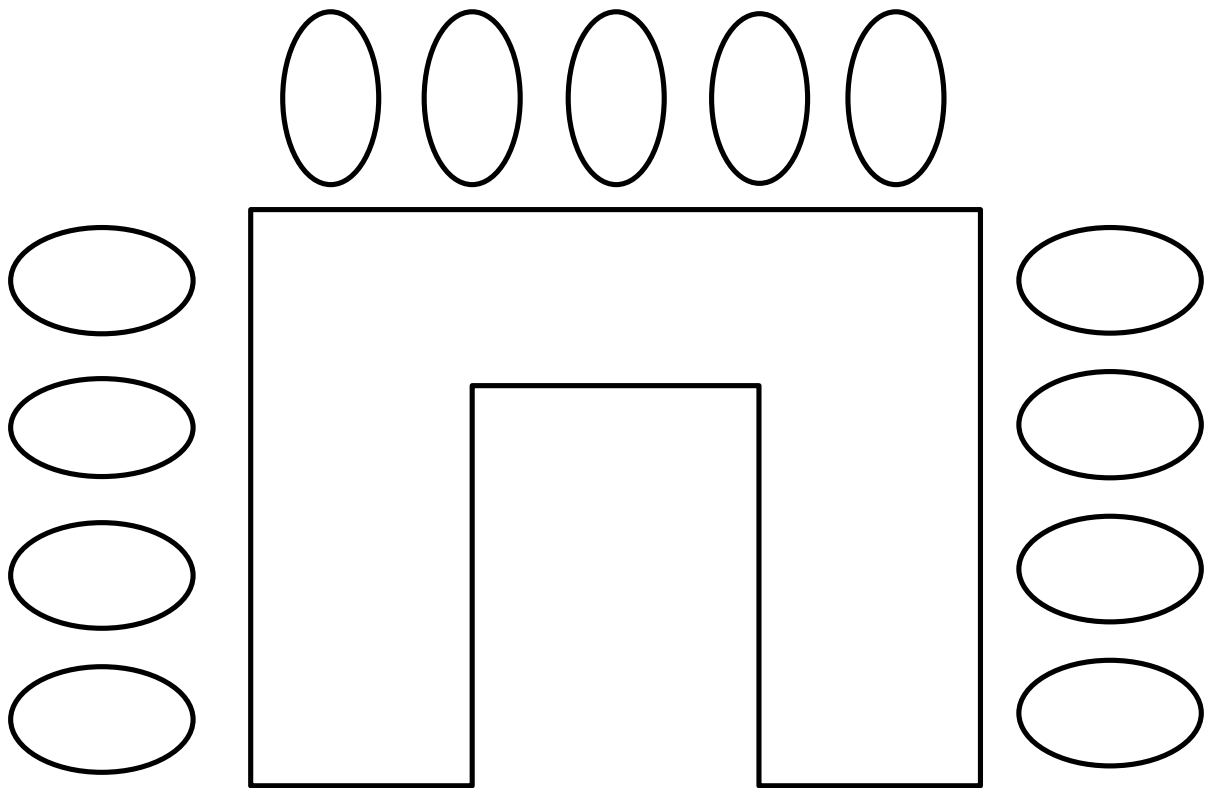
**Matthew
26:18**

'And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand, I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.'



On the first day of every week we reflect on that poignant night, the Last Supper of Christ with his disciples. Perhaps we don't, however, always visualize how the scene would have looked, or what the customs of the times were. If possible try to place Christ and some of the disciples at the Feast on the diagram below. At least 2 or 3 can be reasonably discerned, but obviously we can't be certain, and don't know for sure. Below the diagram are some spaces to write in your reasoning for placing the disciples where you have. This question would be a good one to compare notes with friends on. In relation to this, the expression 'sat down' in Matt 26:20 is more correctly rendered 'reclined'. The practice of lying on one's side while eating seems to have come from the Persians, but had become general practice (Esther 1:6, 7:8, Ezek 23:41, Mark 7:4 marg.).

(If you are interested in some short historical reading on the Jewish customs around eating meals while "reclining," see *Manners & Customs* by James M. Freeman, custom #712. You can read it free online at www.archive.org)



Name

Position and Reason why

Christ:

Disciple:

Disciple:

Disciple:

How do you think this seating arrangement links with the controversy of Luke 22:24-27? Read Luke 14:7-11 in connection with this.

Q 10

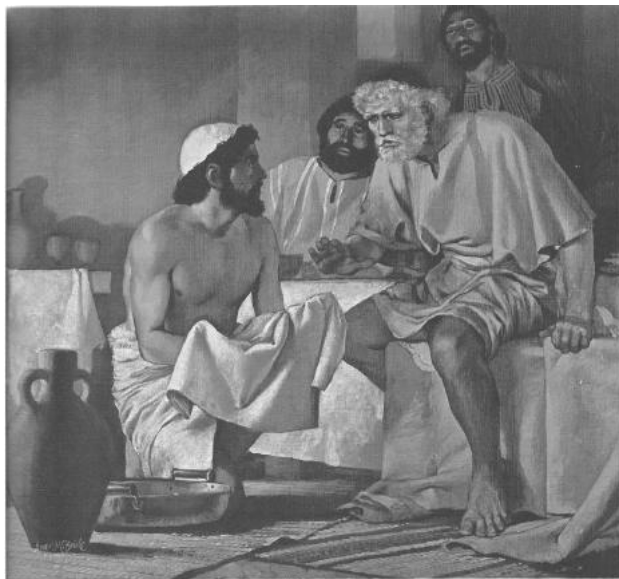
During the Supper we read that Christ rose from supper, took a towel and washed his disciples' feet. In John 13:10, the word 'washed' and 'wash' are quite different words in the Greek. Look them up in a Concordance and comment on the difference in meaning.

'washed':.....

'wash':.....

Our Lord is drawing a spiritual lesson for his disciples using these two different words. Christ seems to be alluding to a practice out of Leviticus 8:6 and Exodus 30:18-21. What was this practice and what spiritual lesson does this contain for us? Hebrews 10:22 may help you in this explanation.

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Brother Islip Collyer has a fantastic sentence in his book *The Guiding Light*, page 41.

'There is such a difference between the little man who with unenlightened selfishness serves because he wishes to become great, and the one who with enlightened self-sacrifice, served because he was great.'

Instead of demonstrating HUMILITY, the disciples had bickered about pre-eminence (Luke 22:24). Christ, however, told the disciples that if he, their Lord and Master, has washed their feet, how much more ought they to wash each other's feet (John 13:14-15). Selfishness is HUMILITY'S silent assassin. Using the following quotations, expand the idea of 'washing one another's feet.' Think about each incident carefully and try to think of a specific practical idea that you could work on in your life.

	Person/s	Action	Practical Idea for your Life
Gen 18:4	Abraham	Rushed around organising a huge meal for complete strangers	Initiate giving visitors accommodation or a meal, and give of our best!
Gen 19:2			
Gen 24:32			
1 Sam 25:41			
Luke 7:38-39			
1 Tim 5:10			

Q 11

In this question we want to have a brief look at how predetermination and free will work hand in hand with each other. Luke expresses that the betrayal of Christ was 'determined' beforehand by God (Luke 22:22). The following quotations illustrate other parts of his life or roles that were 'determined' by God. Write next to each quotation what exactly is 'determined'.

1. Acts 2:23
2. Rom 1:4 (marg.)
3. Acts 10:42
4. Acts 17:26,31

And yet Christ still willingly submitted to this of his own free choice. How does God fore-ordain people and know how they will act? How does He allow free will, and yet at the same time pre-determine what actions people will make? Feel free to use Ephesians 1:4 as a starting point. This would be a good question to bounce ideas off your friends.

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Matthew 26:21

'And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.'

Q 12



During the Supper, Christ tells the disciples that one of them, one of the men who have been with him day and night for the three and a half years of his ministry, will betray him. When asking who the betrayer is, the disciples all call Christ 'Lord', but Judas calls him something else! Consulting all four gospels, find out what Greek word the rest of the disciples address Christ with and the Greek word Judas uses. Suggest a reason for the difference.

The rest of the disciples call Christ

in these passages:

Judas calls Christ

in these passages

Reason?

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Q 13

Christ appealed to Judas many times throughout the meal. The sop was Judas' last chance for repentance, for after it he went immediately out (John 13:30). Make a list of the opportunities and appeals that Christ gave Judas to change his black heart and repent, in just this episode of the Upper Room. Here are two to start things off:

1. Christ initially thwarted Judas' plan to discover in advance the meeting place for the evening meal (Mark 14:13-15). This ought to have made Judas think twice.
2. The twelve disciples and Christ only moved from the Mount of Olives (Luke 21:37) when it was 'even' or dark (Matt 26:20), to avoid recognition. There was every sign of Christ taking precautions about being caught by the authorities. That he had planned it so carefully with nothing left to chance should have made Judas wonder whether Christ was more in control than he possibly assumed.

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Q 14

Before they left the Upper Room they sang an hymn or psalm (Matt 26:30 marg.). Because of the association with the Passover, this is usually assumed to be what is known as 'the Paschal-Hallel', which is Psalms 111-118.

Due to time constraints they probably only sang the last half of the second Hallel, which is Psalms 117-118. Write down some of the phrases from Psalm 117 and 118 that might have greatly encouraged Christ at this stressful time. One example is given below to get you going.

'I called upon Yahweh in distress. Yahweh answered me and set me in a large place. Yahweh is on my side; I will not fear: What can man do unto me?' (Ps 118:5-6)

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Q 15

The departure of Judas (John 13:30) raises a very interesting question, which has vexed many. Was Judas present for the institution of the emblems in the Upper Room? Or did he leave before the wine or the cup was instituted? The Gospel writers make it difficult to piece the chronology of this time together easily. Both Matthew and Mark have Christ speaking of betrayal before the emblems. Luke's Gospel has it after, and John does not record the emblems at all. Matthew records that it was 'as they were eating' that Christ instituted the bread (Matt 26:26), whereas the cup was instituted 'after supper' (Luke 22:20). However, Judas left immediately after being handed the sop (John 13:30) while the meal was evidently still in progress. So, was Judas present for both of the emblems (bread and wine) or just the bread, or not at all? For this question you will need to map out a possible order of proceedings in the Last Supper. You might like to create a table to map out what each Gospel says. Take your time with this, and use additional paper if necessary.

Whatever your answer may be, it must reconcile with 1 Cor 11:28, 'Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.' This is a good question to discuss with others, as it is a bit of a tricky one!

1) When the even was come, Jesus sat down with the twelve (Matt. 26:20)

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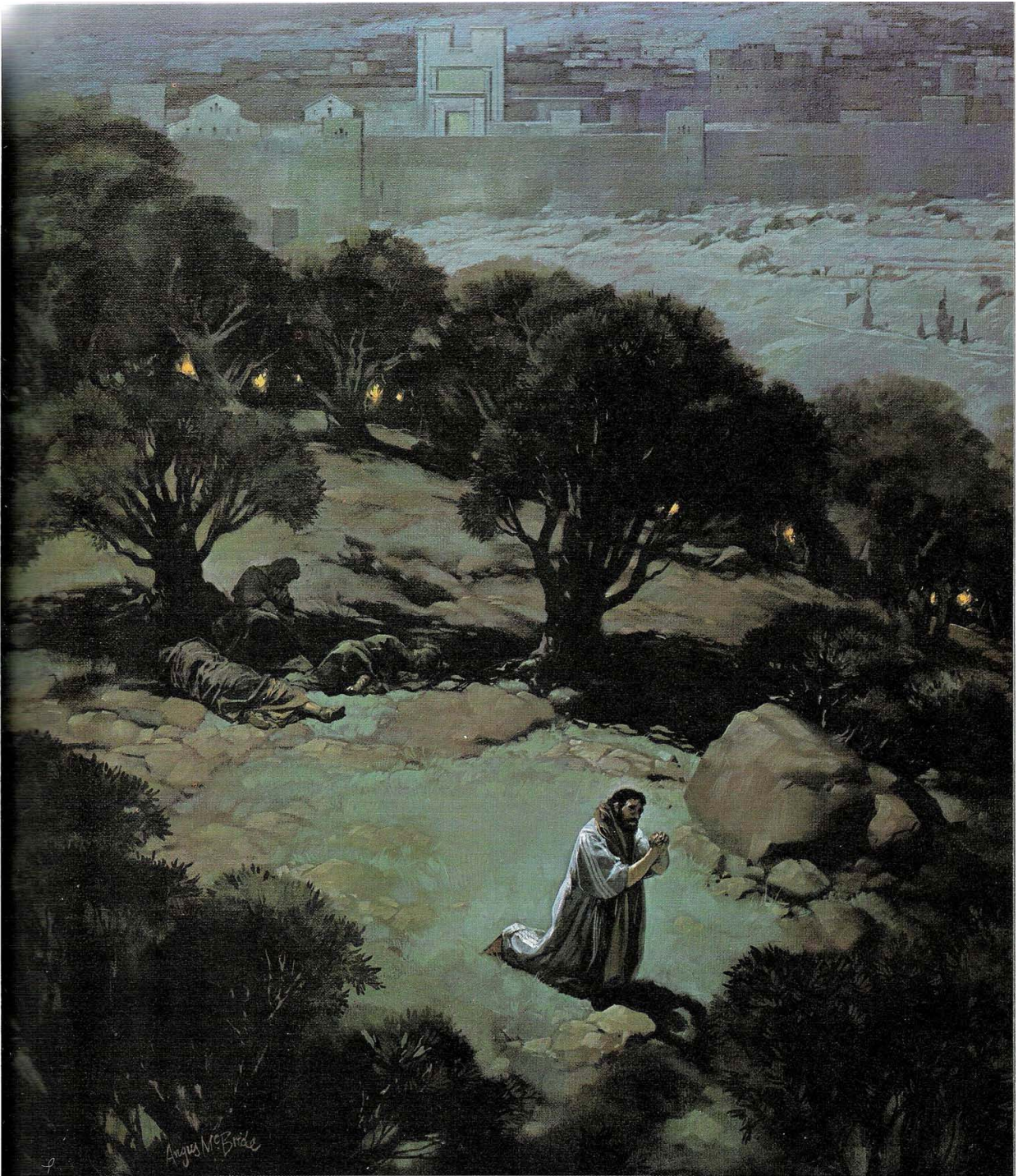
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THE GARDEN



OF GETHSEMANE

The Garden of Gethsemane

(Matt 26:31-46)

'In the light of the paschal moon Jesus led his disciples from the city of shadows across the waters of Kedron to the darkness of Gethsemane. It was a familiar spot. When circumstances had made it difficult to reach Bethany it had been their shelter for the night. But on this night it was different. The joy and confidence with which he had encouraged his disciples was ebbing as he looked back at the walled city with its flickering lights, concentrating for a moment upon its gates, and then pressed forward again towards the olive trees. He left most of his disciples on the fringe of the garden, and called his three beloved friends to follow him as he penetrated further among the trees. Finally he stopped. He spoke in a voice more troubled than they had ever known. 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch.' They saw him go forward about a stone's cast and throw himself suddenly down among the gnarled roots of the olive trees in an abandonment of grief and prayer.

'Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.'

We must ever look upon this prostrate form of our beloved Lord from the distance which separated him from his three disciples. We could not approach nearer if we would. Yet he desired his loved ones to witness the price he paid, that they might learn as much as the human heart can stand and the human mind conceive; that learning this they might love more fervently, and loving, be his disciples indeed, bound to him by the fellowship of his sufferings.

There are those who point out the increased sensitiveness of Christ to physical suffering; but have we realized his sensitiveness to sin? He lived in the presence of his Father, in shame and ignominy of a criminal's death. His pure mind had to face all the degradation of mockery, exposure and crucifixion. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin. And because he was bearing the sin of the world and accepting the curse of the tree, he must be alone, forsaken not only by the people he had come to save, not only by those who were about to leave him and flee, but above all, by the One from the light of Whose countenance he had never departed. He knew that the terrible cry of Psalm 22 would be wrung from his lonely, aching heart. Already the horror of great darkness was upon him. The Lord was laying upon him the iniquity of us all. Bearing iniquity was a desolating experience. It was here, not on the morrow in Jerusalem, that our Saviour was undergoing the ordeal of his trial. All that happened to him afterwards would be physical. This was his hour. This was his victory. 'Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.'

Extracts from *The Life of Jesus*, Melva Purkis, pages 327,329



Readings

A Life of Jesus
Nazareth Revisited

Melva Purkis
Robert Roberts

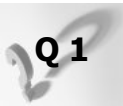
chapter 11
chapters 103-105

The Supper had come to an end. The emblems had been instituted, partaken of, and concluded with the words 'I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' How many hundreds of years it would be until those words would be fulfilled. For a short while our Lord has the opportunity to encourage and instruct, words which are recorded for us in John 14-16. In the following chapter, he prays to the Father before them all, concluding with words expressing his care for them: 'And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.'

After singing an hymn, they make their lonely way to Gethsemane. On the way there or even perhaps after they had arrived there, Christ made the last of a few attempts to cushion the faith of his disciples for the tremendous jolt which would inevitably come in the next few hours. This short conversation illustrates Christ's remarkable concern for his chosen band of followers. Even in the face of his personal impending suffering, he is aware that the coming ordeal will be too much for them, and so he continues to devote time to warning, explaining, preparing them. It will be only due to his care, that though they will all still fail him at first, it will be possible for them to come to terms with the experience afterwards.

**Matthew
26:31**

'Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.'



Q 1

It is amazing to ponder the crystal-clear discerning mind of Christ in this section. He quotes from, and alludes to the Old Testament, and in particular, relates it to himself. Every verse must have teemed with significance for him, as his brilliant memory flicked through the scriptures. Zechariah especially, has allusions to Christ's work at this time. See if you can make a list of connections between the last week of Christ's life, and his experiences foretold by Zechariah 9,11, 12, and 13, all those hundreds of years earlier. Try and find the verses in each chapter of Zechariah as well as the connections in the Gospels.



Zechariah	Connection	Gospel Reference
9:.....		
11:.....		
12:.....		
13:.....		

Matthew
26:32

'But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.'



As Christ enters the garden, he quotes from Zechariah 13:7. However he leaves the last part of the verse from Zechariah out. The words 'and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones' from Zechariah are excluded by Christ. Rotherham's translation of Zechariah 13:7 reads 'turn **back** my hand over the little ones' for this phrase, which suggests an act of mercy, not judgment. What Christ omits however, is precisely what he wished them to understand. They, the disciples, were the 'little ones' spoken of in Zechariah. Although they, as 'the sheep' would be scattered, as 'the little ones', they would not be forsaken. After Christ's resurrection, God through Christ would gather his sheep together again.



Use a Concordance to trace the phrase 'little ones' from Zech 13:7 through the Gospels to see if you can confirm who Christ is eluding to here. List the passage, and then who it refers to.

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Matthew
26:34

'Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.'



Christ's warning here to Peter's reply in Matt 26:33 is both solemn and yet sympathetic. To go from a position of self-assurance to one where he is told he will deny Christ three times before the night is over, was a startling revelation. His denials would leave him ill-prepared for the shock of the cross, but this was part of the development of Peter's character. The Lord responded in this way to Peter because he knew who Peter was. Peter was a fisherman, and yet he was a lot more than this.

Use the following quotes and whatever other resources you have available to build up a brief character profile on the man Peter.

- John 1:42
- Luke 5:8-11
- Matt 16:15-19
- Matt 16:21-24
- John 18:3 (cp v10,11)

Matt 26:58

John 21:7

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Q 4



The reference here to cock-crowing is interesting. Mark refers to the cock crowing 'twice' (Mark 14:30). This is an allusion to the Roman sounding of the trumpet to mark a watch of the night. In the Old Testament, the Jewish night seems to have been divided into three 4-hour watches (Judges 7:19). The Romans used a different system.

Using a Concordance, research the idea of the cock crowing and find out how the night was divided into different watches in the **Roman** system. (Hint: Mark 6:48 is one helpful passage).

How many watches were there under the **Roman** system? Refer to Mark 13:35 and plot the **Roman** watches onto the chart below and name them.

6(pm)	7	8	9	10	11	12(am)	1	2	3	4	5

Other Scriptural Proof:

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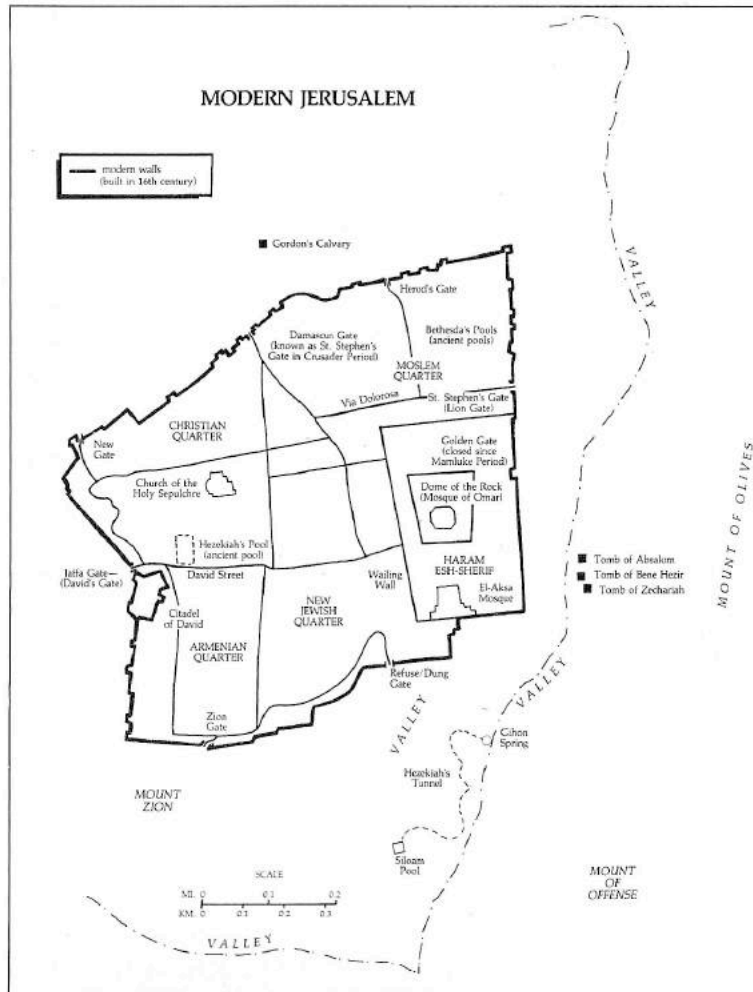
Using the above chart and the quotations you have looked at, work out during which watch Peter denied his Lord, and when he went out and wept (Hint: Mark 14:??) Mark this on your chart.

**Matthew
26:36**

'Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.'



As Christ leaves the city and with his subdued band of loyal disciples, heads east towards either the Water or the Fountain Gate, we begin a march through the Old Testament in terms of fulfillment of types and prophecy. John 18:1 says that they went over the brook Cedron, or Kidron. The great reformers of the past had carried out parts of their reformations using the Kidron Valley. Here idolatry was destroyed and true worship revived. Truly this was an historic spot to cross as Christ marched towards Gethsemane where he would stamp every last possibility of idolatry out of his mind, and dedicate himself wholly to God. Firstly, on the map below, mark where the Kidron Valley and Gethsemane are, to get a picture of where Christ took his disciples on this night.



Using a Concordance, record the instances where the brook Kidron features in the national history as a type of a suitable place to overcome idolatry and obey God alone. (Hint: Kings and Chronicles)

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These references would make a good table at the top or bottom of John 18:1.

**Matthew
26:37**

'And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.'



Why are these three disciples singled out? These three impetuous fishermen were Christ's best friends, and right now he needed their special companionship. All three had accompanied Christ on special times before. Using a Concordance, find the two other occasions where Christ took with him just these three men. Can you also think about why these particular events were so special that Christ singled them out from the rest of the disciples?

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Thus, these three men had been with Christ during some of his greatest moments. Moreover, all three had only recently made certain claims in seeking special closeness and comradeship with Christ. Find one quotation for Peter and one for James and John where they claimed special closeness to Christ, and describe the situation.

Peter:

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James and John:

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All three had claimed to be able to handle allegiance to Christ better than others, if it meant extreme suffering, even unto death. These three men would soon witness the greatest agony any human being has been called upon to experience. Christ's example would stand them in good stead for when they would be called upon to suffer for Christ. And suffer they would. They would each 'fellowship his sufferings' (Phil 3:10) in a special way. See if you can find the details of how each of these three men suffered and died for Christ, and learnt the lesson that was so impressively shown them in the Garden: that the cross must come before the crown. You will need to consult a reference or history book to find this information. A Bible dictionary, such as Unger's or Smith's, would also be a good start.



James:

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John:

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Peter:

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**Matthew
26:38**

*'Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:
tarry ye here, and watch with me.'*



From the sound of his voice, and the visible anguish and strain on his face, Christ was clearly highly emotional at this time. Now, right before their eyes, he begins to break down. He was 'exceeding sorrowful'. The Greek word means 'grieved all around'. Rotherham's reads 'encompassed with grief', and the Diaglott has 'My soul is surrounded with a deadly anguish'. This was an intensely sad, all-enveloping grief. Sorrow on every side, above and below. Wrung from his heart is the refrain found in Psalm 42:5,11, 43:5. 'Why art thou cast down O my soul' is the same phrase in the Septuagint as here in Matt 26:38. Psalms 42-43 are a key to Christ's feelings in Gethsemane at this time. See if you can make a table of connections between the experiences of the Psalmist in Psalms 42-43 and the experiences of Christ on his last day, gaining an insight into the mind of Christ at this time.

Psalms 42-43	Christ's last day
The refrain 'Why art thou cast down O my soul' (Psalm 42:5,11, 43:5 in Septuagint)	'My soul is exceeding sorrowful' (Matt 26:38)
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Bible mark this box into the Psalms and mark the Psalm cross-references in the New Testament passages.

**Matthew
26:39**

'And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.'



Mark records that Christ addressed God in this way: 'Abba Father' (Mark 14:36). The word 'Abba' is Hebrew whilst 'Father' is a Greek word. Perhaps this strange use of two languages is a clue to the extreme anguish of soul felt by Christ at this time. The phrase, 'Abba Father', is only used on two other occasions in the New Testament. Using a Concordance, find those two places and see the context in which this strange title is used again. See if you can pin-point from the context of these two other references why Christ's mental anguish is so intense.

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Both references talk about
So why was Christ so distressed when he used the title himself?

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'Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt'. This was always the policy of Christ. God's will always came before his own. Use a Concordance and make a list from the Gospels, of the times Christ talks of the 'will' of his Heavenly Father.

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From amongst the above list, there are a handful of quotations that define God's will. God's **purpose** is to 'fill the earth with His glory' (Num 14:21) but what is our definition of God's **will**, and how did this affect Christ's mind?

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'This is the will of Him that sent me,

Think about how this would have placed pressure on Christ's mind.

**Matthew
26:40**

'And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?'



Before he returns to the disciples, and while his mind was in such an emotional turmoil, Luke records an angel appearing to strengthen Christ (Luke 22:43). It is generally assumed that this incident in Luke occurs after his third prayer, but this is not so, for Luke says after the angel has come, that 'he prayed more earnestly' (Luke 22:44) and this refers to the second and third prayer as recorded by Matthew (Matt 26:42,44). It has been reasonably suggested that the angel given this awe-inspiring task was none other than Gabriel himself, who had orchestrated his birth (Luke 1:26), probably his temptations and trials (Matt 4:11) and was now orchestrating his death, that God's will might be accomplished, and the world redeemed. It had been Gabriel, around 500 years earlier who had communicated to Daniel the details of Messiah's great suffering (Dan 9:21-27). Gabriel means 'the Might or Strength of God' and was there any being more appropriately suited to this role? Gabriel is noted for answering prayer (Dan 8: 15-16, 9:21, 10:12, Luke 1:13,26,30) and nothing would be unusual here if he were to suddenly appear in answer to Christ's repeated pleas. If Gabriel is the angel of Luke 22 and Daniel 10 (and it seems most likely), then there are a number of striking parallels between this, and the experience of Daniel 10.

See if you can add to this table, to flesh out the parallels between Daniel and Christ.

Experiences of Daniel (Dan 10)	Experiences of Christ
Episode happens in the first month (10:4) Bread and wine was avoided (10:3) 	Occurs in the first month (Matt 26:17) Bread and wine abstained from (Matt 26:29, Luke 22:16)



Bible Mark this table in either Daniel 10 or one of the Gospels, or wait until Conference to compare notes with others before doing so!

Finally, if Daniel 10 was a type to foreshadow the experiences of Christ, what great encouragement could Daniel 10 give Christ in this moment of agony?

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Q 12

In Luke's Gospel it records the fact that 'his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground'. The mention of 'sweat' here is quite interesting. The word 'sweat' only occurs three times in the Biblical record, and combined, they tell a symbolic tale.

Use a Concordance to find the three places, then elaborate on how they symbolise the story of sin. *Try to put the quotations in the order they happen or will happen, not necessarily the order they occur in the scriptural record.*

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**Matthew
26:43**

'And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.'



Q 13

The sleeping disciples are such a contrast: asleep while Christ is striving so mightily against sin. Mark records that when he shook them awake, they were silent, 'neither wist they what to answer him' (Mark 14:40). There was no excuse they could make when they rubbed the sleep from their eyes, and beheld a man visibly shaken and wrung out with grief, his body saturated with perspiration. Likewise, when we consider the lengths Christ went through, just in the Garden, to rid the world of sin, there can be no excuse for us falling asleep in the middle of our evening prayers either! Christ had been praying each time for about an hour (Matt 26:40,44). What disciple these days has recently spent *half* that time in prayer?!

Try to find a quiet place, and spend half an hour in prayer. Think about your life, your faults, your weaknesses, and the greatness of God's forgiveness; the sacrifice of Christ that has made it all possible, the unspeakable love of God in the giving of His son, the sacrifices we have been called on to make in comparison to *that*, the things you want to improve on, and the practical ways that you might show yourself as a disciple who has been affected by these things; the benefit of friends who can help you, and the glorious vision of the Kingdom, where indeed there will be no more sweat (Ezek 44:18) or tears (Rev 7:17, 21:4). Truly there is a lot to pray about!

Will half an hour be enough time?

THE BETRAYAL



BY JUDAS

The Betrayal by Judas

(Matthew 26:47-56)

'Judas quickly saw him, and at once gave the signal agreed upon. He walked up to him and saluted him, 'Hail, master, master!' Christ's first response to the infamy was in the mildness of powerful though agitated self-control: 'Friend, wherefore art thou come?' Then, as Judas made no answer - could make no answer - to such a question, Christ's words deepened in their tone; smothered indignation underlay them, as he said with emphasis, 'Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?' What viler treachery could man be guilty of than to hand over an irreproachable friend to his enemies for the sake of money? But to do this with the privileged token of affection, and to do it in a case like Christ's who went about doing good, and whose only offence was his zeal for righteousness, was to sink to a depth of wickedness that beggars language to characterise...

...Here was Jesus, the great and glorious and sinless, treacherously brought into the power of an unfeeling mob, the instruments of still more unfeeling and cruel foes assembled at the palace of the high priest. It seemed as if his word and his claims were utterly falsified by such a triumph of brute force. It seemed as if, after all, he were not to 'lay down his life' of his own accord, but that it was to be 'taken from' him by his enemies, whether he willed or no, notwithstanding his earnest deprecation of the view in the course of his public teaching. How terrible torturing was such an appearance of things, when it was the very question which had been decided with much prayer-wrestle in Gethsemane. It seems altogether fitting, therefore, that Jesus should have been permitted to show at this last moment that it was his own surrender to the Father's requirement, and not the superior power of his enemies, that brought him into their cruel hands. The withering glance of this eye, which threw them on the ground, could have consumed them in a moment, like the captains and their fifties who went to arrest Elijah. But the time had not yet come. It was the time for humiliation and death, at a time when it might be shown it was the Son of God's surrender to the wisdom of God, and not the victory of a wretched man's cupidity, that had placed power on the side of the armed ruffians who were seeking his life...

...The officers tightened their hold on their surrendering victim. The 'power of darkness' for the moment prevailed. The thongs reserved for the worst of mankind were fastened on hands only beneficent and righteous; and he who had done nothing but good among his enemies was led away bound, and insulted like a common felon. They might have spared him the indignity of bonds had they known. He was no common prisoner who would try to make his escape. He went of his own will to prison and to death, 'for the love wherewith he loved us'...

...Faith only can endure the heart-breaking scene. Its meaning soothes and upholds: 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' The enemies of Christ were only actors in the scene, though at the same time acting the perfectly witting part of malice and wickedness. As Peter afterwards told them, 'Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he so fulfilled' (Acts 3:18). By 'wicked hands' they took him; but it was 'by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God' that they had the opportunity (Acts 2:23; 4:27,28).

Extracts from *Nazareth Revisited*, Robert Roberts, chapter 56 Gethsemane - the arrest

Christ's rousing words stirred the dozy disciples into consciousness again: 'Rise, let us be going, behold, he is at hand that doth betray me' (Matt 26:46). While saints had slumbered, sinners had plotted and toiled. While the disciples had slept in heavy anguish, the traitor had been awake, and active in his hateful yet pathetic scheme to advance his own wealth. The time for spiritual strengthening had come and gone, and the world lay ahead, vicious, and cruel. It had yet to be faced, and overcome. Overcome by the love and longsuffering, that, when put alongside the rough men that would arrest him, could only be divine.



Readings

A Life of Jesus

Melva Purkis

chapter 11

Nazareth Revisited

Robert Roberts

chapter 106

**Matthew
26:47**

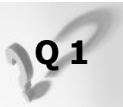
'And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.'

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the fact that it was while he spake these words to his disciples that the arrest party arrived (Matt 26:47, Mark 14:43, Luke 22:47). Mark says 'And immediately, while he yet spake!' It was almost as if the angels had held Judas and his iniquitous band up by some means, to allow Christ the time to mentally make his Father's will wholly his. The angels are working to a strict timetable. It is amazing to think of them orchestrating events here in the Garden with such split-second precision that it was while Christ spake these words, that the arrest party arrived!



The past had not yielded many successes against the carpenter from Nazareth. There was little cause for satisfaction or self-congratulation from their previous efforts to arrest him, kill him, or at the least, discredit him in front of the people.

Below are a list of quotations that refer to the various means that the Pharisees and chief priests had tried over 3 and a half years, to dispose of this troublesome prophet. Write next to the quotations a brief description of what they were trying to do, and the undesired result.



Verbal Attempts:

Mark 2:24, 3:2, John 5:16, 9:16

Matt 9:34, 10:25, 12:24, Mark 3:21-22, John 7:20, 8:48,52, 10:20
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John 8:14,16,19,41,46,48, 9:29 (*think about the circumstances of his conception and birth*)
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Matt 22:15,23,34

Physical Attempts:

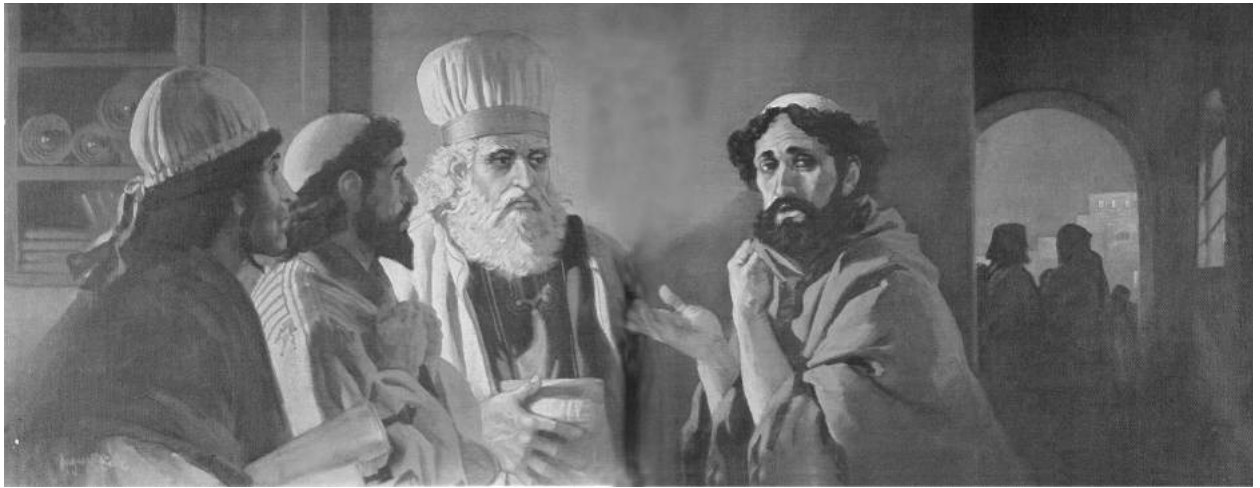
John 7:32,45-46

John 8:59, 10:31,39

John 11:50-54

This would make a nice box, when completed, to fit somewhere in Matthew 26.





Q 2

Thus their efforts had all resulted in dismal failure. Only days before Judas had offered his services, they had held an anxious meeting about how they might dispose of this troublesome Galilean prophet (Matt 26:4-5). Judas' offer of assistance brought a ray of hope into their plans for they didn't have many ideas of how to take Christ quietly without upsetting the large Passover crowd. Look in Luke 22:6 for what Judas offered that the Jews desperately wanted.

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Here was one who could offer the success that they had never attained. Obviously Judas' betrayal had been somewhat of a process, but what was the catalyst for his decision to go to the chief priests to offer them direct help? From Matthew 26, Mark 14, and John 12, try and find what **specific incident** (other than money) led to Judas approaching the chief priests.

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And so 'Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you.' The blunt offer was met by ecstatic glances amongst the Sanhedrin which were swiftly replaced by more business-like frowns. Matthew 26:15 says that the chief priests 'covenanted' with him for 30 pieces of silver. Thirty shekels was worth approximately twenty dollars, and was the price of a dead slave (Exod 21:32). A very small sum of money for the man who would be their most useful tool in the pursuit of the Lord. It is unlikely that money-hungry Judas, who stole money from the communal bag, would have been satisfied with so paltry a sum. We know from Acts 1:18, Matt 27: 3-10 that the blood-money he received was used to buy a field in Jerusalem, prime real-estate, for which 30 shekels of silver would not have been nearly sufficient.

It is clear from Matthew that the money was handed over during the meeting, for we read that he brought it back in Matthew 27:3. However, Mark and Luke seem to imply that the money was only *promised*, not *given* (Mark 14:11, Luke 22:5). It seems then that the 30 shekels were merely a token gesture, a down-payment to show good faith, and that the real money (used to buy the field) would arrive on successful delivery of the goods.

What did Judas offer that made the chief priests pay him so much money? Was it merely the fact that he could lead them to the right man? Or was there another role that he could play in the story of Christ's destruction? It is highly probable that Judas' side of the bargain was a promise to be star witness in the trial of Christ. His intimate knowledge of the comings and goings of Christ made him perfect for the job. He had heard the words of Christ right throughout his ministry and could well twist these to incriminate him. We will see later how the chief priests' aims were frustrated, their hopes dashed, as a guilt-stricken Judas failed to live up to his promise. In the end they were forced to seek 'false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; but found none: yea though many false witnesses came, yet found they none' (Matt 27:59-60).

Matthew reads that Judas arrived 'and with him a great multitude.' The arrest party was a rather motley array of men.

Q 3

Using the following quotations, build up a list of who was there on that night in Gethsemane. Also find out what the word 'band' in John 18:3 means, and how many soldiers are in one band.

John 18:3,10,12; Luke 22:50,52



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The military force that was marshalled against one defenceless man made for an impressive array!

John records that the group came with 'lanterns and torches' (John 18:3). Ironically, they were seeking the 'light of the world' (John 8:12). Why were so many men brought on a mission to capture just one man? And why are we specifically told that they were carrying lanterns and torches? Try to develop the scene.

Q 4



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Apart from the obvious need for light, why else might the group carry lanterns and torches? Tragically, their hunt for Christ using lanterns and torches was exactly the opposite of what they were meant to be doing! What did Exodus 12:15, Zeph 1:12 say they were meant to be making diligent search for on this very night? If your memory needs refreshing, refer back to Section One on the Upper Room, Question 3.

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They were using the right instruments, but for the wrong purpose! Instead of using their oversized candles for hunting out the right thing, they were desperately intent on hunting out what 1 Cor 5:7 describes as:

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You can imagine the scene of hundreds of men, all carrying torches, intent on capturing the only perfect man that could save them from their sins. How ironic that they were acting in the manner of an established custom, but with such an opposite spirit. They were doing it in the very spirit described in 1 Cor 5:8 as

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**Matthew
26:48**

'Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.'

Doubtless Judas would have been only too glad to stay in the background while Christ was arrested, but there were reasons why he could not.

1. He wanted the arrest to be as quick and as efficient as possible. This seems to be a condition of his agreement with the high-priests, that the capture create as little disturbance as possible (Luke 22:6). This is implied in the words 'hold him fast' (Matt 26:48) and 'take him and lead him away safely' (Mark 14:44).
2. It was night-time, and the darkness made identification difficult.
3. Christ and the disciples were probably all dressed in a similar fashion, and with similar beards and mantles. Judas wanted no mistakes to be made.
4. The official arrest would have been made by the armed Roman soldiers (John 18:12), and these men had perhaps never seen Christ before. Alternatively, after the incident in John 7:45-46 they were deliberately picked for this mission only if they didn't know him! They needed a positive identification, not just a description.

Judas then found himself up the front of the crowd, 'leading them on' (Luke 22:47 Roth). His sign or 'token' (Mark 14:44) would be a kiss to identify the Master. 'I'll kiss him casually, and then before he realises, you grab him, hold him, and take him away safely.' By a kiss! Robert Roberts in *Nazareth Revisited* describes a kiss as a 'privileged token of affection.' A kiss was always a sign of friendship, affectionate greeting, or homage.



Using the references below, divide them into these three sections: a sign of friendship, affectionate greeting, or homage.

Gen 27:26, 29:13, 33:4, 45:15, 1 Samuel 10:1, 20:41, 2 Samuel 19:39, Psalm 2:12, Luke 7:45, Luke 15:20, Acts 20:37, Rom 16:16, 1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12, 1 Thess 5:26, 1 Peter 5:14



Friendship	Affectionate Greeting	Homage
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Matthew 26:49

'And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.'



In 2 Samuel 20:9 we read the story of Joab, who, meeting Amasa in the way, leaned forward to kiss him, and then treacherously killed him. We have a similar picture of deception here with Judas and our Lord. Judas had promised the chief priests that he would 'kiss' Christ as a sign to show them the man they were to capture. However, the Greek word for 'kissed' in Matt 26:49 is quite different to the word 'kiss' in v48. Look up the meaning of the two words in the Concordance, and some different translations, especially Diaglott and Rotherham's.



It seems then, that when Judas actually did kiss him, he was over enthusiastic, probably out of sheer nervousness. Find a verse in Proverbs 27 that is fitting for this situation, and comment on what it tells us about Judas' heart towards his Lord.

Matthew
26:50

'And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.'



Christ's first response to the infamy of Judas' deceit, is an example to all of us of tremendous self-control. The Greek word for 'friend' is 'hetacros' and simply means 'comrade or companion'. It is not the affectionate term for a friend at all. Judas' over eager affection, and fervent kissing did not elicit an answering 'Shalom', nor a returning embrace. Christ's cool reception and interrogatory question, was almost his last attempt to rouse Judas' conscience. The word 'comrade' is a term which only Matthew uses, and which Christ had only ever used in a derogatory context and disapproving way. Look up the word for 'friend' in the Concordance, and then using Englishman's find where else Christ uses the word. It occurs only three other times. Write down for each time what the 'friend' could not accept about Christ, and see if you can find how Judas shows the same spirit.

1. Matt The Parable of

The 'friends' could not accept

Judas was guilty of this very same crime when he was unable to accept that Christ must first come as the suffering servant.

2. Matt The Parable of

The 'friend' could not accept

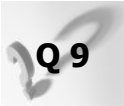
Judas was guilty of this very same crime in Matt 26:8 and John 12:5 when he couldn't accept what he viewed as a "waste" of the ointment, but Christ could.

3. Matt..... The Parable of

The 'friend' could not accept

Judas was guilty of this very same crime when in John 13:26

Therefore, every time the word 'comrade' or 'friend' is used, it describes someone who could not accept something about Christ, and Judas fits this pattern perfectly! Are there some things that we struggle to accept about Christ? What might they be?



Between the first half of Matt 26:50 and the second half, the story of John 18:4-9 fits. No sooner had he repelled the villainous falsity of Judas, than he stepped forward himself, perhaps through the gate of the garden to confront his pursuers. Here was a willing sacrifice. Not running. Not attempting to hide himself. He stood there before them in the full moonlight in lonely and awful majesty, shaming their needless torches and abundance of weapons, by his utter defencelessness. Completely open and completely in control. John records that he 'knew all things that should come upon him' (John 18:4). This insight was a hallmark of his life. Write down what Christ '**knew**', as recorded mainly by the disciple John.

- John 1:48-49
- John 2:24-25
- John 4:1
- John 4: 19, 29
- John 5:6
- John 6:6
- John 6:64, 13:11
- John 13:1
- John 16:19
- John 16:30
- John 21:17
- Matt 12:25, Luke 11:17
- Matt 17:22
- Luke 9: 47

This would be a good colouring in exercise.



Jeremiah prophesied that Christ would have this kind of knowledge in his 11th chapter...

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Jer 11:

Surely this is a testament to Christ's amazing courage that, despite knowing all things, he still went through with it, and fulfilled his Father's Will!

**Matthew
26:53**

'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?'



Here is Christ's example and counsel for all the crises of life: prayer is mightier than brute force. Reproachfully, he asked his disciples, ignoring the multitude for the moment, whether they really thought he couldn't escape if he wanted to. A breath of a prayer would secure not twelve timid disciples to his aid, but twelve legions of angels! It is instructive to ponder for a moment what twelve legions (72,000 angels!) might be capable of doing. Look up the following quotations and note down what we learn about the angels' power. Try and think of three or four other quotations that give us an insight into the angels' capabilities.

1. Gen 19:24
2. Exod 12:23

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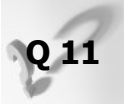
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One angel would suffice in terms of power, but this is Christ's scathing rebuke of the multitude gathered in such a show of force to take him. Christ could call on more than the 'Chiliarch' or captain (John 18:12). History tells us that there were 10 Roman cohorts in Jerusalem at this time of the feast, 6000 men, or the equivalent of one legion. Christ could call on twelve legions! One for himself, and for each of the eleven disciples!

This was not only a comfort, but also a great temptation. We know from Matthew 4 that part of the temptation of Christ was in referring to how the angels would save him if he jumped off the temple. It was a temptation *then* to misuse the power of the angels, and could be *now* if he let it. We know from Psalm 91:11-12 that the saints are well looked-after by the angels. The very knowledge that they could rescue him immediately from his arrest would have been a great temptation to Christ at this time.

**Matthew
26:55**

'In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.'



Q 11

This was the feeling of David who played in Saul's presence so often, and was apparently so admired (1 Samuel 16:14-23, 18:10). Yet, he was then hunted like a flea and a common criminal in the wilderness (1 Samuel 24:14, 26:20). Turning to the chief priests and Pharisees, who, seeing him bound so securely, had ventured out of the darkness to throng about him in insulting curiosity, he directs this stinging rebuke. Truly, as Luke adds, 'this is your hour, and the power of darkness' (Luke 22:53). Later this description of the Jewish leaders would be taken up as being very apt for the state of the spiritual enlightenment.

Consider John 1:5, 8:12, Colossians 1:13, and Ephesians 6:12 and describe how the extremes of light and darkness extend into the rest of the New Testament as being typical of knowing the Truth or not.

- John 1:5
- John 8:12
- Col 1:13
- Eph 6:12
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**Matthew
26:56**

'But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.'



Q 12

The men who had been his close companions for the last three years left him, fleeing in panic into the darkness. Our Lord was left all alone with the enemy and with his betrayer. When the moment of trial came upon them, all of the disciples failed. We can all see this failure so clearly in them, but what about ourselves? How do we betray our Lord? When it comes to taking up our cross and following him, do we really follow? Or do we, like the disciples, disappear into the background? Take a moment to think about how we can do this in our lives every day. What are some things that you can put into place in your life to prevent this from happening? Where possible, try to think of some helpful scriptural principles and quotations. Use additional paper as needed.

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THE SIX TRIALS



The Six Trials

(Matt 26:57-27:31)

'The trial of Jesus was in fact no trial at all. It was judicial murder. There was a pretence of justice, and with difficulties developing and precious time running out, even that was thrown to the winds. The arrest was illegal: only voluntary witnesses were allowed to bring a wrongdoer to the Sanhedrin. The time of trial was illegal; no capital cases were allowed to be tried after sunset. The cross-questioning and challenge of his judge was illegal; he should have been acquitted immediately; the evidence of the witnesses had failed.

But Jesus was arrested by conspiracy, tried by enemies, testified against by hired witnesses. Time was the great factor, time, and a suitable charge which would allow Pilate to confirm the death sentence. He must be condemned before the multitudes of worshippers realised what had happened. Evil was abroad that night - evil concentrated and unrelieved. This was their hour, and the power of darkness.'

A life of Jesus, Melva Purkis, page 332

It was around eleven o'clock in the evening when Christ was betrayed by a kiss from one of his closest friends, roughly arrested by the men he had come into the world to save, and deserted by the friends who only hours before, had avowed their undying loyalty. His hands bound, willingly submitting to the indignities of being treated like a common thief (Matt 26:55), he was led stumbling back over the Kidron Valley into the heart of Jerusalem, where despite their torches and lanterns, lay the seat of 'the power of darkness'.

Each step brought the Lamb closer to the slaughter (Isa 53:7). The burden of knowing what lay ahead (John 18:4) was immense. The sheep had been scattered (Zech 13:7) or had 'all gone astray and turned every one to his own way' (Isa 53:6) and now came the time when 'Yahweh would lay on him the iniquity of us all' (Isa 53:6). This must have been on his mind as he crossed the Kidron, for even Pilate marvelled that he refused to defend himself or say anything, in accordance with the words of Isaiah, 'yet he opened not his mouth' (Isa 53:7). Between the hours of midnight and 8 o'clock in the morning, Christ would be tried six times for his life, and by 9 o'clock, the feast crowd would awake to find the Galilean prophet crucified outside the city as one of three common criminals.

Christ underwent, in effect, six trials altogether: three before the Jews, and three before the Gentiles. The ecclesia saw it later as a preliminary fulfillment of Psalm 2 when they prayed 'against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast annointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done' (Acts 4:27-28). None were guiltless. All the world was guilty before God (Rom 3:19). Everything to do with the last day of Christ's life seems to be done in triplicate to emphasise this. This day was special. And things seem to be grouped in threes throughout the day to emphasise the unbreakable nature (Ecc 4:12) of what God was completing on this tumultuous day.

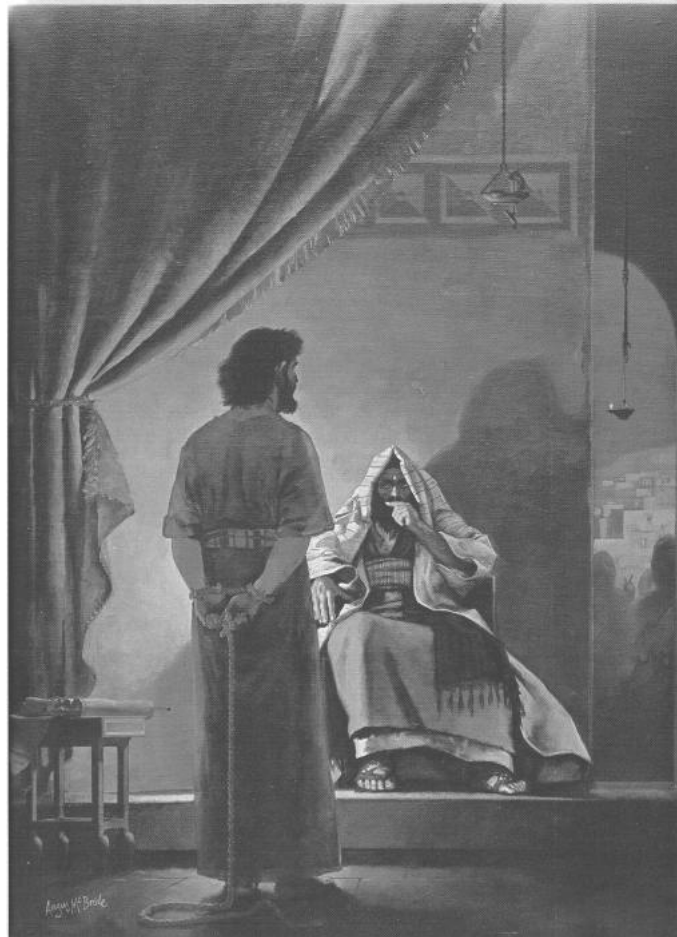


Readings

A Life of Jesus
Nazareth Revisited

Melva Purkis
Robert Roberts

chapters 12-13
chapters 106-107



After capture, Christ was first led to Annas (John 18:13). Annas was the old Patriarch of what was a famous family in Israel. Probably in his sixties, he was one of the most astute characters ever to occupy the seat of power. Although he had only been High Priest officially for 10 years (AD 6-15), he still wielded considerable political power. Under his influence and guidance, all five of Annas' sons (Luke 16:28) would be astutely manoeuvred into assuming the mantle of High Priest as time went on. It would be the last of these, also called Annas, who would so viciously put James to death in AD 62. For thirty to forty years, through his sons, old Annas was able to dominate Jewish affairs. This was a remarkable feat considering that Herod's Temple had no fewer than twenty-one other High-Priests in less than one hundred years! The old man had the benefit of years of dodging and weaving. His wily experience and shrewd perception was being used here to see if he could find a chink in the armour of Christ, that a more formal examination before Caiaphas could exploit. Because of the prestige, authority and influence he exercised in the nation, and his patronage even of Caiaphas, Caiaphas defers to his father-in-law for the initial examination. Although technically Caiaphas was the high-priest that year (John 18:13), priestly families and any strict observers of the Law would regard the deposition of Anas as invalid and sacriligious, as he was supposed to officiate till death claimed him. Annas was widely known by the title of High-Priest both before this time (Luke 3:2) and after (Acts 4:6). John records before the interrogation even begins, as part of his decription of Annas, that he was father-in-law to the man who had said 'It is expedient that one man should die for the people' (John 18:14). This statement was actually made in John 11:50 during a council of the chief priests and Pharisees. In John 11:53 we read that 'from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.' The decision has been made and the verdict reached before the trial even takes place. The trial was merely a formality. They wanted him dead.



Thus, the trials were not really trials at all. The whole of the next seven hours was to be a violation of justice. Every conceivable law would be broken, ignored, or set aside in their quest for the death of the most innocent man that had ever lived in Israel. Any veneer of legality was just that: a veneer that hid their ugly violation of the Law. A man needed to break the Law to be sentenced to death, but this man was a perfect law-abiding citizen. The only possible way for Christ to be condemned in this capital trial, was if they themselves broke and overrode their own rules, and deliberately miscarried the course of justice! Below are a few of the regulations, both from the Mosaic Law, as well as Jewish tradition, that were broken in the trial of Christ. For each, say how it was broken and give a New Testament reference to show where it says that it was broken.

Regulation	How this was broken	New Testament Reference
1. A person tried for a capital offence was not to be interrogated by a private individual before trial.		
2. No trial was to be held between sunset and sunrise.		
3. Capital trials had to be conducted in an acknowledged court of law.		
4. Trial of capital offence could not be carried out on the preparation day of a Sabbath or Holy day.		
5. The court could not accept evidence from false witnesses who didn't agree with each other.	<i>Compare Deut 19:16-21</i>	
6. The words of the accused alone could not be used to incriminate him.		
7. It was illegal for the High-Priest to rent his clothes.		
8. In a capital trial all the members of the Sanhedrin had to vote around the semicircle they sat in while secretaries noted down their votes.		
9. The accused was to be given a chance for defence (actually given 40 days in a capital trial to gather evidence!)		
10. Capital cases could not be concluded in one day. They had to go over into the second day.		

These are not all. Try and find some more! Jot them down on additional paper if you find some.

Was there ever a larger conspiracy to commit the most malicious act of injustice in the history of the world? Countless illegalities, and six acquittals before being condemned to crucifixion. An innocent man railroaded by cruelty, selfish ambitions and worldly pride to an undeserving death. The martyrdom of Golgotha was not even really a miscarriage of justice. It was murder.



Matthew
26:58

*'But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace,
and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.'*



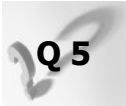
In John's Gospel, the narrative of the first trial of Christ before Annas is interrupted with the recounting of Peter's first denial (John 18:15-18). All the disciples had been scattered through the olive groves of Gethsemane, but Simon Peter and 'another disciple', recovering from their initial panic, surreptitiously followed the mob back to Jerusalem, to the High Priest's Palace. Some have suggested that the 'other disciple' was Judas, but surely Judas would have been mighty keen to keep the quick-tempered Peter outside the Palace courtyard to ensure his own safety. In addition Judas had possibly promised to appear as the Sanhedrin's star witness. However, he obviously thought better of stooping even lower, and only showed up later that morning to return his money once the sentence had already been passed (Matt 27:1-5). It is unlikely that he would be anywhere near the scene. Investigate the following references and describe how each of them points to the identity of the 'other disciple'.

Who is described in John 13:23, 20:2,3,4,8 as
but not mentioned by name? Why would that be?
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Read John 18:15,16. What information does this passage tell us?
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The following two passages give us information that is unique to this gospel. What is it and how did the writer find out about it? John 18:10,26 and John 18:18
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Therefore, we conclude that the 'other disciple' who arranged the entrance of Peter and who was therefore an eye-witness to many of the circumstances of this night was none other than:
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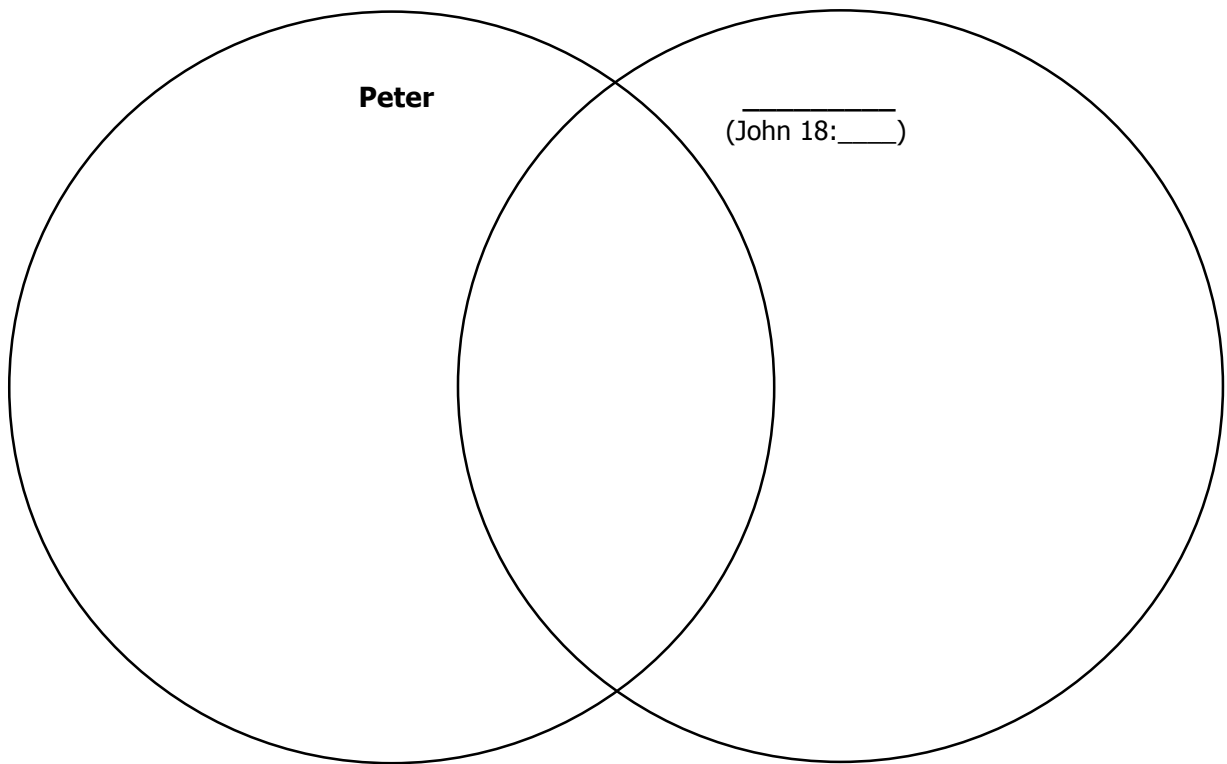
Matthew records that Peter followed him afar off. He followed, but not too closely; an indication of his tormented mind. He could not walk *with* the Lord, but he still followed. He was confused and agitated and didn't really know what was going to happen to Christ. Was this really it? Was he really going to die? Or would he escape, as he had always done during the last three and a half years? And so Peter went to see what would happen. He followed 'to see the end.' Is there any connection between Peter waiting 'to see the end' and Jonah 4:5, considering John 1:42 and Matt 16:17?

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Many of the Gospel records mention that Peter sat with the servants, which was not a wise decision (Psa 1:1). John says 'and Peter **stood** with them and warmed himself' (John 18:18). This phrase 'stood with them' has already been used in John 18. Which verse does it occur in, and who is it describing?

Compare and contrast the two betrayals and outcomes using the diagram below. You may need to consult all of the Gospels to get the full story.





Write a succinct sentence for each betrayer, summarising the information in your diagram, that you could write in your margin in John 18.

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Both betrayals were 'revealed by fire'. Where in the epistles does this phrase come from?

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Find out from John 18 how fire appears in each betrayal.

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How did that fire reveal the actions of each betrayer?

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How can this apply to us?

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In the conclusion of the trial before Annas, Christ is dealt a resounding blow across his face, delivered by one of the thugs who was camouflaged as an 'officer of the Temple Guard.' It is probable that the blow was made with a rod, as the Temple Guard specialised in their use of wooden clubs or 'staves' (Matt 26:47).

What other Old Testament characters experienced this brutal treatment?

1 Kings 22:

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Job 16:

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The righteous man of Lam 3:

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Especially here, this act of being smitten with a rod was foretold in the prophecy of Micah.

Find the chapter and verse in Micah that alludes to this incident and from the context discover any consolation Christ might have taken from this cruel blow prophesied so many hundreds of years earlier!

Micah 5:

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**Matthew
26:59**

'Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death.'

Matthew records that they 'sought false witnesses against Jesus, to put him to death.' Judas who had originally pledged 'to confess' ('promised' Luke 22:6) was possibly to be the Sanhedrin's star witness in the prosecution of Christ, but he was nowhere to be found, for in bitter regret he had fled like the other disciples (Matt 26:56). He had refused to testify and even tried later that morning to undo the great evil he had started (Matt 27:3-5), but to no avail. The Council's open objective was to put Christ to death, at all costs, no matter what means had to be employed, no matter how low they had to stoop. False witnesses were utterly condemned by the Law (Deut 19:15-21) and the Mishnah tells how in a trial on a capital charge, a special warning and abjuration was solemnly laid on all witnesses to tell the truth, for great curses, and the punishment of death were the consequences of lying. Yet here, the Judges are seeking false witnesses! The implication is that no true witness would condemn Christ, for he was innocent! The scripture had anticipated this experience of Messiah.

Describe how each of the following prophecies spoke of this hundreds of years before, and what Christ knew he would experience.



1. Psalm 27:

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2. Psalm 64:

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3. Psalm 109:

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4. Psalm 70:

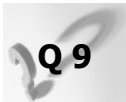
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- 5. Psalm 31:
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- 6. Psalm 35:
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- 7. Isaiah 59:
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**Matthew
26:60**

*'But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none.
At the last came two false witnesses.'*

The trial before Caiaphas was a preliminary mock trial to see what was satisfactory and what was inadequate before the full Sanhedrin meeting later that morning: the trial proper. Caiaphas was under an enormous amount of pressure to come up with solid evidence that would stick in the full Sanhedrin trial. It was for this reason that he sat smouldering, watching the laboriously meticulous and searching method of examining the evidence of the witnesses, as they were cross-examined as laid down by Jewish Law, and then, when proved inconsistent, thrown out of court! As witness after witness was dismissed, it became clear that things were not running smoothly. The discordance between false witnesses was so glaringly and painfully apparent, that even a prejudiced Sanhedrin could not base a single conviction on it! There seem to be two possible reasons for this:



1. Present in the assembled Sanhedrin was at least one, if not three fair-minded and courageous men who might have exposed the witnesses for the frauds they were. Refer to the quotes below to see who these men were.

Luke 23:51

John 19:38-39

Acts 5:34-40

Even if

and were absent,

maybe

was present and possessed the razor-sharp legal mind and the clear logic of a 'doctor of the Law', at least enough to untangle the web of lies which they wove.

2. More likely the witnesses were confused by another means so that they didn't agree.

2 Sam 15:31

Psa 55:9

Psa 40:14

Psa 35:26

And so, the evil testimonies of these false men were dismissed. The Law spoke sternly about the fate of false witnesses. What was supposed to happen to them?

Deut 19:16-21

Although they might disregard God's Law concerning their just punishment, God, however, would not. They accused Christ of wanting to destroy the Temple (Matt 26:61), and would in turn have their own destroyed 'tooth for tooth' as God's unerring retribution fell on the nation in AD 70. Their conspiracy against the life of Christ was like signing their own death warrant. It is not without significance that the Jews sought to kill Christ by crucifixion, and Josephus records that the Romans employed crucifixion and other methods of brutal punishment and death during the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70.

**Matthew
26:65**

'Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.'

In Matt 26:63 Caiaphas put Christ to an oath to tell the Sanhedrin whether or not he was the Christ, the Son of God. To this, the Lord was forced to reply, giving a brief description of his role in the future. Caiaphas was so incensed that he only heard Christ's admission to the charge, a bold assertive 'I am' (Mark 14:62). As a Sadducee, he didn't place emphasis on the Psalms (Psalm 110) or Prophets (Dan 7), which Christ had just quoted, for they were not the Law of Moses. In a dramatic display he rent his garments, an act of emotional disgust at an especially ugly offence! But his action was alive with dramatic irony! In the previous verse (Matt 26:64) Christ had asserted his superior priesthood and superior access to the divine presence, and here in this act, Caiaphas openly proclaimed that his claim to the High Priest's office was null, void and abolished!



Q 10

In fact, Caiaphas should never have been able to rend his clothes like this. The High Priest was supposed to be wearing a specific robe. What was special about the garment?

Exod 39:23 -

Obviously Caiaphas was not wearing his priestly garments. Now compare this to what Christ was clothed in and see who really was the true High Priest.

John 19:23-24 –

God would soon confirm Caiaphas' act as the signal for the end of Caiaphas' priesthood and the beginning of Christ's.

Matt 27:51

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Christ was seen to be the superior High Priest on every count!

**Matthew
26:71**

'And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.'



Q 11

Meanwhile downstairs, in the courtyard, Peter was involved in his own trial. Moving from the tense moments by the flickering fire, he had walked out into the porch, where his nervous tension eased somewhat. He thought the worst of his ordeals was over. The first cock crow (Mark 14:68) had sounded an alarm. But now, more alert, and on guard, he was surely not likely to be caught once again in a panicky denial of his Lord. It is in this phase of Peter's second denial that those who want to find contradictions in the Gospel records have a field day! John says 'Peter stood and warmed himself' (John 18:25) while Matthew and Mark say he had 'gone out into the porch' (Matt 26:71, Mark 14:68). Mark records that 'the maid saw him again' (Mark 14:69) but Matthew says it was 'another maid' (Matt 26:71) and Luke says it was simply 'another' (Luke 22:58) but uses a masculine pronoun, and records the denial as 'Man, I am not' (Luke 22:58).



Try to piece the Gospel records into the most harmonious solution plausible and discuss this with your friends. The first suggested point is given.

1. Peter, still mingling with the crowd to avoid attracting undue attention, is spotted by a second maid who exclaims contemptuously to those around her 'This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth' (Matt 26:71).
2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

**Matthew
26:74**

*'Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man.
And immediately the cock crew.'*



Peter the disciple had reverted to Simon the coarse vulgar fisherman, swearing and uttering oaths. 'I know not the man' he cries over and over again, until he is interrupted by the second cock crowing (Mark 14:72). Luke says 'And immediately, while he yet spake' (Luke 22:60). The oaths and curses were still issuing forth! This is another example of the impeccable precision of the angels' timing (Mark 14:43). There has been some difference of opinion over what is meant by the two cock crowings and when they occurred. The Diaglott seems to have the best explanation in a footnote when it says that laterally the idea of the cock crowing was...

'...A watch trumpet sounding. It is well known that no cocks were allowed to remain in Jerusalem during the Passover feast. The Romans, who had a strong guard in the castle of Antonia, which overlooked the Temple, divided the night into four watches, beginning at six, nine, twelve and three. Mark 13:35 alludes to this division of time. The last two watches were both called cock-crowings. The Romans relieved guard at each watch by sound of trumpet: the trumpet of the third watch was called the first, and that of the fourth, the second cock. And when it was said the cock crew, the meaning is, that the trumpet of the third watch sounded, which always happened at midnight.'

Diaglott, page 109

In other words, the 'cock-crew watch' (12am-3am) started and ended with a blast from the trumpet, which sounds reasonable.

On the timeline below, try to fill in the four Roman watches from Mark 13:35, the main events of the night, Peter's three denials, and the two cock crowings. You may like to look again at The Upper Room, Question 7 and The Garden of Gethsemane, Question 4 to refresh your memory. This time, try to expand on the events of the night and be more specific.

	Mark 13:35	Night's events	Peter's denials / cock crowings
6pm
7pm
8pm
9pm
10pm
11pm
12am
1am
2am
3am
4am
5am
6am
7am
8am
9am

Interestingly, Mark alone records the detail about the two soundings of the cock crowing (Mark 14:30,68,72). Tradition has it that he received his information first-hand from the apostle Peter years later in Rome, and this seems appropriate.

**Matthew
26:75**

'And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept bitterly.'



The noise of the trumpet had saved Peter, by distracting the attention away from him, but he knew its meaning only too well! However, it was not just the noise of the trumpet blast that caused Peter to remember. Luke records 'And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered...' (Luke 22:61). This was a poignant moment indeed. A penetrating gaze that bespoke hurt and pain, yet indescribable love (John 13:1). But it was too late. Mark, giving Peter's personal version no doubt, records how 'he called to mind the word *how* that Jesus had said to him' (Mark 14:72 RV). The word 'how' implies the solemn repetition with which Christ had warned him that this would happen (Mark 14:30). Peter's experience is the archetype of every failure in time of temptation: he remembered too late! Later, following Christ's advice to strengthen the brethren (Luke 22:32), he is tireless in his efforts to not let the ecclesia make the same mistake as he made, in remembering too late. In fact, a key idea in his second epistle, near the end of his life, is the concept of remembering or remembrance!

Q 13



Using a Concordance, trace this idea of remembrance through 2 Peter, and colour it in.

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**Matthew
27:4**

'[Judas] saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.'

Q 14

This clear confession carries the clear implication that Christ's claims during his ministry, and his testimony at his own trial in front of Caiaphas, were true. He was the Messiah. He would be killed, but would rise again the third day, ascend to heaven and then return to judge on 'the clouds of heaven' (Matt 26:64). Horror-stricken at his own belated perception, and realising he had backed the wrong side, Judas alludes in this remorseful but not truly repentant confession to a number of Old Testament incidents, where this phrase 'innocent blood' becomes a type of Christ. Look up the following references, and find the verse which mentions 'innocent blood'. Explain the reference in the context of the rest of the chapter. Also think about whether these verses are a type of Judas' betrayal of Christ.

1. Deut 21:

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2. 1 Sam 19:

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3. Psa 94:

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4. Isa 59:

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5. Jer 19:

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6. Jonah 1:

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The phrase 'innocent blood' has quite a history in the Old Testament Scriptures, and clearly Judas' use of this phrase in his confession shows clearly that he realised he had made a huge mistake in backing Caiaphas rather than Christ. Tragically, his wretchedness was so overwhelming that he didn't have enough faith to believe that even *his* huge sin could be forgiven by such a gracious Lord!

We have seen already how Peter and Judas stand alongside each other in the record as betrayers of the Lord. Both men failed their Master. Both men realised their sin and 'repented'. Yet, what was the difference in reaction and outcome to this realisation? How did each man deal with his sin, and what happened to him?

Judas:

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Peter:

.....

This is a powerful lesson for us. We too have in some way betrayed our Lord. Each of us must personally come to a realisation of this in our life. But how should we react? How should we deal with this realisation? Do we assume our sins are too great for God to forgive and through Christ save us? Do we, like Judas resign ourselves to the fate of spiritual death? Or, like Peter overcome ourselves, and 'walk in newness of life' with our risen Lord? Think about your own life and how you can follow in the footsteps of Peter. Use the following quotations to write down a few thoughts about your own life.

1 Pet 1:3-9

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1 Pet 1:14-17

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1 Pet 5:5-10

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2 Pet 3:18

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**Matthew
27:9**

'Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value.'



This is one of the best-known apparent contradictions in the New Testament record. Matthew here attributes words to Jeremy the prophet which are not found in Jeremiah, but in Zechariah 11:12-13! Ask your friends, parents, brothers and sisters what they think about this intriguing puzzle, and see if you can come up with a convincing solution!

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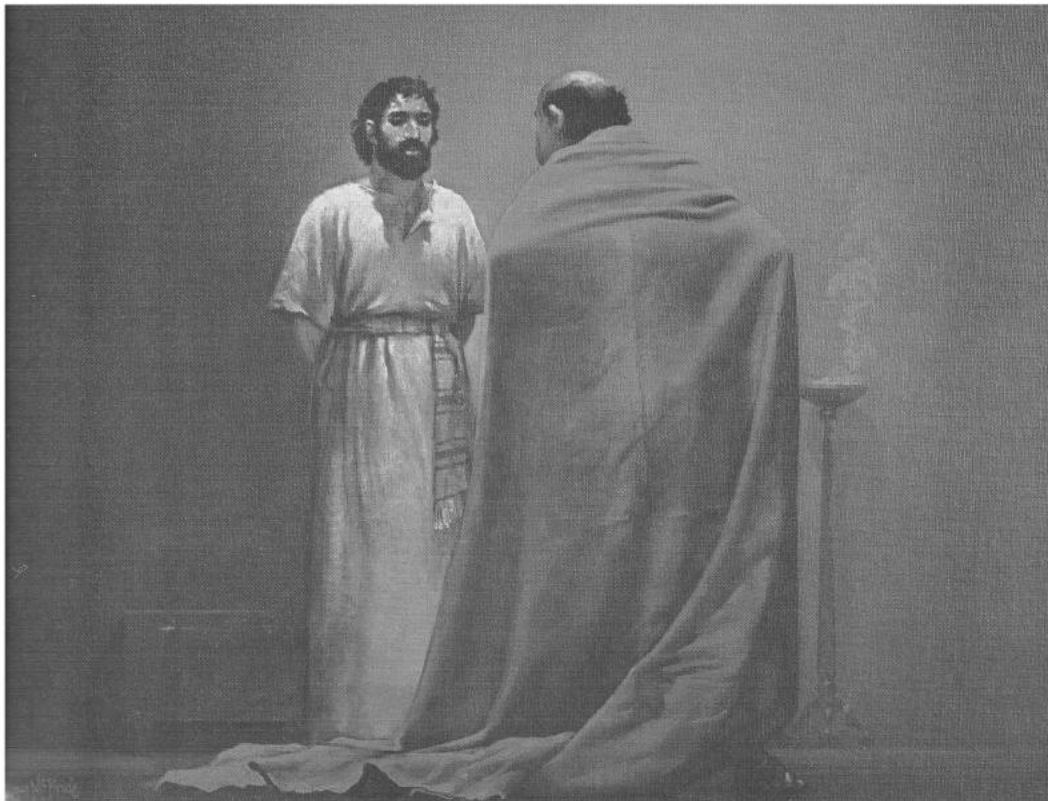
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**Matthew
27:11**

'And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.'



Pilate's first interview (John 18:28) with Christ is not recorded in detail, but it did not take long for him to exit the Judgment Hall, and demand impersonally from the Jews, as if he had no acquaintance with the strange case now before him 'What accusation bring ye against this man?' (John 18:29). This would have greatly dismayed the Jewish leaders. This is not what they expected at all! They were all under the impression that Caiaphas had arranged everything with Pilate the night before. It should have been merely a case of rubber-stamping the conclusion agreed on the previous night, but now Pilate wants to formally examine the prisoner! Imagine the unease and annoyance amongst the chief priests as they are caught off balance by this request! They did not have a ready reply, and could only assert with an insolence that dismayingly failed to cover their confusion, 'If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee' (John 18:30). There was no love lost between Pilate and the Jews, and their sarcasm was met with his contempt! 'Take ye him and judge him according to your law' (John 18:31). 'No charge, then no trial. Suit yourselves!' Pilate is unwilling to entangle himself in the prosecution of someone who is so obviously innocent and harmless. Pressed by this unexpected setback, the Jews are forced to concede, 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death' (John 18:31). Yet the Jews did have the authority to put people to death. Blasphemy was punishable by stoning (Lev 24:16, John 10:33) and they had found Christ guilty of blasphemy (Matt 26:65-66). They later stoned Stephen to death (Acts 7:58). What they really meant was, they did not have the power to execute by crucifixion! Here they unwittingly expose their true motives, for why would they be so insistent on crucifixion when they could have achieved his death themselves by stoning Christ for blasphemy. They definitely wanted Christ crucified, as it becomes clear in the record when they cry, 'Crucify him, Crucify him' (Matt 27:22-23, Mark 15:13-14, Luke 23:21-23, John 19:6). They are clearly referring here to crucifixion as the method of death (John 18:32).

Q 16



Why did the Jews so desperately want Christ *crucified*? Try to **brainstorm** a few reasons, and proofs for why this might be! Put yourself in the shoes of the Pharisees and think about what they wanted to achieve. It may help to think of applicable references in the Law as well. This would be a good question to compare notes with friends on.

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Q 17

With the rhetorical question ('What is truth?') that shows Pilate's exasperation on examining the prisoner, and his deepening involvement in the controversy, 'Pilate went out again to the Jews' (John 18:38). Christ was brought out and Pilate settled in his Judgment Seat to deliver his verdict before the accused and accusers. When all was arranged, Pilate delivered his pronouncement on the case: 'I find in him no fault at all' (John 18:38). Weymouth says 'No crime in him', and Rotherham's 'not a single fault'. What a stunning verdict! This is the first of five acquittals that Pilate makes of Christ in the morning trials. See if you can find the other four by looking ahead through the Gospels, and write down exactly what Pilate says on each occasion to acquit Christ.

1. John 18:38: 'I find in him no fault at all' (*same acquittal as Luke 23:4*)
2.
3.
4.
5.

**Matthew
27:14**

'And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.'



Q 18

In Luke 23:8-12 we have the trial before Herod which chronologically fits between Matt 27:14 and Matt 27:15. The trial before Herod was a closed session in which Herod intimately interviewed Christ in an attempt to badger, threaten, request, demand, and plead for a statement by which he could condemn or release Christ, but Christ remained silent (Luke 23:9). Given that this was a private meeting, at an extremely early hour, in Herod's own private residence, how can we know exactly what did happen? In Mark 6:14-29 we know of other private dealings of Herod. If this was a private meeting how did the Gospel writer Luke receive this exact information?

There are two possible ways. Use the quotations below to formulate suggested answers.

1. Luke 8:3

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2. Luke 23:10 and Acts 6:7

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**Matthew
27:18**

'For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.'



Q 19

Mark uses the Greek word 'eginosken' which means 'it was dawning on him' (Mark 15:10). It was becoming increasingly obvious that the priests were only acting for personal reasons and the case for the prosecution really had nothing at all to do with zeal for justice or religion. The word 'envy' is a strong word, and Mark also uses it (Mark 15:10). It is reminiscent of the experiences of Abel (Gen 4:4-5, 1 John 3:12). Use a Concordance to look up the word 'envy' and related words. Make a list of other faithful men and women in the Scriptures that were envied.

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The word 'envy' is often encountered in the New Testament as a work of the flesh. Try to find, using a Concordance, the 13 times where it (or another related word) is used in this way in the New Testament.

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Contrast these with 1 Cor 13:4!

How perverse that the Jewish leaders could envy the very man they were condemning to death, yet refuse to listen to his teachings!

**Matthew
27:24**

'When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.'



BE DONE

Rotherham's says, 'Rather a tumult was rising.' This was the last thing Pilate either wanted or needed! He wanted to stay out of the Roman newspapers if he possibly could, and another scandal was to be avoided at all costs! But he was trapped! Something had to give under the mounting pressure, and that something could not be his career. It must be Christ. But before his final capitulation to their iniquitous desires, he permitted himself one last gesture. As a final show of his contempt for the Jewish leaders, he thrust their own Law at them.

In washing his hands with water, what Law was Pilate drawing their attention to? (Refer to AV margin if you have one)



The law of the

Go back to this Law, write a description of what was meant to occur. Describe what Pilate is really saying here by alluding to this passage in his actions.

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What were the people really doing in Matt 27:25, given the statement of v7-9 in the passage from the Law above?

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Matthew
27:26

'Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.'



How badly Pilate emerges from this encounter! His reputation as a fearless imperious leader is in tatters, as the Jewish leaders have intimidated and bullied him into giving way on all of their demands! Despite repeated attempts, all his arguments have been defeated by the crowd, and manipulated by the chief priests. His conscience has been destroyed as he has condemned an innocent man to death for political expedience, and despite washing his hands in a public display of innocence, he knew he was guilty (John 19:8,13,22). He has had to get up early, upset his wife, give deference to Herod, and on top of all this, release a well-known Roman hater and assassin back into society, instead of an innocent carpenter. It had not been a good morning! Pilate was under pressure from the people and he knew it. Mark records, *'And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them'* (Mark 15:15). The need to keep the populace happy is the main consideration of every career politician, and Pilate is no different. Comment on these three quotations.

Acts 12:3

Acts 24:27

Exod 32:21-24

Add any more examples you can think of, and mark them in beside Matt 27:26.
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**Matthew
27:30**

'And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.'

This was not all mockery without physical abuse. Christ was now the target of all the hatred, contempt, and scorn that the soldiers felt for all the non-Roman people of Judea. Their coarse ribaldry with which they did him homage, was not without them also venting their hatred physically. Mockingly, they bowed the knee, giving him feigned reverence, and then pretending a kiss of reverence, they spat in his face, and ripped out chunks of his beard (Isa 50:6). Instead of humbly touching his sceptre (Esther 5:2) they snatched the bamboo from his hand, and beat him over the head with it. His head still reeling from the scourging, the effects of even a hollow-stemmed bamboo reed would be vicious in its effect to the head (Matt 27:30, Mark 15:19) and John adds, 'they smote him with their hands!' (John 19:3)



Q 22

What they were really doing is obvious when the events are carefully catalogued.

1. **Naked** : Representative of

Gen 3:10-11

Rev 3:17

Rev 16:15

2 Chron 28:19

2. **Scarlet Cloak** : Representative of

Isa 1:18

3. **Crown of thorns** : Representative of curse of

Gen 3:18

Heb 6:8

4. **Reed sceptre** : Representative of

Matt 11:7

Isa 19:6-7

Isa 42:3

2 Kings 18:21

Not only are the Scarlet Cloak, the Crown of Thorns and the Reed Sceptre representative of:

.....
they are also standard symbols for a

Instead of the promised King of Israel, they were trying to make him _____,
which was the opposite of what he was. Read 2 Cor 5:21 to see a summary of this.

THE CRUCIFIXION



The Crucifixion

(Matt 27:32-44)

'Go, soldier, get ready the cross.' In some such formula of terrible import Pilate must have given his final order. The execution followed immediately upon the judgment. The time required for the necessary preparation would not be very long, and during this brief pause the soldiers, whose duty it was to see that the sentence was carried out, stripped Jesus of the scarlet war-cloak, now dyed with the yet deeper stains of blood, and clad him again in his own garments. When the cross had been prepared, they laid it, or possibly only one of the beams of it, upon his shoulders, and led him to the place of punishment. The nearness of the great feast, the myriads who were present in Jerusalem, made it desirable to seize the opportunity for striking terror into all Jewish malefactors. Two were therefore selected for execution at the same time with Jesus, two brigands and rebels of the lowest stamp. Their crosses were laid upon them, a maniple of soldiers in full armour were marshalled under the command of their centurion, and amid thousands of spectators, coldly inquisitive or furiously hostile, the procession started on its way.'

A Life of Christ, Dean Farrar, page 584

The trials were over. Over the past few hours, Christ had been roughly arrested, bound, dragged back into Jerusalem, and questioned for hours about crimes he had never committed. He had been mocked, scorned, derided and taunted by hundreds of coarse soldiers, beaten by the chief priests, Herod's men, and lastly Pilate's Praetorium Guard. He had been forsaken by his disciples and betrayed by his friend. He had been scourged, paraded in kingly regalia twice, blindfolded, punched and spat upon. He had suffered the indignities of nakedness and the pain of having his hair and beard ripped out by cruel ignorant soldiers. He was rejected by the chief priests and elders, the common people, Pilate the governor, Herod the King, and even at the last Peter himself. He had been shouted at, humiliated, abused, and finally even Barabbas a notorious robber, murderer and rebel had been preferred instead of him, as the incensed crowd had screamed for his blood to be spilt. The torture of food and sleep deprivation was taking its toll on his exhausted body, already fatigued by months of relentless campaigns, and more recently weakened by gruelling days in the Temple, and sleepless nights spent in prayer on the Mount of Olives.

But the agony was only just beginning...



Readings

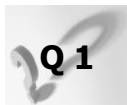
A Life of Jesus
Nazareth Revisited

Melva Purkis
Robert Roberts

chapter 14
chapter 108

**Matthew
27:32**

*'And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name:
him they compelled to bear his cross.'*



It was customary for the condemned man to carry the cross-piece of his cross from the site of trial to the site of execution, partly for convenience, and also to heighten the prisoner's shame. The tablet, with the inscription afterwards affixed to the cross was borne before him, heralding his crime to the pitying onlookers.

The cross-piece was traditionally 1.8 metres long, made of dense Cyprus wood, and usually weighed around 35-55 kilos. John records 'And he bearing his cross went forth' (John 19:17). He was living what he had earlier preached 'And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple' (Luke 14:27).

His own clothes restored to him, he bore the wood of the sacrifice, like Isaac had done so many hundreds of years earlier. The word 'bore' is the same word as in Gen 22:6 (Septuagint). There are a number of marked similarities with the sacrifice of Isaac and what Christ accomplished on this day.

Look up the New Testament references in the table below and find the connection and reference with Isaac in Genesis 22.

Genesis 22	Connection	New Testament Reference
		Matt 3:17
		John 19:17
		John 19:17,20
		1 Cor 15:4





Christ managed to carry the cross some 500-600 metres, probably to the gate of the city, before collapsing from physical and nervous exhaustion. The load, not intolerably heavy under normal circumstances, was too much for the Lord of life. The Psalms portray him as just skin and bones by the time he was crucified (Psalm 22:17). The progress was agonisingly slow, for the rough timber rasped his raw back, still bleeding from the half-way death of the Roman scourge, and each step was a mental and physical struggle.

It seems that Christ managed to get to the 'coming out' (Matt 27:32) of the city gate where they met a traveller coming in. It appears from the Gospel records that Simon was actually going in the opposite direction (ie into the city), for Mark says, 'Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country' (Mark 15:21). Weymouth: 'Coming from a field, a passer-by'. He was probably minding his own business, going in the other direction, from a 'country town' (Roth marg.) to celebrate the Passover in the Temple as thousands did (John 11:55). But today his life was going to be dramatically turned around, and he would become intimately involved in another and greater Passover! Simon was roughly seized ('laid hold upon' Luke 23:26) and 'compelled' to bear the cross, and immediately became a vivid illustration of 'taking up the cross and following after Christ' (Mark 8:34, 10:21). Matthew, Mark and Luke mention this random passer-by by name, and note his nationality (Matt 27:32, Mark 15:21, Luke 23:26) and one even mentions his children. It would seem obvious that this man and his family were well-known to the early ecclesia, and this moment where he was compelled to carry Christ's cross was also his moment of conversion to the Truth.

Use the following quotations to see how this event affected Simon and through him, others.

Mark 15:21

Rom 16:13

Acts 11:19-20

The Greek word 'compelled' is only used once **outside** of the story of Simon's conversion. Find where this is, and comment on its significance in the life of Simon.

Matt

**Matthew
27:33**

*'And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha,
that is to say, a place of a skull.'*

Golgotha, the place of the skull, is located outside the city walls of Jerusalem near the Damascus Gate on the northern side of the city. On top of the hill today is a Muslim cemetery.



Q 3

Before they reached Golgotha in Matt 27:33, Luke tells us what happened on the way. Christ stopped to talk to the women who were bewailing and lamenting him (Luke 23:27-31). Out of pure pity, these women wept for Christ, but their own plight was to be much worse. These poor sympathetic folk would suffer the calamities that would soon descend on Jerusalem in AD 70. God's impending judgment would sweep through the land, as punishment for the execution of His son, the very act these innocent women were bewailing. Christ's mind is in the prophets, for he alludes to Jeremiah and Hosea in his comments. The awful lamentation of Jeremiah had been over a city and nation that had rejected Yahweh's salvation, and the same had happened again! His prophecies were fulfilled in his own day but also had application to the future destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.



Look up the following connections between Jeremiah and Luke and note them down. Then mark them into the margin of Luke 23.

Jer 9:20-22 and Luke 23:28

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Jer 3:21-23 and Luke 23:30

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With his foreknowledge, Christ's mind now moves to Hosea's warnings to the nation, when they were about to suffer the ravages of the cruel Assyrians. 'For behold, the days are coming in the which they shall say 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.' Then shall they begin to say to the mountains 'Fall on us', and to the hills 'Cover us' (Luke 23:29-30). Christ had already warned the disciples of the same thing just two chapters earlier in the Olivet Prophecy. Find exactly where it is mentioned in the prophecy.

Luke 21:.....

The horrific climax of human suffering, innocent and guilty alike, in the tribulation of AD 70 weighed more heavily on the soul of Christ than his own misery and pain. The quotation here from Hosea in Luke 23:29-31 opens for us a vista of scriptural allusions that undoubtedly flooded the mind of Christ. Have a look at Hosea 9 and 10 and see how amazingly the prophecy in these two chapters is fulfilled in the Gospel records of Christ's last week. Look up the quotations in Hosea and see if you can find the parallel thought, idea, or quotation from the Gospels relating to Christ's crucifixion and the sufferings of AD 70.



Reference in Hosea	Connection to Christ's crucifixion / AD 70
9:5	
9:7	
9:9	
9:10	
9:12	
9:14	
9:15	
9:16	
9:17	
10:1	
10:3	
10:4	
10:5	
10:8	
10:13	
10:14	
10:15	



Quite plainly, Hosea 9 and 10 have Messianic intentions. How marvellous that Christ, despite his weakness and distress, was able to see this set of quotations applying to him, and make reference to two of them to illustrate this! (Hosea 9:14, 10:8) It is an amazing witness to the extent to which the word became part of himself, the 'word made flesh' (John 1:14). What an example for his disciples of where to turn for comfort and answers, when faced with personal hardship. Once the parallel with Hosea 9 and 10 is finished and the connections found, mark it into your Bible, either in Hosea 9-10 or Luke 23.

Matthew 27:35

'And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.'

This simple phrase 'and they crucified him' is the sum description of what was an awful death. All of the Gospel records are as brief as Matthew, as in reverence the writers draw a delicate veil over a horrific death. Why does the record not dwell more on the specific details of crucifixion? Our knowledge of crucifixion comes only from history books, not from the Word. Think about why we are not given more information in the New Testament. Is there a reason for this?

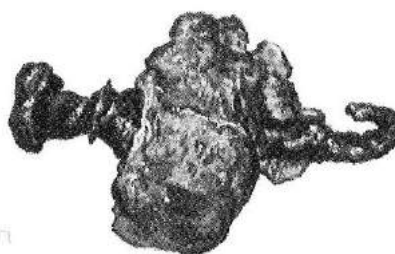
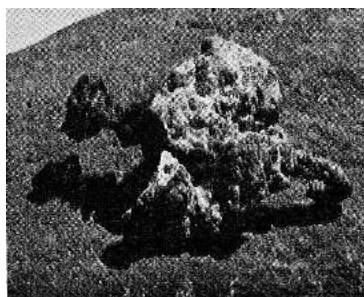
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Crucifixion probably first began among the Persians (Ezra 6:11), or the Phoenicians. Alexander the Great introduced the practice to Egypt and Carthage, and the Romans appear to have learnt it from the Carthaginians. Although the Romans cannot claim to have invented it, they can claim to have perfected it as a form of torture and capital punishment, and reduced it to an exact science which soon had a set of rules to follow in its execution!

A public crucifixion proved to be an excellent deterrent for continuing misbehaviour. Initially they only spiked the feet to the stake, and merely lashed the hands to the cross-piece with ropes, but they found this took too long for the prisoner to die, and was too expensive, for it required soldiers to guard the body for that time. Adopting the practice of nailing both hands and feet was immediately found to be superior, for the victim died in only 2-3 days, requiring less guarding of the body, and by then the crowds had lost interest anyway. Even so, men had been known to last for days on a cross, the longest crucifixion known lasting nine days, and all the while suffering from such cruel torture that the mind would be driven insane with the relentless pain. Death by crucifixion was in every sense of the word excruciating (Latin: 'excrucios' which means 'out of the cross').



This is the ankle bone of a 30 year old man found with the nail still stuck in it. The victim was crucified in the first century.



Throughout Scripture there seem to be continual types of Christ's crucifixion on the cross. Below are some examples of types that come out in scripture. The first few are provided for you. With the others try and find the connections, and see if you can think of any other types of crucifixion in scripture.

Discuss with your friends why there are so many hidden types of the Messianic Death.

Type of Crucifixion	Christ's Crucifixion
<p>Abraham and Isaac (Gen 22)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Father=Abraham ▪ Son=Isaac ▪ Two servants ▪ Mount Moriah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Father=God ▪ Son=Christ ▪ Two thieves ▪ Golgotha (on same mountain spur)
<p>Absalom (2 Sam 18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Father=David ▪ Son=Absalom ▪ Hangs in tree ▪ Joab talks of reward of silver shekels if the man had killed Absalom ▪ Darts thrust through Absalom's heart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Father=God ▪ Son=Christ, putting to death flesh ▪ Hangs on tree ▪ Judas received silver shekels for betraying Christ ▪ Spear thrust through Christ's side
<p>Moses (Exod 17:8-16)</p>	
<p>Samson (Judges 16)</p>	
<p>Eli (1 Sam 4)</p>	



But why such a cruel gruesome death? Why not a quicker method? God is not willing for any to perish (2 Peter 3:9). He takes no delight in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11, 18:23) or anyone for that matter (Ezek 18:32). His mercy rejoices over His judgment (James 2:13) and He who would have mercy and not sacrifice (Hosea 6:6) would not unnecessarily torture anyone, much less his sinless only begotten Son. But we also know that it 'pleased Him to put him to grief' (Isa 53:10). Herein lies the power of the 'cross of Christ' (1 Cor 1:17). To the Jews this would become a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to all that are called, both Jew and Greek, this act of crucifixion was both 'the power of God' and the 'wisdom of God' (1 Cor 1:23-24).



There are a number of reasons why Christ had to suffer this torturous death, even 'the death of the cross' (Phil 2:8). Try to think of as many reasons as you can for why Christ had to be not just killed, but *crucified*, as part of God's 'wisdom'. In the last section we considered why the *Jews* wanted him to be crucified, but why was this part of **God's** plan?

Think about:

- The fulfilment of Old Testament types of crucifixion.
- The idea of 'lifting' up.
- It was a dramatisation of the principle of putting to death the flesh.

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There were other reasons why crucifixion seems to have been chosen by God. Can you think of a few?

1. It was an awful death, to show the awfulness of sin, and what was due to it.
2. No-one, just no-one, can say that they have suffered more than Christ, mentally or physically. None of us can say 'Why does this have to happen to me?'

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How thankful ought we to be, that in the 'wisdom of God' (1 Cor 1:24) all these things should be set out for us, even as Paul puts it:

'But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world, unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.' (1 Cor 2:7-8)



The theme of crucifixion becomes dominant in the record after this day. Trace the following quotations and see the importance of the crucifixion and the cross in the Apostles' preaching work and the epistles.

Acts 2:23,36

Acts 4:10

1 Cor 1:13,23

1 Cor 2:2,8

Col 2:14

Phil 2:8

Heb 12:2

But if that is all there is to the cross we would be where the Churches are now. Look up the following quotations to see how the cross, and crucifixion, must become a motivating force in our life.

Rom 6:6

Gal 2:20

Gal 5:24

Gal 6:14

Matt 10:38

1 Cor 1:17

Eph 2:16

Col 1:20



The incident of the parting of his garments is recorded in more detail in John 19:23-24. The grim business of crucifixion had been completed, and the screams of the thieves had died to just muted groans. The quaternion of soldiers (John 19:23) settled down (like Joseph's brothers did after they had disposed so cruelly of him (Gen 37:25)) to callously divide the spoils: the clothes of the three crucified men. Their grisly job was done, and it was time to receive the perks of the job, the clothes these condemned men would never need again, whilst preventing rescue of any of the criminals by family or friends. This was another act of horror and shame for the victim as he hung helplessly in agony: seeing his last earthly possessions being argued over by greedy soldiers!

For each victim, there would usually be five items of clothing: head-dress, sandals, robe, girdle and shirt or 'chiton'. The 'chiton' of Christ was evidently especially good quality, so it was set aside till the four soldiers had gambled for the other pieces with the dice: 'Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be' (John 19:24). John describes the coat as 'without seam, woven from the top throughout' (John 19:23) probably woven by his mothers' own hands (1 Samuel 2:19). Josephus uses an almost identical description in portraying the linen garment of the High Priest (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus, 3:7:4). 'Chiton' is the normal word for a priestly robe, either blue or white (Exod 39:22, 27) and reaching to the ground. The High-Priest had previously rent his garment (Matt 26:65) to demonstrate his unworthiness of the position (Lev 10:6, 21:10). Christ, as the true High Priest, although powerless to change events due to being nailed to the cross, would have noted with encouragement that his priestly robe was not rent or divided! The spiritual mind of John the Evangelist looked beyond the mere outward form of events in this incident, and it is no surprise that he records this in greater depth than any of the other Gospel writers. It is clear that John saw in this event, a happening of far reaching significance for he underlines it with the quite superfluous phrase, 'These things therefore the soldiers did' (John 19:24).



Firstly the soldiers unwittingly fulfilled the Psalms concerning Messiah's experiences.

Psalm 22:

Use the following verses to comment on the spiritual significance of the seamless robe or 'chiton'.

Exod 39:23

Col 2:19

1 Cor 12:27

Heb 1:9

Psa 133:1-3

The garment then was the symbol of what Christ had promised the disciples earlier. Note down what Christ had promised in the following quotations.

John 10:16

John 17:11

John 17:20-21

By contrast, John describes the condition of those who do not recognise Christ. Note down what the following quotations say.

John 7:43

John 9:16

John 10:19

How insightful John is! Here in symbol is the unity possible by being part of Christ's body, and the obvious division amongst those estranged from him! How sad it is to think of the rending of his garment that has gone on since then, and of Christ looking down from his priestly throne (Zech 6:13) at the blithe indifference with which his brethren rend that which was intended to be without seam.

We too can sometimes be guilty of causing tears in the ecclesial fabric. Try and think of three practical ways in which you can mend divisions, in your work in the ecclesia.

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**Matthew
27:38**

'Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.'

In John's description of this fact, there is a remarkable redundancy of phrase: 'Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst' (John 19:18). There is lurking more in this simple statement than meets the eye. The crucifixion of Christ in the middle of two thieves makes a powerful contrast with an incident earlier in his ministry. The other Gospels paint this scene by describing the thieves, 'the one on his right hand, the other on his left' (Matt 27:38, Mark 15:27, Luke 23:33). John, however, who was actually there as an eyewitness (John 19:26), describes it differently, as above in John 19:18. Why would this be?



Read through Matt 20 and see if you can piece together an answer to the puzzle of why John describes the scene so differently to the three other Gospel writers, and write down what you think John learnt from this experience!



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**Matthew
27:39**

'And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads.'



Q 10

Because Golgotha was so close to the main road leading north as well as to both the city and the Temple (John 19:20), the crowd which stopped to stare at the spectacle was not inconsiderable (Luke 23:35, 48). Both Barabbas' men and certainly Christ were well-known figures and had been much in the public eye. Many of the rulers of the Sanhedrin being present (Matt 27:41) also added to the morbid fascination of the gruesome scene. The Romans invariably staged their crucifixions in prominent public positions, usually by a main highway to attract those 'passing by', adding to the victim's derision and shame. All this was prophesied of hundreds of years earlier. Find exactly where these Old Testament passages prophesied of this event.

Psa 22:

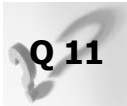
Psa 109:

Lam 2:

Jer 18:

**Matthew
27:40**

'And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.'



Q 11

The experiences of a desolated Jerusalem, given to derision by those that 'passed by' and 'wagged their heads' was a type of the reviling experienced by Christ. Where did those travellers who were merely 'passing by' get the information of Matt 27:40 from? Suggest where this information came from, and provide scriptural evidence and reasoning.



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**Matthew
27:42**

'He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.'



There is a real emphasis in this section that the taunting, coming from all quarters, was for Christ to save himself. It was a cruel jibe, based on the meaning of his own name (Matt 1:21). They were in fact referring to some words in Zechariah 9.

Christ had already fulfilled one requirement prophesied of the 'King' from Zechariah 9 in Matthew 21. What had he already fulfilled?

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Look again at Zechariah and make a suggestion as to what the chief priests were mockingly asking of Christ while he is on the cross.

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Think also about how the knowledge of the whole chapter in Zechariah 9 would have given Christ great comfort.

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**Matthew
27:43**

*'He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him:
for he said, I am the Son of God.'*



Q 13

Apart from John's indirect allusion to his presence at the crucifixion (John 19:26) we know of no other apostle that was present, barring Peter, of whom it was written that he was 'a witness of the sufferings of Christ' (1 Peter 5:1). With what self-reproach would he witness the agony of Christ's last hours, when he bore in mind the shameful experiences of the previous night. Quite possibly all the disciples were present, carefully maintaining their anonymity by mingling as obscurely as possible amongst the crowd. If they were present, perhaps reference to them is veiled because of their cowardly desertion as scattered sheep when the Shepherd had been smitten (Matt 26:31). Luke records 'And all his acquaintance (probably including the disciples) and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things' (Luke 23:49). Matthew records the same: 'And many women were there beholding afar off' (Matt 27:55). Christ's loneliness is one aspect dwelt upon more than once in the scriptures foretelling his rejection. Starting at Psalm 38:11, use the marginal references (or *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge* if you have one) to compile a list of quotations from the Old Testament that foretell Christ's loneliness.

Psa 38:11

Psa

Psa

Job

Psa

How did the loneliness described here affect Christ?

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What does the context of these passages say about how Christ dealt with this loneliness?

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What does the loneliness of Christ teach us for our times of loneliness?

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**Matthew
27:44**

'The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.'



It is incredible that even those who were crucified with him turned on their fellow victim. Such is the perversity of human nature. It always seeks to find a scapegoat for its own troubles. Rotherhams (marg.) has, 'began to cast'. The thieves contrived a barrage of insults! Now all classes of people had reviled Christ as he hung there.

There were four groups of people mentioned as reviling Christ. It had been witnessed that Christ would bear the reproaches of the sins of many (Isa 53:12) and so it would be. The four classes mentioned in the Gospels, however, are significant. They are the four classes of people that his gospel message would level. In each of the three references below, four groups are mentioned. Look up the references, find what the groups are and try to match them together.



Isaiah 40:		Luke 3:		New Testament References	
				Matt 27:39	
				Matt 27:41	
				Luke 23:36- 37	
				Matt 27:44	

Here on the cross, Christ levels all four groups as he

reveals (Isa 40:5)

by declaring (Isa 40:___)

Paul describes the rejection and reviling of Christ in Col 2:13-15 and Heb 12:2-4. Read these passages and think about how Christ overcame rejection. When you look at the cross of Christ, what do you see for your own life? How in your life can you overcome the same, by following his example? Use additional paper as needed.

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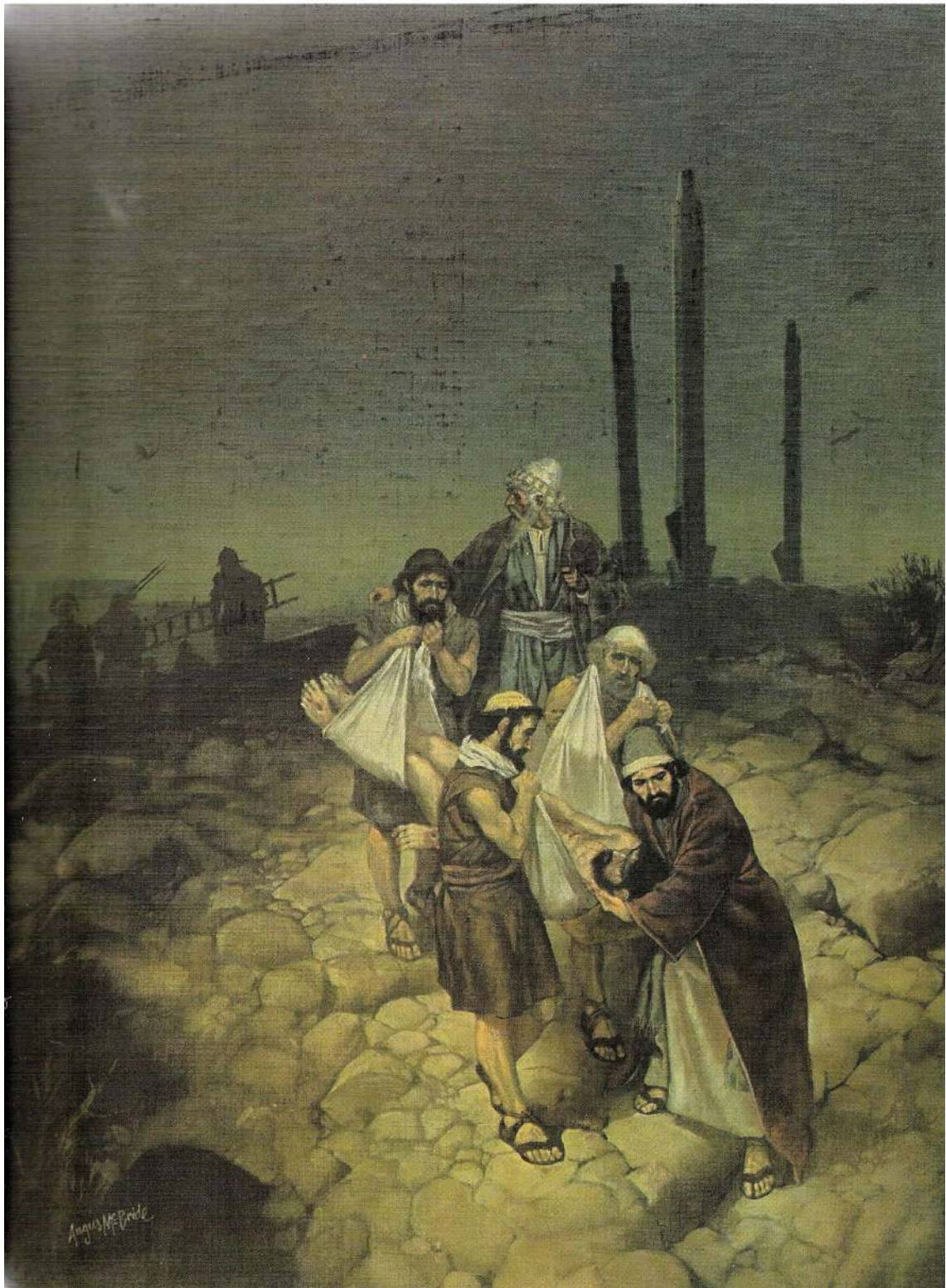
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DEATH AND BURIAL



Death and Burial

(Matt 27:45-61)

'The earth shuddered at the death of Jesus Christ. The rocks were rent; the buildings of Jerusalem trembled. In the temple that was no longer the House of God, a heavy veil that separated the Holy Place from the Sanctuary was rent from the top to the bottom. Graves were opened, and three days later, long dead saints were seen in the city.

The Centurion, in charge of the Roman soldiers gathered under each cross, had watched the closing scene. He had doubtless seen many such dreadful sights, but he had never seen a man die like this. And now as the earth trembled under him, and the shattered rocks hurtled down the hillsides, he turned his eyes to the darkened sky. 'Truly this was the Son of God.'

Afar off, women watched and wept.

A rich man came to Pilate begging the body of Jesus. Joseph of Arimathaea had not been summoned to the council: he was known to be a secret disciple: he was a good man and fatal nervousness had robbed them of their opportunity of serving the living Christ, but they have earned our love and gratitude for their tender concern for his body. Slowly the cross was lowered, the cruel nails were drawn out. The body was wrapped reverently in a white linen cloth and carried to the garden tomb: there it was more carefully prepared with myrrh and aloes. Gently they laid him to rest.'

A Life of Jesus, Melva Purkis, pages 346-347

Christ has been on the cross for three long, grueling hours, and now the sun is at its scorching zenith, and the brilliance of the midday heat is adding its own torture to that of the cross. The wounds are turning septic under the heat; wounds in his wrists and ankles, his back and pale brow... The initial intense agony of the nails has died to a throbbing ache. A dull, burning pain from the limbs that had long since succumbed to the convulsions of continuous cramps pulses through the back and arms. Each new movement to breathe caused fresh stabbing twinges that would shoot up and down each limb along exposed nerves. The torment was evident in the groans wrung from Christ's two companions.

Not content to inflict merely physical pain, the taunts of hundreds of onlookers rose up to meet him in a continual barrage of hate and mental abuse for three hours. Jeers of scorn: 'Where's your God now, eh?' 'Ha, he said he could build the Temple in three days! He won't be building much now!' The gloating triumph was written all over their sneering faces. 'Ha, Son of God eh? Well come down off the cross then...come on, just float down.' 'Hop down and we'll believe (ha, ha). No truly, we will! (ha, ha).' 'Your God was going to save you? Well he's not doing the best job is he?! (ha, ha). Maybe he's changed his mind! Doesn't want to save you after all!' (Matt 27:39-44)

For three hours Christ endured the blasphemy, the reproach and the shame. For three hours Christ answered them not so much as a syllable. The curses, the scorn, the mockery and blasphemy. The cruel taunts and foul language. Until finally God had had enough. He plunged the world into thick darkness.



Readings

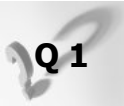
A Life of Jesus
Nazareth Revisited

Melva Purkis
Robert Roberts

chapter 14
chapter 108

**Matthew
27:45**

'Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.'



It was an unnatural darkness. An eerie silence descended on the scene. In the middle of the day, the Middle Eastern sun had been extinguished (Luke 23:45). It was not just overcast. Not just murky or merely gloomy: it was pitch black! The jeering taunts subsided into an uneasy silence. The air suddenly became thick, muggy and claustrophobic. The Roman soldiers turned to light flaming torches, but the air was too heavy for them to even ignite! God wanted darkness. He was deeply upset, and in His anguish He cast an impenetrable veil over the miseries and agony of His son. The atmosphere suddenly became oppressive. Clammy sweat formed on the back of the necks of the chief priests. This was no unexpected eclipse that would soon pass! Something very, very spooky was happening. The darkness felt to be just pressing in and in, on top of all the onlookers who were first surprised, then apprehensive, and finally afraid. This was a darkness which could be felt (Exod 10:21).

There is a remarkable parallel occurring here between the experience of Israel in Egypt with the plague, and what is happening here. Using Exodus 10, and the Gospel records, fill in the gaps of the parallel below.

9 th Plague	Crucifixion
	When Christ was crucified, his arms were nailed in an outstretched position towards heaven (Matt 27:35).
It was the ninth plague which occurred just before the Passover (Exod 10:21-28).	There was darkness until the 'ninth hour' (Matt 27:45) when the Passover lamb was slain (Exod 12:6).
	'Darkness over all the land' (Matt 27:45).
	It lasted for three hours (Matt 27:45).
	The rulers' hearts were hardened (John 12:40).
	Now the darkness engulfed all Israel and the only light was hanging on the cross (John 8:12).
Moses' face was seen no more (Exod 10:29).	When the darkness lifted, Christ's face was lifeless (Matt 27:50).
The darkness was followed by the death of the Egyptian firstborn (Exod 11:5) after which natural Israel was delivered from slavery in Egypt.	



The type of the deliverance of God's natural son from Egypt, by requiring the death of the firstborn, cannot be missed. God's ways are inscrutable, and His plan so complete and perfect! History was being repeated, only now it was far more important. Even the three hours of darkness only prefigured the 'horror of great darkness' (Gen 15:12) that was soon to descend oppressively upon God's son. Christ was placed in the tomb, or the heart of the earth (Matt 12:40), from which place he would not rise for three days, as decreed in type (Exod 10:23).



The phenomenon of the darkness is recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke with the utmost simplicity and without a word of explanation as to why it occurred or why it occurred when it did. The obvious answer to this intriguing inquiry is that the events needed no explanation. Explanation had already been given in the Old Testament. There are three prophecies of this time, which fill in the gaps for us of these three hours of darkness.

Amos 8 would hardly appear Messianic on the surface, but the thoughts encompassed within this section are highly reminiscent of the crucifixion.

Use the references provided to establish the parallels.

Amos 8:8

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Amos 8:9

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Amos 8:10

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Amos 8:11

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The earthquake and the darkness in Amos 8 were a dramatic foreshadowing of Yahweh's displeasure at the calculated villainy and murder that was this day enacted upon Golgotha's Hill.



God's evident displeasure and wrath is even more clearly seen in Psalm 18, which is clearly Messianic, for Psalm 18:2 is quoted of Christ in Hebrews 2:13.

Psa 18:3-5 describes

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Psa 18:6 describes

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Psa 18:7-11 describes

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While Psalm 18 describes why the darkness came, Isaiah 59 describes the attitude of the people which led to the darkness coming down upon them.

Isa 59:1-8 describes

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Isa 59:9-10 describes

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Isa 59:11-21 describes

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The darkness that covered the land, like a blanket for three hours, was not an eclipse! This was Passover time, when the full moon rendered an eclipse impossible. Besides, an eclipse cannot continue for three hours anyway. This was undoubtedly God's wrath and pain being expressed by plunging the world into pitch darkness.

**Matthew
27:46**

'And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?'



It was 'about the ninth hour.' The end drew near, after three hours of darkness, quietness, and astonishment had no doubt settled on the crowd gathered around the crosses on Golgotha's Hill. Something miraculous was taking place and everyone knew it (Luke 23:48). The ninth hour was a highly significant time in the life of a Jew.

Look up the following references and note down what the ninth hour is associated with.

Acts 3:1

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Acts 10:3,30

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Luke 1:10

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Exod 30:8 (see marg.)

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Exod 12:6 (see marg.)

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Look up Daniel's prayer in Dan 9:21, and see when it was that he was praying and what the angel's answer was (v22-27).

Time of prayer:

Answer to prayer:

We know that Christ knew all things (John 18:4) and now knowing that the right hour had come (John 13:1) he pushed himself up on that nail and broke the silence with a hoarse rasping cry! Now was the time decreed in God's will for him to voluntarily lay down his life (John 10:17-18).

**Matthew
27:51**

*'And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom;
and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.'*

When we read of the horror and injustice of the crucifixion, we recoil in shame that mankind could delight in such cruelty, and then as we ponder that this was done to God's only Son, we smolder in anger at the wickedness of man. How much more did God have cause to be wrathful? (Psa 18:7) The word 'behold' is a term of surprise, for the ninth hour was the time of prayer (Luke 1:10; Acts 3:1, 10:3,30) and when the incense was offered on the altar of incense (Luke 1:10). How surprised must those priests have been, when the veil that normally shrouded from their view the block of stone in the Most Holy Place was torn in two!

Luke mentions that the veil was rent down the middle (Luke 23:45) and Matthew and Mark both mention that it was rent 'from top to bottom' (Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38) into two pieces, or 'twain'. If this information was not given by direct inspiration, it could have come from eyewitnesses, for we are told that 'a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith' (Acts 6:7). The confirmation by these priestly disciples would convince them all, that the rending from 'top to bottom' could only be an act of God. Humans could not rend such thick material, and even if they could, it would have been from the ground up!

According to Edersheim's rabbinic sources the veil was 40 cubits by 20 cubits (60ft x 30ft) and a handbreadth thick (70mm). This means, when interpreted, that in reality, once hung, it was only 20 cubits by 20 cubits, but hung double, a handbreadth apart over a rail so that the cherubim pattern woven into both sides showed true. Edersheim says it was made from 24 threads woven together, and was so large and heavy that when washed before hanging it needed 300 priests to manipulate it into position. According to the apocryphal Gospel to the Hebrews, the earthquake fractured the lintel of the Temple door and if this is reliable then it agrees entirely with Matthew's account that the veil was rent from top to bottom.

In addition, the Gamasa mentions at a Passover, around forty years before the Temple was destroyed in AD70, the great gates of the Temple were mysteriously flung open at midnight, but given the darkness at midday until 3pm, this could be a reference to the same incident.





The rending of the veil was highly significant. Use the quotations provided to think of what was being said by God in His rending of the Temple veil. Gal 3:23-24; John 19:23-24; Heb 10:19-20.

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What do the following quotations imply about the work of Christ?

Gen 3:24 and Rev 2:7

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Try and find the link between Mark 1:10 and Mark 15:38 and explain in the light of Isaiah 64:1-5 what is meant or symbolised by this linkage.

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In the story of Christ's death, there is an earthquake (Matt 27:51), a loud voice (Matt 27:50) saying 'It is finished' (John 19:30) and a rending of the veil into different parts (Matt 27:51). All these have their counterpart in Revelation 16:17-21. Find the parallels and comment on them.

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**Matthew
27:54**

'Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly saying, Truly this was the Son of God.'



Q 7

The death of Christ polarised everyone into two groups: either a derider or a supporter of Christ. Luke highlights these contrasts particularly well in his Gospel.

Read through Luke 23 and find a few contrasts of similar persons or people who show these two groups quite clearly.

Supporter	Derider
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**Matthew
27:55**

'And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him.'



Q 8

No doubt, just before the darkness descended at the sixth hour, the group of women, including Christ's mother had drawn close enough for Christ to talk to them (John 19:25-27). Now that the darkness had come, they, and the rough soldiers, had quietly withdrawn a distance from the cross. The type with Genesis is wonderful here.

Using Gen 2:21-23, John 19:34 and the fact that Matthew, Mark and Luke mention the women (Matt 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 23:49,55) draw out the parallel!

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Of all the intriguing and intensely significant happenings at Golgotha, nothing seems to have attracted John's attention more than the outpouring of 'blood and water' onto Judaea's soil (John 19:34). Concerning this, he felt compelled to give his personal guarantee of truth: 'and he that saw it bare record, and his record is true' (John 19:35). On many occasions already, John's spiritual mind and perspective has furnished us with the spiritual significance of an otherwise insignificant detail. Here, his use of two slightly different words for 'true' in John 19:35 draws our attention to the circumstances. Any doubt we may have had on this, is settled by John's obvious reference to these two things again in his first epistle: 'This is he that came by water and blood' (I John 5:6). Clearly this reference in the Epistle looks back to the Gospel record for its interpretation. It has been said that Christ died of a broken heart, even as the scripture saith, 'Reproach hath broken my heart' (Psa 69:20). It was certainly true in a figurative sense but perhaps also literally. The strain and pressure of physical exhaustion and mental and emotional fatigue may have ruptured the wall of the heart. This would fit with the discharge of blood and water; blood obviously from a distended then ruptured heart, and water which would adequately describe the fluid which surrounds the heart. The mention of blood first does not indicate which *came out* first, but the *prominence* of the blood over the water which would correlate with a ruptured right atrium or ventricle. Whatever the medical explanation, John was more interested in the spiritual significance rather than physiological facts.



What is the importance of the blood and water, for it to be so emphasized by John in his writings, and yet be without explanation? Use the following quotations to comment on the significance of the blood and water.

1. Blood:

Matt 16:17

John 1:13

Water:

John 5:14,24

John 7:37-39

2. Blood, water and hyssop used for:

Lev 14:6-7

Heb 9:18-20

John 19:29,34

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3. Water:

John 3:5

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Blood:

John 6:53-54

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1 John 5:6

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**Matthew
27:59**

'And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.'

Q 10



Joseph of Arimathaea did not come alone. John's record says, 'there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night.' Here was another member of the Sanhedrin. In Greek his name means 'victorious among his people' and in Hebrew it apparently means 'innocent of blood'. The life story of Nicodemus is divided into three stages, which John alone picks up.

Use a Concordance to find the three places and comment on the development from his conception to his birth as a disciple.

Conception (John :)

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Gestation (John :)

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Birth (John :)

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Here were these two extremely wealthy and powerful men, honourable counsellors, humbling themselves at the foot of the cross, gladly giving homage to a dead man whom they had struggled to believe while he was still alive! Both men had found their faith while others had lost theirs in grief and despair.



The theme for our Conference together, '**Thy will Be Done**', is taken from the Gospel of Matthew.

'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, **thy will be done**' (Matt 26:42).

This agonising sob, wrung from the lips of the Messiah in the moment of his most gruelling trial, was the motto of his whole life. It was the reason he was born, the sole aspiration of his life, the silent summary of his mission. He came to accomplish many things: preach the gospel, raise the dead, heal the sick, save the sinners, and redeem the nation. But all of these are swallowed up in Paul's quotation of Psalm 40 where he says,

'Lo, I come to do thy will O God.' (Heb 10:9)

Everything he did was subservient to his Father's will. It was the measuring stick of every decision, the map at every crossroads, the mentor of every thought. Amazingly, it was such a powerful force that it constantly overcame his own will.

- John 4:34 'My meat is to do the **will** of him that sent me.'
- John 5:30 'I seek not mine own will, but the **will** of the Father which hath sent me.'
- John 6:38 'For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own **will**, but the will of him that sent me.'

Christ was not the first to be intimately aware of God's will. Moses was acutely aware of 'the good **will** of him that dwelt in the bush' (Deut 33:16), and David cried in his distress, 'Teach my to do thy **will**, for thou art my God' (Psa 143:10). Neither of these two great men accomplished what Christ did, for by his submission to this **will**, we are 'sanctified...once and for all' (Heb 10:10).

The will of God, as distinct from His purpose, is clearly defined by Christ himself.

- Matt 18:14 'It is not the **will** of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.'
- John 6:39 'And this is the Father's **will** which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing.'

And if this 'will of God' was not sufficiently clear, Peter expresses it this way,

- 2 Pet 3:9
'The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'

God's will, thus clearly stated, is to save people.

If God's will is done, then His purpose will be able to be fulfilled, for the earth cannot overflow with His glory, as reflected in human manifestation, if no humans have been saved. It is God's will to save people, that He might accomplish His purpose. It is for this reason that we have been adopted as children, for this is the 'good pleasure of His **will**' (Eph 1:5).

This is the **will** that Christ bowed beneath. The will of God that was to save people required his sacrificial obedience that they might be saved in him. He did God's will by saving people, even though to do this he would have to die for them.

To 'do the will of God' is the call of every disciple of Christ. We also must do everything we can to save others for the glory of God's name. This is **doing His will**. The apostles understood this to be the key to the disciple's life, for all of the New Testament writers mention '**doing the will of God**': Paul (Heb 13:21), Peter (I Pet 2:15), John (I John 2:7) and James (James 4:15).

Christ's life, and especially his last day as a mortal being demonstrates the power of not just **letting** God's will be done, but actively **doing** God's will.

This needs to be our greatest goal, our hearts desire, and the aim of our whole life.

'Not every one that saith unto me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'

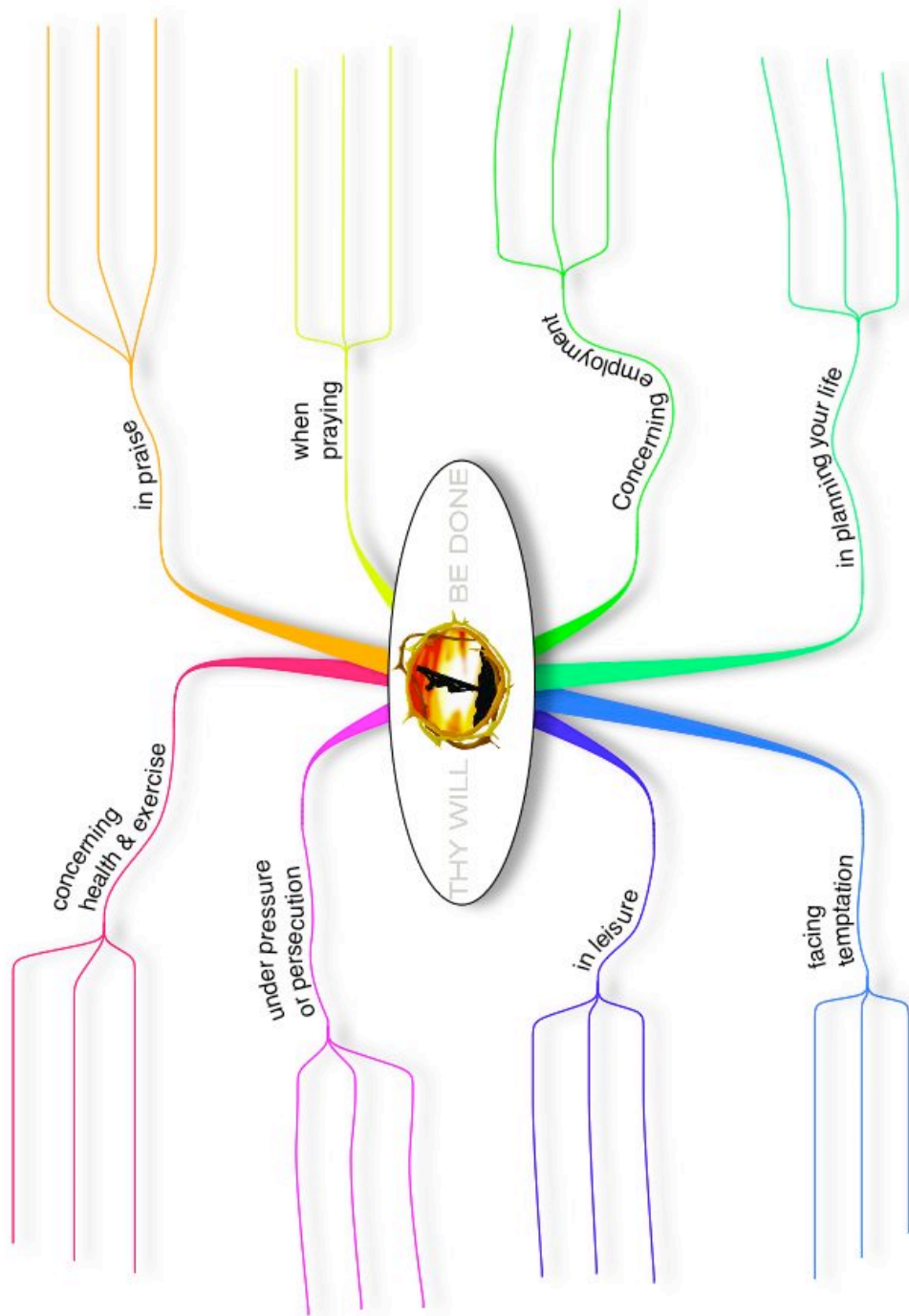
(Matt 7:21)

As a final activity, meditate upon the phrase 'Thy Will Be Done', and fill in the mind-map on the following page, where this expression becomes the central theme. On the mind-map branches are some aspects of our life today. See whether you can think of two or three ways in which you can put the spirit of this quotation into these areas of your life. How can you personally put this divine principle into practice?

For example, when praying, do you ask only for your own desires, and for your personal salvation, or do you pray for the Kingdom so that *God* is glorified throughout all the earth? When choosing a job, do you think of what the prospects and money will be like, or whether it will be compatible with a life dedicated to work in the truth for God? Feel free to add extra branches if necessary.

Then, God Willing, our life will be motivated by the same principle as the man Christ Jesus whom we have come to know, and who is even now the Lord of Life seated in heaven at our Father's right hand.

We hope you've enjoyed this Workbook, and we look forward to all gathering together at Conference, God Willing, to share our enthusiasm and learn more about 'The Day Christ Died.'



*' At the moment when Christ died,
nothing could have seemed more abjectly weak,
more pitifully hopeless, more absolutely doomed to scorn,
and extinction, and despair,
than the ecclesia which he had founded.
It numbered but a handful of weak followers,
of whom the boldest had denied his Lord,
and the most devoted had forsaken him and fled.
They were poor, they were ignorant, they were helpless.
They could not claim a single Synagogue.
If they spoke their own language,
it betrayed them by its mongrel dialect;
if they spoke the current Greek, it was despised as a miserable patois.
So feeble were they and insignificant,
that it would have looked like foolish partiality
to prophesy for them the limited existence of a Galilean sect.*

*How was it that these dull and ignorant men, with their cross of wood,
triumphed over the deadly fascinations of sensual mythologies,
conquered kings and their armies, and overcame the world?
What was it that thus caused strength
to be made perfect out of abject weakness?*

*There is one, and one only possible answer-the resurrection from the dead.
All this vast revolution was due to the Power of Christ's Resurrection.*

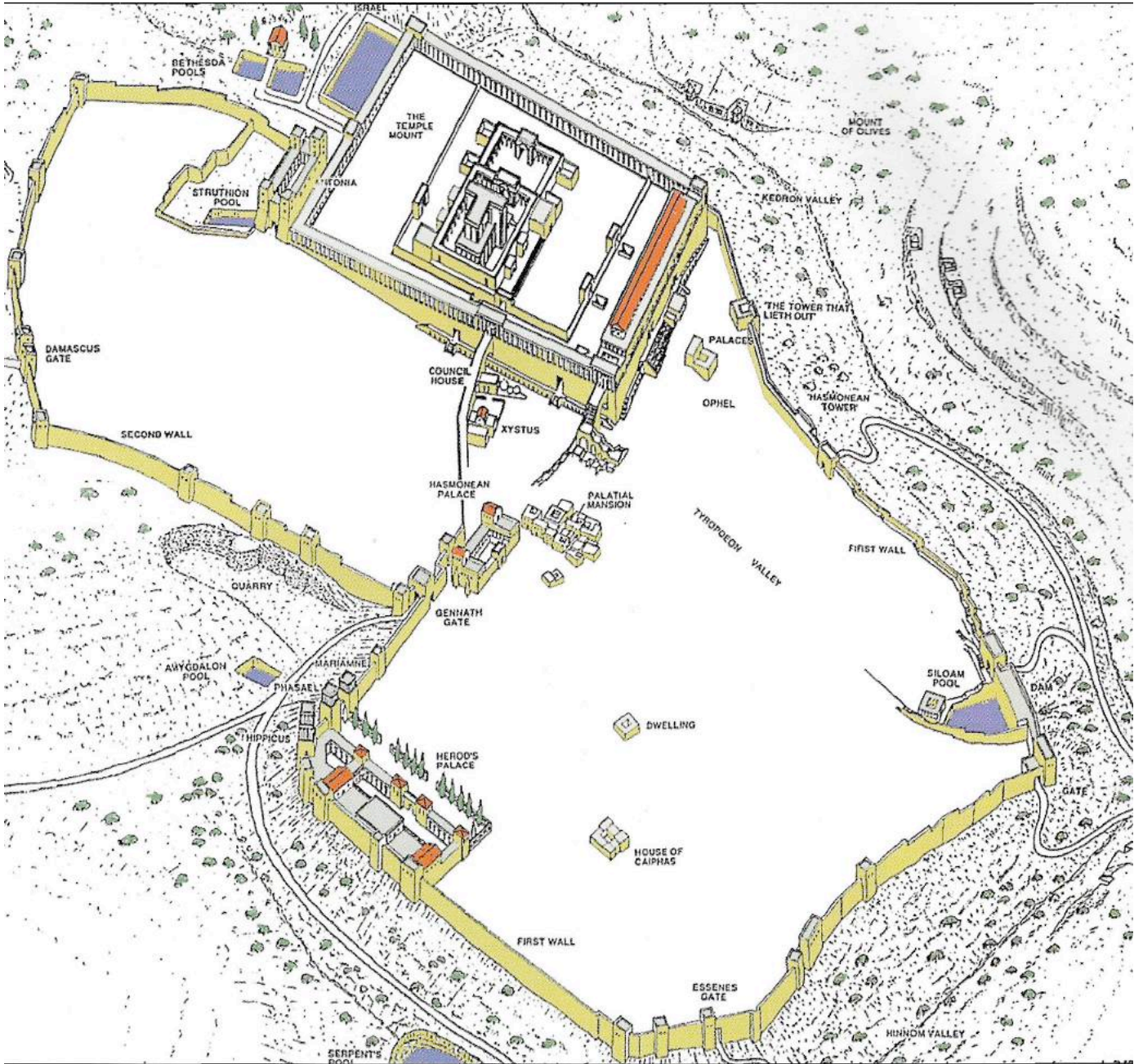


**BC YOUTH CONFERENCE
2014**

Appendix 1

BACKGROUND





The Jewish World

As we close the book of Malachi and open the book of Matthew we are immediately confronted with a different era of Jewish history. Suddenly we come across Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, Herodians, Publicans, Priests, and others. We take many of these people for granted as we read through the New Testament record, but who really were they? Where did they originate from and what did they believe? What part did they play in the mortal life of our Lord?

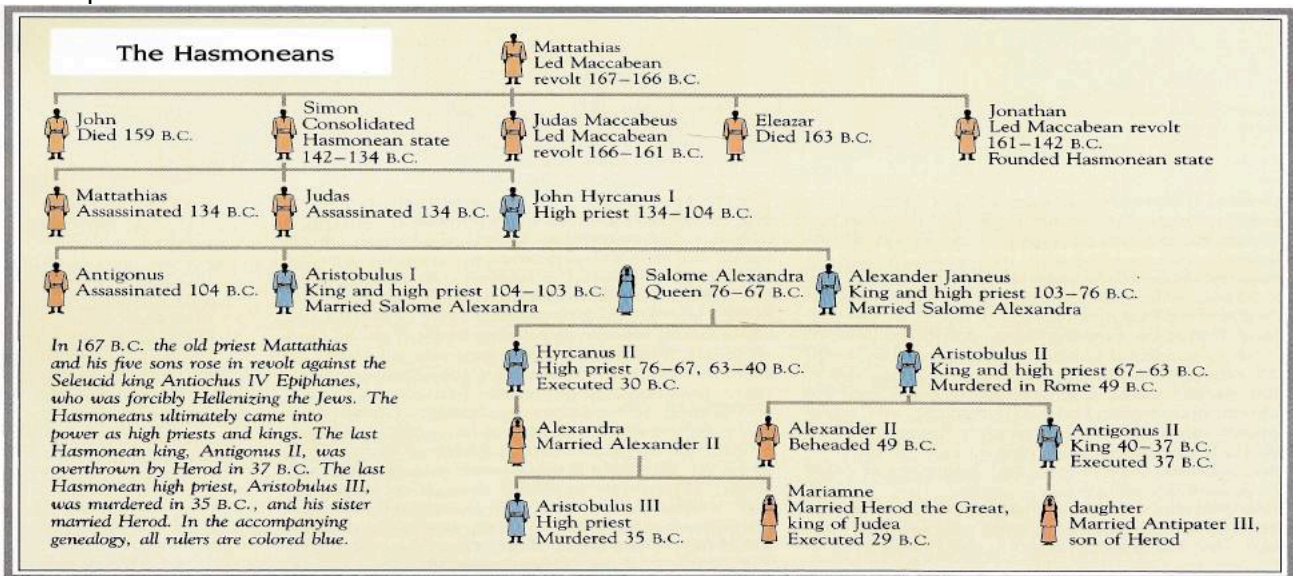
The Period between the Old and New Testaments

The Jewish world that Jesus lived in was one of division and, as with all divided societies, one of extremes. The turbulent period between the Old and New Testament produced the groups we are so familiar with in the Gospels. To understand where they came from, we need a brief history of the centuries leading up to Christ's first advent. In 332 BC Alexander the Great marched through Palestine, and gained control over all of Asia Minor. After his death in his 33rd year, in 323 BC, his empire was divided between his generals, Ptolemy, Seleucus, Cassander, and Lysimachus. This was the beginning of the Hellenistic Age (culture of Hellenism, or Greece). Israel came under the control of one of these generals, Ptolemy, in 301 BC. The Jews enjoyed comparative freedom of worship, yet had to deal with an influx of Greek settlers who mingled with the Jews. In 198 BC the Seleucid rulers in Syria took over control of Israel from Ptolemy under Antiochus III.

This ruler's son, Antiochus IV, who named himself *Epiphanes*, which has the scandalous meaning of 'God made manifest', created havoc in Israel. Jerusalem was transformed into a Greek city, with Greek administration, and Greek Law. To make matters worse, when Antiochus attempted to take some of the Temple wealth for himself, and the city protested, he massacred 40,000 of its inhabitants and sold many into slavery. The Torah was banned, and the Temple splattered in the blood of pigs. Sabbath observance, circumcision, and refusal to eat pork became matters for the death penalty.

Matters came to a head when in 167 BC Mattathias, an elderly priest, was asked to sacrifice on a pagan altar. He refused, killed a Judean who had come forward to sacrifice, overthrew the altar and fled into the wilderness with his sons. He was joined by many Israelites who set about purging the land from pagan worship. Mattathias was succeeded by his sons, Judas Maccabeus, Jonathan and Simon. Judas Maccabeus recaptured the Temple in 164 BC, and Simon, in 142 BC, gained independence for the Jewish people. The people of Jerusalem unanimously appointed him the new High-Priest, and Ruler of the Jews. Thus the Maccabean family became the 'Hasmonean' Dynasty, after the priest Mattathias' tribal surname.

At the time of the Maccabean purges earlier on, a party known as the *Hasidim* ('the pious ones'), who were teachers of the Law, gave their full support to the Maccabeans in a desire to restore the Torah to use. However the Hasmonean claim to High-Priesthood brought division to the party. The Hasidim split into two groups over this issue. Those who advocated a priesthood purely of the line of Zadok became known as *the Essenes*. Those who were mainly non-priestly and remained loyal to the early Hasmoneans became known as *the Pharisees*. Despite their differences, both groups placed great emphasis on the interpretation of the Torah and the Law. And in opposition to these two groups was the priestly nobility who derived their name from 'Zadok', and asserted their claim to the priesthood. These became known as *the Sadducees*.



The Jewish Leaders



iii

'But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi' (*Matt 23:5-7*)

The Pharisees

Origin and Membership

The Pharisees really emerged as a distinct group during the reign of John Hyrcanus, one of the Hasmonean or Maccabean rulers (135-104 BC). During the reign of Queen Alexandra, one of the later reigning Hasmoneans (76-67 BC), all power was relegated to them, and they gained religious control over the people. The word *Pharisee* means 'separatist' and is indicative of how others saw them, probably either in an attitude of admiration or scorn. Amongst themselves they went by the name *Haverim*, which means 'companions'. Though many priests were Pharisees, most of the members of the group were from the ranks of the scribes, and were thus closely associated with the Torah. In the time of Christ there were about 6,000 members.

Within the world of the Pharisees there were two main interpreters of Scripture, the more conservative Shammai and the liberal Hillel. Though there were about 300 points of disagreement between the two teachers, it was due to the diversity of their personality that the division occurred.

Function

Though they saw themselves as separate, they did not withdraw from society. To the contrary they mingled with the people as teachers of the law and religious leaders. Alongside the written law of the Torah, the Pharisees took great delight in developing the 'oral law', which was attributed to Moses himself and was made up of the traditions of the elders. In doing this they devalued the power of the Law. In the words of Christ: 'Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye' (Mark 7:13). Because the Pharisees had a superior working knowledge of the Law, it was often they who answered questions regarding worship and piety and it was normally the Pharisees that influenced the decisions of public affairs. This superior knowledge grew into pride and disdain for those who were not as pious as themselves. Whilst the Pharisees honoured the Temple, it was the Synagogue that to them was a vital place for instruction and prayer. The Synagogue was the social meeting place, used as a school and for worship. The Pharisees would meet there to discuss with each other and talk with the people on matters of practical living.

BE DONE

Belief

The Pharisees firmly believed in a resurrection of the dead, followed by another world to come. They also believed that the soul of righteous people passed into another body and the wicked would be punished eternally. The existence of angels was recognized, as well as divine providence.

It is this group of people that come under the Lord's scathing rebuke in Matthew 23, 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites'. Outwardly pious, they were inwardly corrupt, and their chief defining characteristic was the ugly sin of HYPOCRISY.

Whilst the Sadducees did not really outlive the events of AD 70, the Pharisees would become the characteristic group of later Judaism.

The Sadducees

Origin and Membership

During the time of John Hyrcanus (one of the earlier Hasmonean rulers), the Sadducees rose to power as official counsellors and dominated the spheres of both religion and politics over the Pharisees. Power was centered in Jerusalem and more particularly the Sanhedrin, or court of law. Traditionally, the Sadducees tried to trace their origin back to a priest called Zadok, though many believe the name may have originated from the Hebrew word *sedeq*, which means 'righteousness'.

Whilst the Pharisees were ordinary citizens, the Sadducees were most certainly not. Their number was constituted of the priestly upper class, and the non-priestly aristocracy. The group was also much smaller than the Pharisees, their number being in the hundreds rather than thousands.

Function

The Sadducees operated as religious and political advisors in their earlier days. In the time of Christ, they had the upper hand in the Sanhedrin, and thus a lot of power in legal affairs. The High-Priestly family of Annas and Caiaphas were members of this prestigious group. The Sanhedrin, and thus many Sadducees, had responsibility for all matters that could not be solved at local level, as well as that which was not under the Roman control.

Belief

The Sadducees adhered strictly to the Torah only, and had nothing to do with the Pharisees' 'oral tradition'. For them, the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, was the most important part of scripture. Thus, in legal matters, they were often stricter than the Pharisees, following every last jot and tittle of the law. They didn't believe in a resurrection or after life as demonstrated in the crafty question of the woman with seven husbands (Matt 22:23; Mk 12:18; Luke 20:27). They found no evidence for a resurrection in the Pentateuch, and so dismissed it as a theory. For them, reward was in the here and now, on earth. They believed in a mortal soul that perished with the death of a person. Moreover, they believed in human liberty and freedom to make one's own decisions, as opposed to divine providence or intervention in man's affairs. Because reward was in this life, they accumulated great wealth from the Temple service. Their chief defining characteristic was the worldly vice of MATERIALISM. Melva Purkis has this to say:

'They were worldly men with political interests rather than godly men with religious convictions.'^{iv}

During their existence they showed a friendship with other cultures. They were friends with the Romans, and tried to introduce elements of Greek culture into Jewish society. However, as the life of a Jew under Roman rule became poorer and more fraught with hardship, the rich comfortable Sadducee became a less popular figure. Due to this and to their friendship with the Gentiles, they began to lose seats in the Sanhedrin, and after AD 70, disappeared completely.

The Scribes

Origin and Membership

The original scribe was one whose sole duty was to make copies of the Law. However, with the return of the Jewish remnant from Babylon with Ezra, his role changed somewhat. Ezra organised the group, the *sopherim*, into a special group of people who not only copied the Law, but also commented on it. Thus, the scribe emerged from his quiet chamber into the public arena. During the Greek period, when the priests began to be involved in pagan customs, the scribes stepped forward as strict upholders of the Law. The titles we meet in the New Testament 'Rabbi', 'Lawyer' and 'doctor of the Law' belong to this class. Most scribes were also Pharisees, though some belonged to the Sadducean order. In the dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees in Acts 23:9, we read of the 'scribes that were of the Pharisees part', which demonstrates that in the main, they owe their influence to the Pharisees. They are also linked together in the woes of Matthew 23, 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.'

Function

The scribes had three main functions. Firstly, they were propounders of the Law, its theory and practice. The study of the Law became complicated and involved, and the imparting of its message to the general masses was highly flavoured with oral tradition. Secondly, they were teachers of the people. They taught in schools and educated the general population. Lastly they were judges in legal matters. They were often responsible for passing sentence in court due to their superior knowledge of legal matters.

During the time of Christ, the Hebrew language was being replaced by the Aramaic dialect, and many people were forced to accept the scribes' interpretation of the Law as true, being unable to understand the original language themselves. When Christ walked among them, his teaching was noticeably clearer to understand than that of the scribes.

'He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.' (Matt 7:29)

The Scribes continued into Jewish history, until about the first Millenium AD.

The Essenes

Origin and Membership

We don't read much of the Essenes in the New Testament, due to the fact that they didn't live and walk in communal society. They were an ascetic society who emerged as a group in the time of the Maccabees. In 152 BC Jonathan the Hasmonean appointed himself as High Priest. The founder of the Essenes, who was later revered as 'the Teacher of Righteousness' denounced the Temple as a defiled place, and its priests as corrupted. He moved out of Jewish society and established his own order, the Essenes. The group were really a higher, stricter form of Phariseeism. For instance, they kept the Sabbath more thoroughly, and washed themselves before every meal.

The sect was quite small, never containing more than 4000 members. There were four grades of membership, and only after three years of probation was a person able to become a full member. Members were not allowed to marry or have children, so the only way of ensuring the survival of the group was by choosing children from other families and bringing them up in the philosophies and practices of the group.

Function

The Essenes led a very simple, moderate lifestyle, supporting themselves by agricultural means and various crafts. Money, food and clothing were held in common between the members. Members rejected all form of pleasure as sinful, regarding self-denial as the greatest virtue. They dressed in white, and underwent a daily round of purifications. Outward cleanliness had to be matched by inner purity. The sincerity of the believer was of the utmost importance.

Belief

The Essenes, like the Pharisees, believed in divine providence and the immortality of the soul. They did not, however, believe in the resurrection. The world, for them, was divided into two groups, the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness. They saw themselves as 'soldiers of God' preparing spiritually and physically for the day of judgment. In their belief, war would rage between these two camps until Judgment Day arrived, which included three Messianic figures: a Prophet, a King and a Priest. After war between the two, evil would be abolished, and the Sons of Light would live in peace and happiness. There were also elements of pagan religion in their worship such as praying towards the sun.

Like the Sadducees, they disappeared from history after AD 70. Christ seems to be alluding to them in Matt 19: 11-12, and Paul in Col 2:18,23.

The Herodians

Origin

Aside from the New Testament references, and some comments by Josephus, not a lot is known of the Herodians. As the name suggests, they were probably formed in the time of Herod the Great, in support of his right to govern Israel.

Function

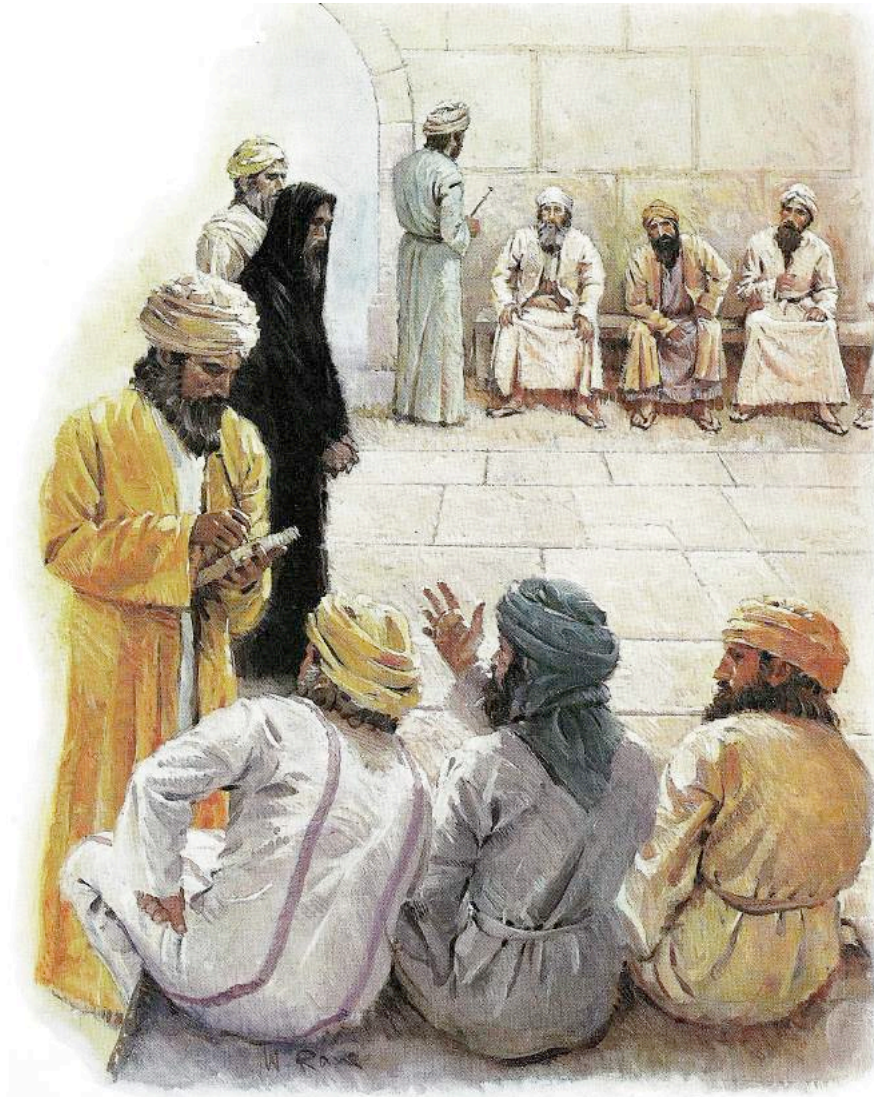
'The Herodians were obviously something more than a political party and something less than a religious sect^v. They were probably wealthy members of society who had some political influence with the Herodian rulers.

Belief

It is likely that the Herodians saw the Herods as a protection against absolute Roman rule in Israel. Unlike the Pharisees who rejected all foreign control in Israel, the Herodians seem to be only partly nationalistic. Some may have even regarded the Herodian dynasty as that of the promised Messiah. They had no qualms with paying tribute to either Herod or Caesar. In Matt 22:16, they and the Pharisees come to Christ with the crafty question, 'Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar, or not?' With diametrically opposing views, they sought to 'entangle him in his talk' and see which group he would justify.

Yet despite their differences, Christ was the common enemy. In the end they combined forces, and worked together to bring about his destruction. 'And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him' (Mark 3:6).

The Sanhedrin

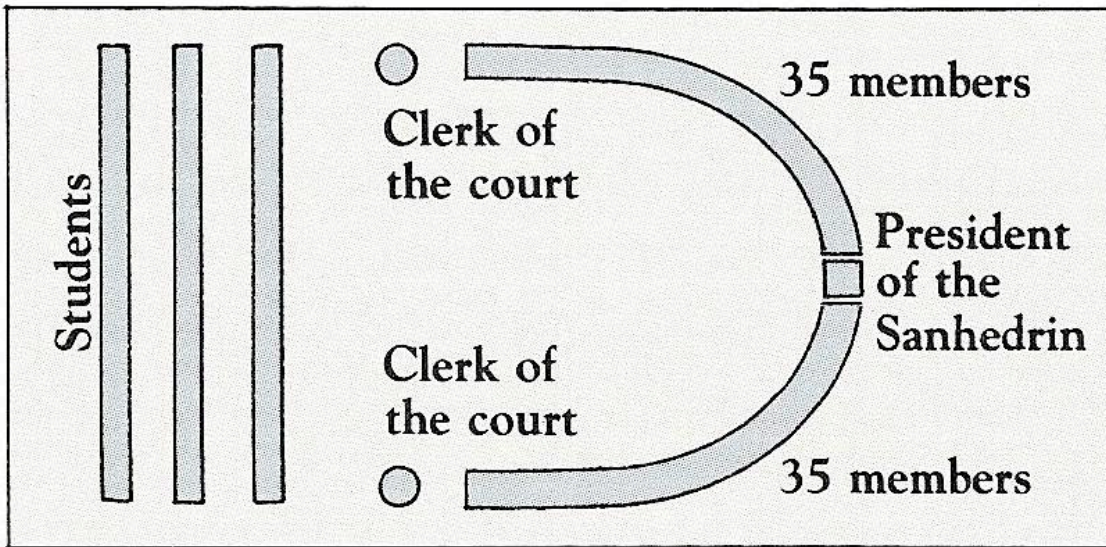


vi

Origin and Membership

This was the Supreme Court of the Jews. Around Israel were local councils, but the main hub of judicial authority was the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. It was essentially an aristocratic body with the High-Priest at the head. The term *Sanhedrin* really means 'a sitting together', and this was exactly what happened. The members were chosen from the chief priests, elders and scribes, and consisted of 70 or 71 members. In the Mishnah the roots of the Sanhedrin are traced back to the seventy elders that Moses appointed to help him in the work.

Members had to be morally and physically blameless, and learned in sciences, languages and the law. They were first required to be judges in their local districts before they could take up the responsibility of judging more serious offences. They also had to be fathers with families, so that they could sympathise with domestic problems that they had to deal with. The President, Vice-President and 'referee', who counted the votes, were all elected by the members.



vii

Function

The Council met daily, except on Sabbath and festival days. In Christ's time they probably met in the High-Priest's palace. Members exercised judgment in ecclesiastical, civil and criminal cases. As their name suggests, the members sat in a semi-circle. Voting began with the youngest member of the group and continued around the circle. Arguments for condemnation as well as acquittal were a part of the proceedings. For condemnation, a majority of 2 was required for sentence to be passed.

The Sanhedrin was officially limited in capacity to the region of Judaea, but in effect had power wherever the Jews had settlements. The Romans allowed it to operate with considerable freedom. It even had its own police force, and could order arrests. Only in cases of a death penalty was it necessary to obtain the Roman procurator's confirmation, as in the case of Christ.

As in some of the previous groups considered, it appears that the Sanhedrin disappeared from existence after AD 70.

Name	Origin	Membership	Function	Belief	Outcome
Pharisees = 'separatist' Known amongst selves as <i>Haverim</i> = 'companions'	-Under John Hyrcanus (135-104 BC) -Gained power under Alexandra (76-67 BC)	-Most were scribes -Ordinary citizens -Two schools of thought: Shammai/Hillel	-Teachers of Law Torah/ Oral Law -Religious guides -Synagogue was important hub	-Resurrection -Immortal Soul -Eternal Punishment of wicked -Oral Law was from Moses	-Outlived AD 70 -Became characteristic of later Judaism
Sadducees <i>sedeq</i> = 'righteousness'	-Under John Hyrcanus (135-104 BC) -High Priesthood (Annas, Caiaphas) were members	-Priestly and non- priestly aristocracy -Membership number in 100's	-Power in Sanhedrin -Religious and political advisors	-Only accepted Pentateuch -No Resurrection -Mortal Soul -Human Freedom	-Lost seats -Unpopular due to wealth -Didn't outlive AD 70
Scribes <i>sopherim</i> 'Rabbi' 'Doctor' 'Lawyer'	-Organised under Ezra, as commentators of Law, not just copiers	-Mainly Pharisees, some Sadducees	-Expounders of the Law -Taught the children and people -Judges - superior legal knowledge		-Continued until about 1000 AD
Essenes	-Under Jonathan the Hasmonean (152 BC) -Split away from society	-Four grades of membership -Only adults could be members -Never more than 4000 members	-Ascetic lifestyle -Higher form of Phariseism -Self-denial	-Divine Providence -Sons of Light and Darkness now -Future Judgment with 3 Messianic figures	-Disappeared after AD 70
Herodians	-Under Herod the Great		-Wealthy citizens with political influence	-Some thought Herod the Great=promised Messiah	-Uncertain

Israel in 1st Century AD

Dean Farrar in his book *The Life of Christ* writes 'It was an age of transition, of uncertainty, of doubt.'^{viii} The society that Jesus walked in was one of tension, hostility, and hardship. Whilst many aspects of life at the time might be addressed, the items below give an insight into the life of Jewry in the first Century AD.

Poverty and Frustration

The reign of Herod the Great was one of enormous building initiative. He built many palaces and fortresses around Israel and even rebuilt the Jewish Temple, which was started before Christ was born and not finished till after his death. He effectively transformed Israel into an urban nation. To benefit from these building projects, the Jewish people paid a heavy price...literally. Taxation to cover the costs, to furnish the King's own luxurious court, and to fund bribes to Rome, crippled the Jewish people. When Herod the Great died, the people were left in poverty. Taxation continued after his death, and would have been bearable were it not for the financial responsibilities the Jews also had to their religion. They had to pay money for the upkeep of the Temple and its priests, so additional taxes to Rome were a tremendous burden. A Jew would not avoid his moral obligation to pay his religious taxes, but taxation to Rome had to be paid as well. In the time of Jesus' ministry 'their existence was frugal at best and could easily slide off into grinding, impoverished misery.'^{ix} In addition to the taxes was the Roman monopoly of Jewish occupations, in particular agriculture and fishing. The Roman land-owners around Israel employed slave labour and were serious competition to the Jewish small-holders who struggled to survive. Poverty of course led to hunger. When Christ fed five thousand people on a few loaves and fishes (John 6:1-21), we can understand why the people seized him and wanted to crown him King there and then. A man who could make bread appear out of thin air? A man who could produce so much food so that all were fed, filled, *and* leftovers gathered? This man was the answer to their problems.

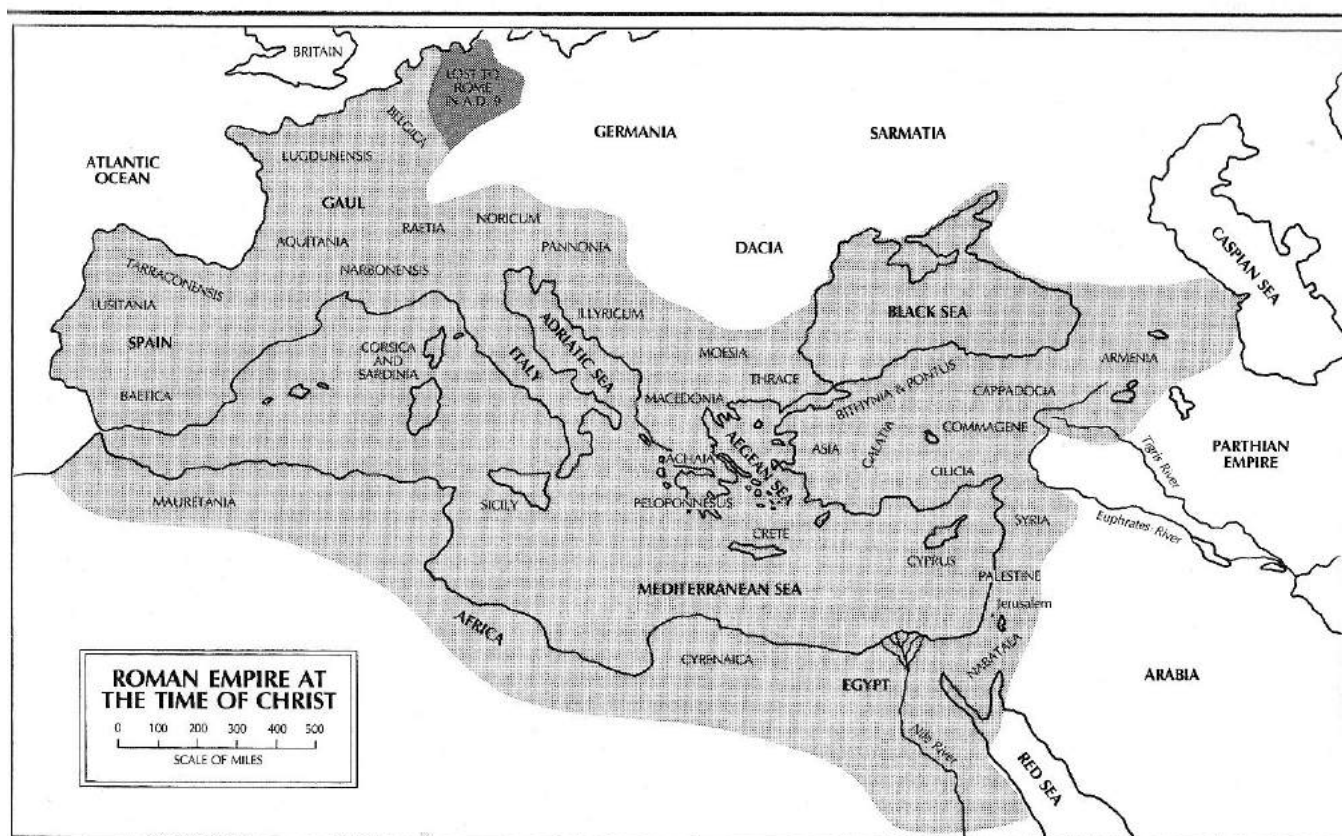
Insecurity and Hope

The Jews were not only poor and hungry, they were also confused and divided. 'The Holy Land itself was a country of mixed and hostile races, of divided interests, where close by the side of the narrowest and most punctilious Phariseism, heathen temples rose, and heathen rites and customs openly prevailed'^x. There was no Jewish King in Israel, the High-Priesthood had been corrupted, and the Sanhedrin was in the hands of the Herodians and Sadducees. The ancient language of Hebrew had given way to Aramaic, and the Jewish people were governed by a Roman and an Edomite. In a land of divisions the only common element that united the Jewish people was a general hatred and bitterness toward the foreigner in Israel. They wanted to be free from Roman control. They wanted the Law of Moses to be restored to its purity. They wanted to live in peace, free from Gentile influence. They wanted their Messiah. Messianic fervour was strong at the time of Christ. Why else would hundreds flock to the River Jordan to hear the 'voice of one crying in the wilderness?' 'And the words of that voice were like a hammer to dash in pieces the flintiest heart, like a flame to pierce into the most hidden thoughts.'^{xi} There was a general expectation of 'the wrath to come', which would herald the coming Kingdom under the reign of the promised Messiah. Jesus of Nazareth, with his pure, clear teachings and his life-transforming miracles had all the semblances of this promised one. And yet, when they tried to make him King, he resisted! This one who could save them, refused to! Maybe he was not the promised one, after all. Former adherents became doubtful, and confused. 'They could not disbelieve, and yet they could not believe.'^{xii} The chief priests played on this doubt in the crowd fervour they created for Christ's crucifixion. In the end, the people who had wanted to make him King rejected and killed him as a common criminal.

The Roman World

Whilst the Hasmoneans were ruling in Jerusalem, under control from the Greeks, Rome was slowly emerging as the new world power. Most of the border lands to the Mediterranean, such as Macedonia, Greece, parts of Spain, and North Africa fell into Roman hands, as well as Asia Minor and Syria under the great General Pompey. Israel, however, remained unconquered.

Opportunity arose when one of the Hasmonean rulers Salome Alexandra died and left the Kingdom to her two sons Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, who were squabbling over who would gain control. The two rival sons appealed to Pompey, who was only too glad to assist. In 63 BC he seized Jerusalem, storming the Temple, slaughtering any resisters, and established Hyrcanus as High Priest and prince of a reduced kingdom that was subject to Rome. Thousands of Jewish war prisoners were shipped off to Rome, as well as the unlucky Aristobulus who was imprisoned there. Thus Israel came under Roman rule and would remain so for the next four hundred years.



xiii

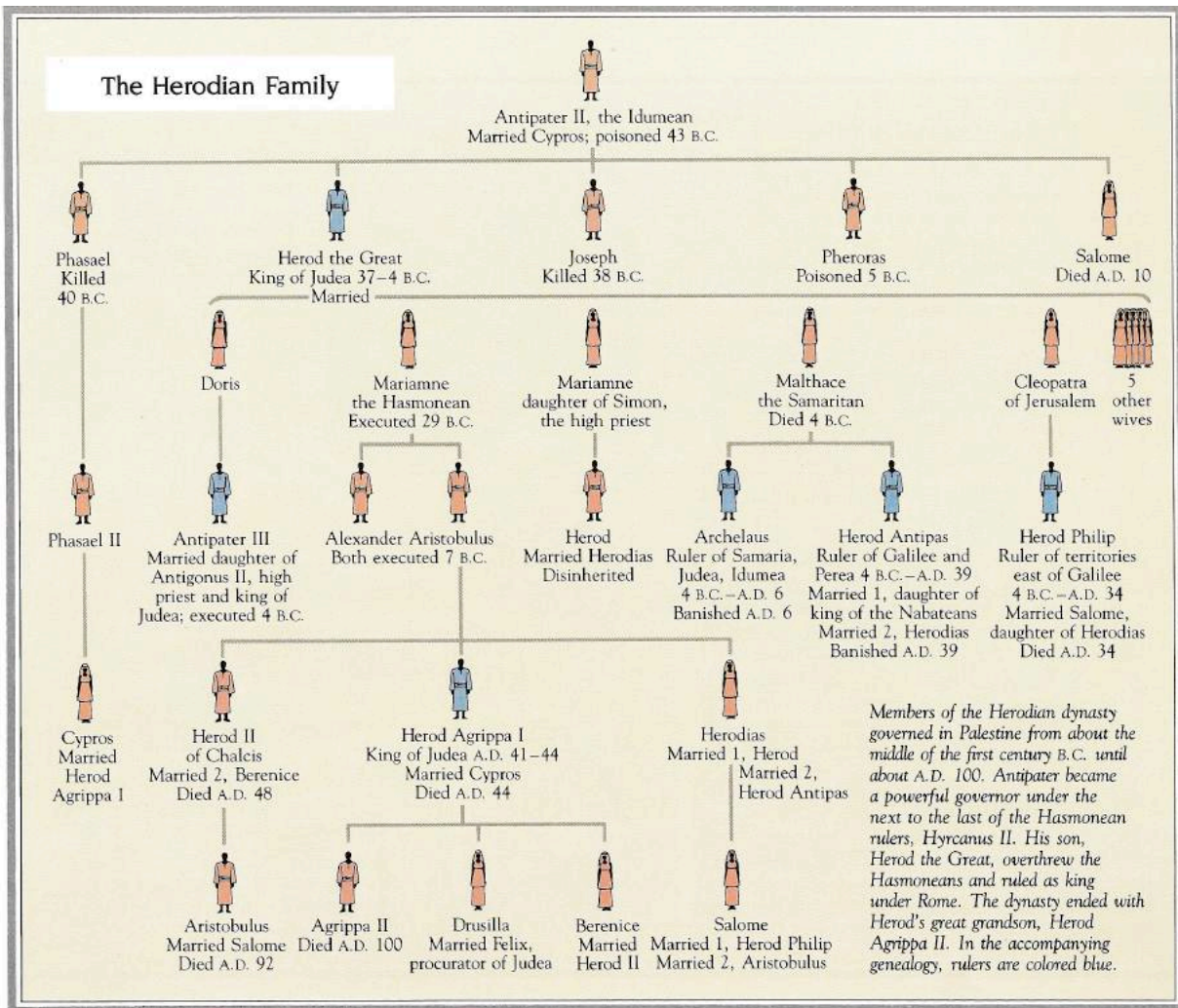
'Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zecharias in the wilderness.' (Luke 3:1-2)

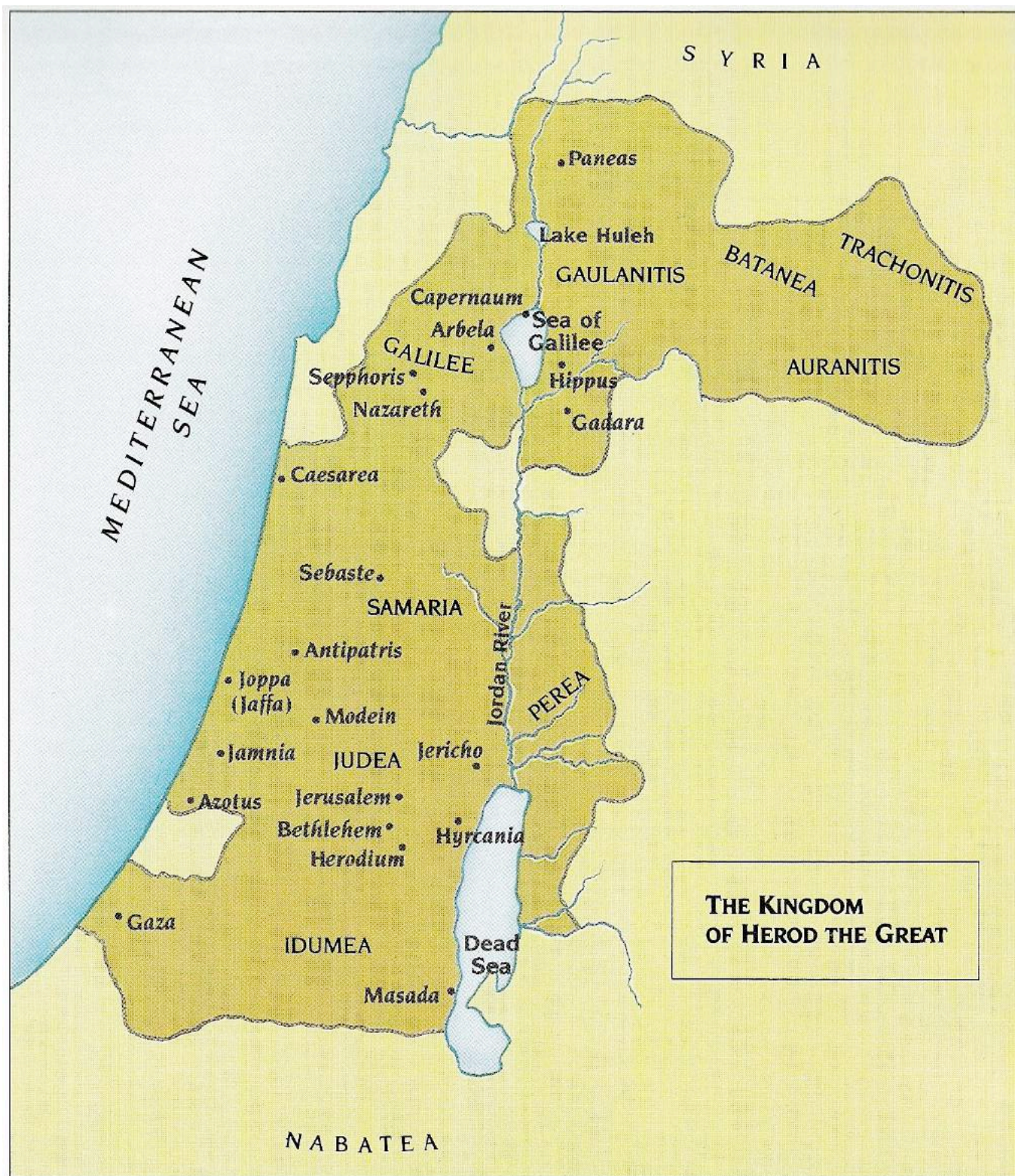
The Herods

Pompey was defeated by Julius Caesar, who is famed for his conquests in Gaul (France). It is here that the Herods of the New Testament come into context. *Herod*, like *Pharaoh* in the Old Testament, was a family or surname: a title that was passed down through the generations. These people as we know them, were Idumeans, or Edomites and were descendants of Esau. They occupied the Negeb, the area between the south of the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean. In 130 BC, John Hyrcanus brought the Idumeans into the Jewish state, and they embraced the Jewish religion, although the Jews were always very suspicious of them.

BE DONE

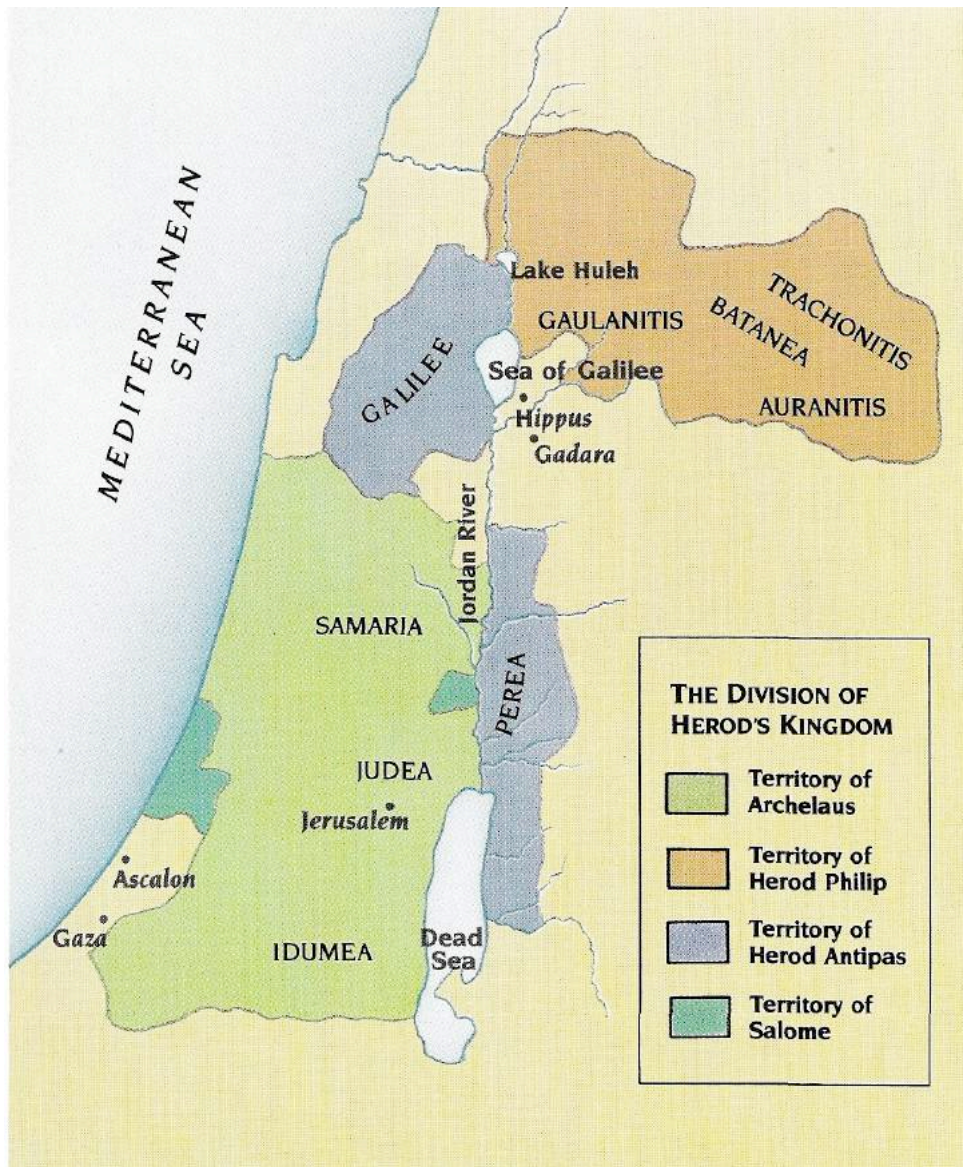
Antipater, governor of Idumea, gained the approval and favour of Julius Caesar who made him a Roman citizen and chief over all Judaea. Wanting to gain the most by this, Antipater acquired positions for his two sons. Herod (age 25), who would become known as Herod the Great, gained governorship of Galilee, and Phasael was given control over Jerusalem. Phasael, however, died of poisoning in 40 BC and after fleeing to Rome following an invasion of Israel by the Parthians, Herod looked to Jerusalem as his next target. In 37 BC, he managed to assault Jerusalem, take control of the Temple and establish his own administration of Israel. He purged the Sanhedrin, and elicited an oath of loyalty from most of his Jewish subjects. It was to be a cruel and vindictive reign. This was the King that ordered the slaughter of all firstborn sons throughout the country at the birth of Christ. At his death, he was so worried that his departure would not be a day of mourning that he enticed all the chiefs of Israel to come to him and had them shut up in a place called the *hippodrome*. He then ordered that at his death, all were to be killed. Fortunately the command was not carried out. In his will he decreed that his kingdom was to be divided amongst three of his sons. Archelaus received the bulk of the territory, Herod Philip received the area north east of the Sea of Galilee, and Herod Antipas was given Galilee and Perea.





xv

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xvi

Herod Antipas

The Herod that mocked Christ during trial was none other than this man, described by one writer as 'about as weak and miserable a prince as ever disgraced the throne of an afflicted country.'^{xvii} Christ refers to him as 'that fox' (Luke 13: 32), one of the few derogatory terms he is recorded as uttering. In fact, Herod Antipas was not a king or prince, but rather a *tetrarch*, ruler of a defined territory, of which Tiberias, his self-built city was the capital. The territory under his rule was Galilee and Perea, the latter being to the east of the Jordan River. Herod Antipas married the daughter of an Arabian King but caused a scandal by eloping with the wife of his half brother Philip I. It is this scandal that is recorded with detail in regards to John the Baptist (Mark 6:17-28). The murder of John the Baptist at the request of the scheming Herodias clearly haunted him, for on hearing of the wondrous works of Christ he thought it was John the Baptist risen from the dead. It was with delight that Herod Antipas agreed to interview Jesus at the request of Pilate 'because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him' (Luke 23:8). He wanted to be entertained, but was rewarded with silence. A few years later, Herod was found guilty of treachery against Rome in storing up secret supplies for war, and was banished to Lyon in France, and then to Spain where he died. His tetrarchy was given to his nephew, Herod Agrippa I.

Pontius Pilate

Whilst Herod was of Idumean descent, Pilate was Roman. Roman governorship of Judaea came into existence due to the incompetence of Herod Antipas' brother, Herod Archelaus, who began governing the area at his father's death in 4 BC. Archelaus succeeded in infuriating his subjects so much that in AD 6 he was deposed, exiled by Caesar Augustus to Vienna and his tetrarchy declared an official province of Rome, to be governed by Roman prefects. Pilate was one of these prefects or governors, appointed to duty by Tiberius Caesar in AD 26.

It was to be an unlucky career. His first major blunder was in bringing standards bearing the image of Caesar from Caesarea into Jerusalem. This enraged the Jewish people who saw it as a violation of their law regarding the making of images. They surrounded the Roman residence at Caesarea for five days in protest. Pilate eventually withdrew the standards, but the incident was the catalyst for his disgust with their ways and customs, and their hatred of him. Pilate then proceeded to hang some shields dedicated to Tiberius Caesar in the Herodian Palace at Jerusalem (where he now abode instead of Caesarea), to which the Jews once more took great offence. They complained to Tiberius Caesar himself, and Tiberius, willing to keep the provinces contented, reprimanded Pilate and ordered the shields to be removed.

The next drama was in taking money from the *Corban*, the sacred Temple revenue for the building of an aqueduct to supply Jerusalem with water. Sacred money used for secular purposes did not agree well with the Jewish constitution. The people rose up in protest, and Pilate dealt with the situation by disguising his soldiers in Jewish dress with staves and daggers concealed under their garments. The soldiers wounded and killed many, and others were trodden underfoot in the chaos.

We are also told in scripture of certain Galileans 'whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices' (Luke 13:1). Whether this is one of the incidents above or something different, it is perhaps this that sheds some light on why Pilate was so eager to pass the responsibility of Jesus over to Herod. As ruler of Galilee, Herod was most likely annoyed at Pilate's interference in his tetrarchy of Galilee. To improve relations, Pilate would have been more than willing to ensure that if Jesus was a Galilean, responsibility was handed straight over to Herod. This perhaps gives meaning to Luke 23:12: 'And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.'

It was customary for the Roman governor to reside at Jerusalem during the great feasts, and so it was, that Pilate was at Jerusalem, probably in the Herodian Palace at the time of Christ's trial. The following events we know from scripture. Pilate's understandable desire to have a quiet, uneventful feast was disappointed as soon as the chief priests appeared at the palace, accompanying Jesus. His decision to please the Jews rather than judge righteously must be seen in context of his former disasters as governor. He had managed to put himself out of favour not only with his subjects, but Herod and Caesar as well. Contrary to his wishes, however, it was not to be an uneventful Passover. His frustration with his lot of governing the Jews, is evident in the tired, cynical words, 'What is truth?'

After the trial of Jesus, Pilate managed to lose his position as Governor completely. Through devious means he gathered a group of Samaritans on top of Mt Gerizim and executed them. The Samaritans duly complained to Caesar of cruelty and Pilate was deposed from office. He went to Rome to answer the accusations against him. There, however, he found a different Caesar on the throne, Caius, who was entirely unsympathetic to his excuses, and refused to reinstate him as governor.

There are various traditions regarding his death. One such involves banishment to Vienna in modern day Austria, where there is a monument called Pontius Pilate's tomb. Another is that he went to Lucerne, in modern day Switzerland, where he dwelt in solitude on a Mountain called *Pilatus*, and afterward drowned himself in the Lake there. Whatever his final demise, his story is not the most successful.

Acknowledgements

The map on page 16 comes from page 680 of *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Merrill F. Unger, Moody Press, USA, 1988

The picture on page 55 comes from pages 60-61 of *Jerusalem in the year 30 A.D.*, Leen & Kathleen Ritmeyer, Carta, Israel, 2004

All other pictures, including those on the title page of each section come from *Life of Christ*, Angus Mc Bride, The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1979

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