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cause we realize the nature of our stewardship to the Master. It may be that the reference in v. 14 is to the Jewish nation which in general expressed just such an attitude. Read the parable of the wicked tenants in Matt. 21:33-43 in this light.

LAST WEEK IN JERUSALEM AREA

Bethany—Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9;
John 12:1-8

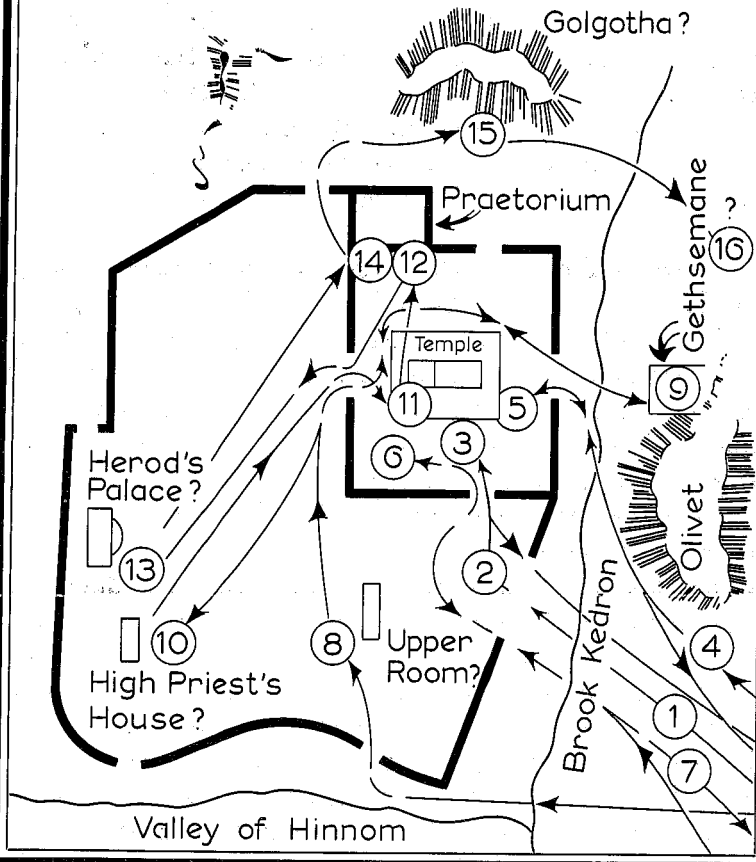
The arrival of Jesus at Bethany begins the last week of events prior to the crucifixion. As the reader may see, the account of John is being followed as to chronological order. The accounts of Matthew and Mark are not in such order, but rather were used by those authors to illuminate the background behind the treachery of Judas.

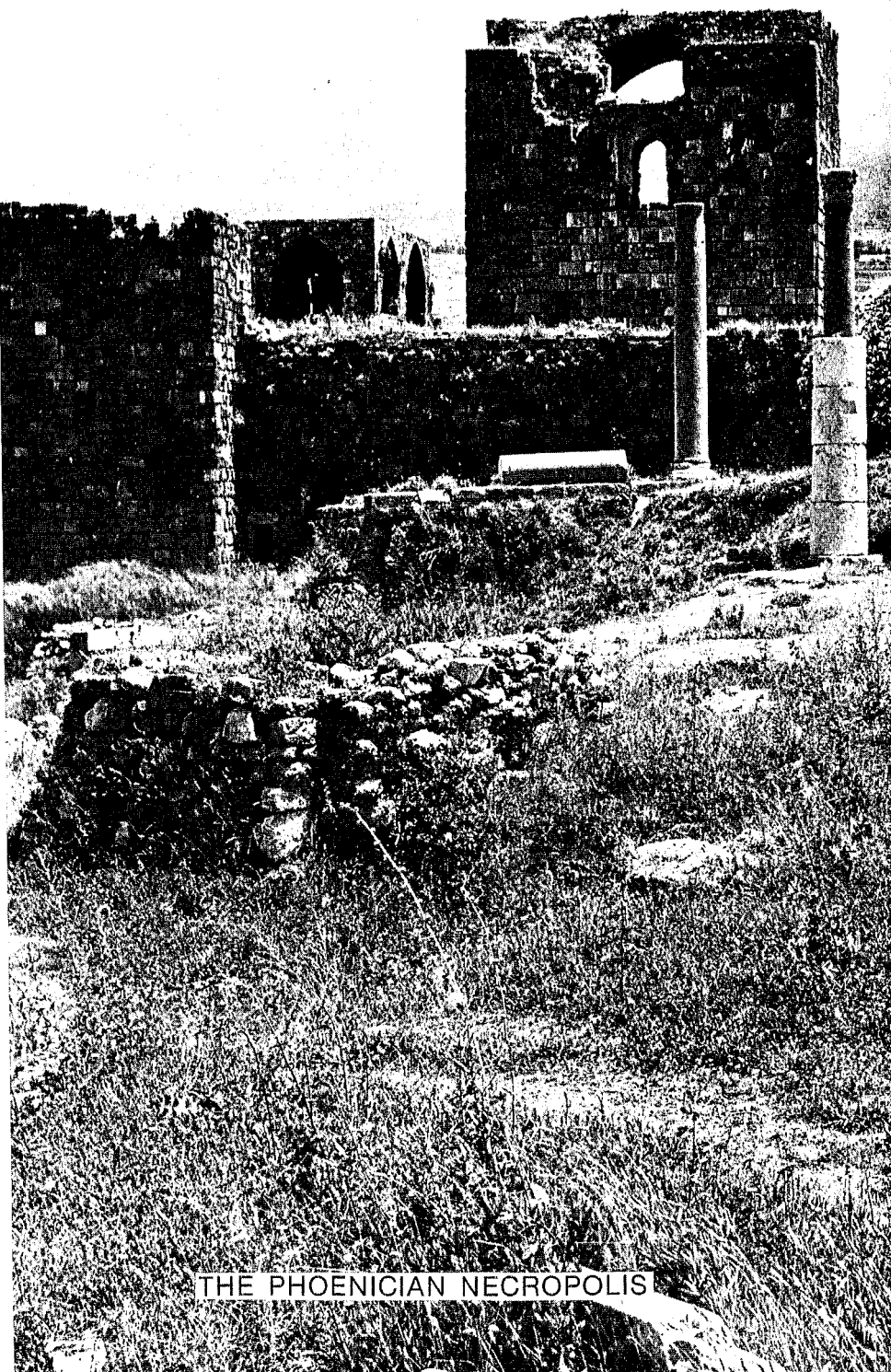
Several facets of this event are interesting. We do not know the relationship of Simon the leper to Jesus or to Mary, Martha and Lazarus. He apparently (?) had been healed of leprosy, but the text does not state that he was present, just that it was his house. It may be that Mary, Martha and Lazarus had either bought, rented or borrowed the house for the event.

Another item that is interesting, but just as impossible to settle, is the day upon which this occurred. Six days is the time mentioned by John, but what six days? Six days inclusive of the day of anointing, or excluding it? The text does not say that the day of the feast was on the day of arrival, just that He arrived six days before Passover. John locates the feast, as mentioned, prior to the Passover, Matthew and Mark using the indefinite words "while" or "when" in their texts. But John does not specifically state upon what day. For that matter, we are not sure if the word Passover means the feast (as it often

MAP NO. 7—LAST WEEK

1. Bethany—Feast, Mary anoints Jesus, Mt. 26:6-13; Mk. 13:3-9; Jn. 12
2. Jerusalem—Triumphal entry (Sunday) Mt. 21; Mk. 11; Lk. 19; Jn. 12
3. Temple, enters, looks around, says nothing, leaves, Mk. 11:11
4. Curses fig tree (Monday), Mt. 21; Mk. 11
5. Temple—cleanses 2nd time (Monday), Mt. 21; Mk. 11; Lk. 19
6. Temple courts?—Great day of discussions (Tuesday)—Mt. 21-22-23-24-25; Mk. 11-12-13-14; Lk. 20-21-22
7. Retirement to Rest?—(Wednesday), Judas plots to betray Jesus, Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22
8. Upper Room—(Thursday), 4th Passover, Lord's Supper, Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22; Jn. 13-14
9. Gethsemane—(Thursday night), Parting discourses, agony, betrayal and arrest, Jn. 15-16-17; Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22
10. Trial before Annas and Caiaphas, Mt. 26-27; Mk. 14-15; Lk. 22-23
11. Trial before Sanhedrin, Jn. 18
12. Trial before Pilate
13. Trial before Herod
14. Trial before Pilate (2nd)
15. Golgotha—(Friday), Crucifixion, Mt. 27; Mk. 15; Lk. 23; Jn. 19
16. Garden—(Sunday), Resurrection, appears to Mary, other women, Mt. 28; Mk. 16; Lk. 24; Jn. 20





THE PHOENICIAN NECROPOLIS

does) or the day of Passover (which began on a Thursday at 6:00 p.m.) or the day the lamb was killed (which would have been the Thursday mentioned, but prior to 6:00 p.m.) often known as the first day of unleavened bread (the whole feast was sometimes referred to in this way), though it was actually only the day the leaven was taken out of the house in preparation for a week (seven days) of unleavened bread. Hence, we do not know when this feast occurred, and cannot use it to determine any event following, though John specifically states the feast occurred the day prior to the triumphal entry. However, the reader must remember that one day ended and another began at 6:00 p.m. in the evening as we count time, not at 12 midnight as for us. Thus, we really do not know on what day for sure the triumphal entry occurred. It might have occurred at the end of the Sabbath Day and finished up on Sunday, since the shift in days occurred at six in the evening. For that matter, there was no specific law that kept the people home on the Sabbath Day, and depending on where Simon's house was (if Jesus was staying there,) the triumphal entry may have taken place on the Sabbath. There were no laws prohibiting such. Even the traditional Sabbath Day's journey is not actually defined in the Bible. Acts 1:12 gives us the common thinking, but the law does not spell it out. The text in Ex. 16:29 finds Moses commanding the people not to leave their own place, but that is as close as we can get. The text in Josh. 3:4 about 2000 cubits was supposedly used by the rabbis as the distance one was permitted to travel. However, again, we do not know if this was so or not. Whether Jesus observed any such tradition is doubtful. We know He went to the synagogue each Sabbath Day, Lk. 4:16, but what this entailed in the way of travel is unknown. Did the trip through the grain fields on the Sabbath (Matt. 12) involve only a distance of 2000 cubits?

The Bible student needs to know what the Bible says as well as what it does not say.

We are reasonably sure what kind of ointment Mary had, called nard. Probably the ointment, rose-red in color, made from the dried roots and woolly stems of the spikenard plant is meant. It was made in northern India, hence very expensive. John uses a unit of measure (translated a pound) equalling about twelve ounces of our English weight. It was, and yet is, transported in an alabaster box or container. Alabaster is a fine-grained gypsum, somewhat like onyx, and mostly mined in Egypt. But the estimate of Judas as to its worth is just that, though perhaps true. If his estimate were correct, then the amount equaled almost a whole year's wages, using Matt. 20:1ff. as a basis.

We have already mentioned the problem about whose house it was—the reason the question is raised is because Martha served, which would be a bit uncommon unless it were her house, or being used by her.

Comparison of the three accounts shows several things. One is that the woman unnamed by Matthew and Mary was Mary, sister of Lazarus and Martha (and not the woman of Luke 7). Matthew and Mark do not name just who of the disciples was indignant about the action of Mary, but John shows that Judas was the instigator, and also the reason, for Judas was a thief, as well as group treasurer, and wanted that money. The intense feeling of Judas may well have provoked his bargain with the priests within the next week. We also can piece together the fact that Mary placed some of the ointment on both the head and feet of Jesus.

The remarks of Jesus were instructive. The poor would always be present, the efforts of society notwithstanding. The gift of money to such causes was (and is) not always the right use of it, neglecting the Lord in

other ways. He did not forbid gifts to the poor, but simply commended the timeliness of the gift. However, the remark about the reason for the anointing is not so clear. It may be that Mary was more perceptive than some, but Jesus does not say that she purposely anointed (by the way, this is the only time we have record of any anointing of Him, though the word "Christ" comes from a Hebrew word meaning "anointed" from the custom of designating new kings, etc.) Him because she understood He was about to die, but rather that in so doing she prepared Him to do so. John's expression in v. 7 is enigmatic, too. Does Jesus mean "keep it" in reference to the remaining ointment or keep the memory she has in mind?

Judas thought the act was a "dead loss" but Jesus remarked that the world would ever remember the act. The reaction of Judas is ever that of the world. Any sacrifice in His behalf is always a waste to some people. But love must express itself, and Jesus called such expression "beautiful". May we ignore the world to gain the praise of Christ, our anointed One.

*Jerusalem—Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10;
Luke 19:28-40; John 12:9-19*

The triumphal entry, as man has been pleased to call this event, probably took place on Sunday as the outline mentions, though the exact time is unknown and not vitally important. This is the first time that all four gospels have related the same event since the feeding of the 5,000 at the end of the second year.

Many things are of interest in this event, and one of those is the crowds of common people (one which had come over to Bethany earlier and one which came out to meet Jesus and the other crowd) and their reaction to

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Him as compared to the rulers. Luke records (the reader should make special study of this account to see how many incidental things he adds to the picture) that some Pharisees told Jesus to shut His disciples up when they hear the shouts of the people which acclaimed Jesus as the Son of David, and thus the Messiah and king of the kingdom as God had promised David. Verse 40 reveals that Jesus informed them that even the stones would bear witness if these people did not do so. We add that when the crowds became silent, the stones of the empty tomb did bear witness to Jesus' deity. When some of the other rulers saw the impact Jesus was having upon the multitudes, they exclaimed to each other that the world had gone after Him, and that they could do nothing, v. 19. Whether they meant that all efforts to change Jesus' influence on the crowds was vain, or that the time had come to cease talk and get on with the business of killing Him is debatable.

The procession started somewhere around Bethany (and a neighboring community of Bethphage) on the eastern slope of Mount Olivet, when Jesus directed two of His disciples to go get a colt and its mother. When the owners asked about their property being removed by the disciples, they answered, as given by Jesus, "The Lord needs them." The disciples did not know which of the two Jesus would ride, so they placed garments on both, though the accounts specify Jesus sat upon the colt, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9.

The shouts of "Hosanna" (which probably means something like "(God) save (us)" or "(God), make us safe") and other ideas of the crowd with Him soon attracted another crowd from the throngs in Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. When the large group with all the noise came into the streets of the city, some were told, when they raised a question of identity, that the person

being so honored was Jesus, the prophet from Galilee. For any conscientious Jew, this would be great news—a prophet no less, and hard on the heels of that other prophet, John. Certainly the Jewish rulers had reason to rejoice when Judas came and told them how to get Jesus quietly, without the knowledge of the crowds. A tumult would have been caused for sure, had the crowds known. We make these remarks now because the reader needs to see why the action of Judas was so important to the rulers, and also why the Jewish leaders had the trials and crucifixion over and done by early morning—the crowds of people who would have been sympathetic for Jesus were not up and around to interfere.

One thing that is of interest, and doubtless confused the disciples who had closely followed Jesus—why did He now accept such tribute in such a public place and under such circumstances, when He had never done so before? The whole event proclaimed for all the Jewish world that Jesus, in accepting the things shouted by the crowds, was their Messiah, the Coming One. He had never allowed such before, and now—in Jerusalem even! The text in John, v. 16, underscores this confusion in the minds of the twelve, at least. Those in intervening centuries who have said that Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah (Christ) just do so out of willful ignorance, more times than not.

Luke 19:41-44 informs us that Jesus wept over the city, and expressed heartfelt sentiments much as He did at other times, we suppose. However, by the action of the event, He took charge of the issue between Himself and the rulers, ignoring their authority, and accepting the claims of the crowd for His Messiahship, which only added fuel to the fire, and forced the hand of the rulers. The action of Judas with the possibility of a secret arrest comes into sharper focus now.

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When Jesus spoke of the future catastrophe to happen to Jerusalem because of its ultimate rejection of Him, we remind the reader the armies of Rome did just that (see the same prophecy in Matt. 24:15-28, also Mark and Luke) in A.D. 68-70. The resistance of the Jews was so extended and strong that the Romans leveled the city, leaving only three city gates standing, that the world passing by might take note and heed.

Mark 11:11 indicates that the day was over when Jesus actually got into Jerusalem, and He, with the twelve, returned to Bethany for the night, as v. 19 also indicates.

The next day the Savior with the twelve returned to Jerusalem. The possibility of going over the top of Mount Olivet to Jerusalem and returning to Bethany by going out the south east side of Jerusalem and around Mount Olivet may help the reader understand why the disciples did not see the fig tree Jesus cursed until the following morning.

Perhaps a word about fig trees is in order here. The texts concerning the whole event are Matt. 21:12-22 (note that Matthew does not recount the fact that the cursing took place on one day and the disciples' reaction the next day); Mark 11:12-14, 20-25. Mark's account gives the information in v. 13 that it was not the season for figs. Of course not—the normal fig season was in the summer or fall along with the other later harvest crops. However, at least two types of fig trees grew in Palestine, one which had fruit and leaves at the same time, another having leaves and then fruit. This fact may account for the expectation of Jesus for fruit.

Whether we ever really understand the "why" of the action of Jesus, if it was to teach a lesson to the disciples about the power of prayer, or if it was an object lesson for the disciples about the fruitless life, or perhaps a vivid portrayal of why God was going to Jerusalem to "clean

house" and take away the kingdom from them to give it unto a nation bringing forth the fruits of the kingdom, Matt. 21:43, we may never know. Make no mistake about Jesus, though—it was not just a mere man who walked up to a tree one day but was fooled by its appearance. God in person walked up to a part of His own creation that day—God does not make mistakes. The reason for the cursing may ever be unknown to us, but Jesus had a reason. It may have been to teach the lesson of what is possible through the power of faith.

*Jerusalem—Matt. 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-18;
Luke 19:45-48*

The sin of a nation is reflected in many ways—its national policies, literature, art, music, even religion. Men tend to become like the society in which they live. People in power tend to satisfy the clientele. What Jesus might do or say about the religious groups in America is anybody's guess, but He put action to His words about the center of Jewish worship, not once but twice, and within three years of each other. John 2 recorded the cleansing by Jesus of the temple at the beginning of His ministry. Now at the close of His ministry, He does the same thing again. Quoting Isa. 56:7 and Psalms 8:2, He proceeded to drive out those selling animals in the temple grounds, overturning the tables of the moneychangers, and force those who sold pigeons to leave. It was not that these things were not needed or unlawful, it was where they were being done that made the difference to Jesus. Perhaps the reader ought to meditate on His description of the status of the temple grounds: a *den of robbers*. Even then, the chief priests were agitating for His death! When He healed those needing help, and those same chief priests (and scribes) saw what marvelous things He was

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doing, rather than praise God for the goodness of His heart, they increased their zeal to destroy Him, and that in spite of the fact that none of the multitude sided with their desire to kill Him.

Is it not ironical that these men were finding fault with people being healed and children praising God, but would plot the murder of both Jesus and Lazarus, and allow such things to go on as Jesus attempted to stop? What blind spots we often have, especially when it comes to our own sin.

Jerusalem—The Day of Discussions

The outline hints that the day may be Tuesday. It is one in a succession of three days as Mark records the events. But the mention of two days before Passover in 14:1 does not tell us if the days are exclusive or inclusive of the day of discussion. If exclusive, then the day was Tuesday, with Wednesday and Thursday being the two days, Passover starting on Friday, which would start at 6 p.m. Thursday our time. This would place the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple on a Monday and the triumphal entry on Sunday. But nothing is certain, and no doctrine rests on whether we can tell when the day of discussions was (though when Jesus ate the Passover meal is an issue of importance).

(1) Matt. 21:23—22:14; Mark 11:27—12:12; and Luke 20:1-18 record the re-entry of Jesus into the temple the day after the cleansing and the issue of authority was immediately broached. The men had a right to ask as they had jurisdiction over the temple. Jesus replied to the question by bringing up the issue of John, and by relating three parables, the parable of the two sons, the wicked tenants, and that of the king's wedding feast.

The first part of a four part answer was the issue

over John's authority. Doubtless it was a touchy issue, since they apparently were among those who have refused his baptism, thus rejecting the fact that God had sent him (Luke 7:29-30). They carefully "reckoned up" the issues, and replied that they did not know the answer to Jesus' question. But they were the only ones who should have known! Jesus stamped His approval on John's ministry, and condemned them in the process.

The reason Jesus asked the question was to make them declare the standard by which they determined authority. If their standard included such things as His signs and teaching, then they would have been on the same basis as He was. But the reader can readily discern that such was not the case at all. Their own selfish causes formed the basis for anything they decided. We would call them "situation ethicists" today, or a somewhat similar term oftentimes, "politicians."

Since they could not decide for John, who only had a message, obviously they could not decide for Jesus, who had both signs and message. It is interesting, though John had been dead for some time, how much he was admired by the multitude and such fact was so apparent that the temple politicians were unwilling to even say anything for fear of being stoned, Luke, v. 6.

(2) So Jesus posed a story of a father with two sons, the second part of the answer to the question of authority, and slyly trapped them into answering. The son who responded to his father with a firm "I, sir, will go!" was equal to these men. Their outward profession witnessed to the supposed truth that whatever God said they would do. But they said and did not (Matt. 23:3). Such despicable characters were what caused Jesus to say what He did in Luke 19:11-27; 40-42; as well as the next two parables in Matthew and all of Matt. 23:1-39.

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(3) The third part of the answer, again turning on the issue of authority, centered around a rather common business deal, that of a land owner who subleased his farm to others. The parable was placed within the daily life of the listeners as Jesus described the man planting a vineyard, enclosing it and building a watchtower for protection, and digging a winepress to be used for the harvest of grapes. One way to build a winepress was to dig a hole in the ground, or in rock, in which the grapes could be placed when ready to extract the juice. This was the top part of the press, and this part would have a small opening in the bottom of it so when the grapes were pressed down, the juice would run out into a lower cavity in the earth, or some sort of receptacle.

The parable itself represented a story of God's dealings with the Jews. He had, as it were, made the nation as tenants, from whom he expected fruit. His servants, the prophets, had been sent but greatly mistreated by the nation. The sending of "His beloved Son" was done in Christ, and as had been predicted in Psalms 118:22-23 a millennium earlier, the Son was rejected. The sentence upon such conduct was expressed in v. 43, thus ending God's dealings with the Jews as a special people. Henceforth and forever, the only people who would (are or will) receive any special favors from God are His own people (Titus 2:14; I Pet. 2:9) bought with the blood of His Son and part of the Son's body, the church. Thus did Peter and the apostles have to learn (Acts 2:39; 10:34-35; 26:16-18; Gal. 3:25-29).

God had always so planned as Ephesians 1:3-12 tells us. (It was not an afterthought as those who adhere to some versions of pre-millennialism hold, or as is taught in such perversions of Bible teaching as can be found in the Scofield Reference Bible. Such doctrines make the Savior less than divine, and the church a stop-gap measure until

the Jews get back on the right track again.) This is clearly seen and pointed out by Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, in Romans 15:9-13; as he quotes from the Old Testament to prove the point that God had always intended to bring Gentiles into the fold. The apostles took a lot of persuading, as did the rest of the Jewish nation, that they did not have a corner on God nor had they ever. Jesus pointed this out in Nazareth as recorded in Luke 4:16-30. The passage quoted by Jesus in Mark 11:17 from Isaiah 56:7 refers to "all nations." The whole premise of the book of Romans is this: Any and all who would be just can be so through faith.

The tenants obviously did not respect the authority of the land owner, and so acted as they did. When Jesus asked His listeners about the consequences of killing the heir, they replied that the man should take away the vineyard from them and give it to others. Jesus then quotes the passage from Psalms as if to say, "Yes, is this not exactly what was foretold?"

The account in Luke provides an additional sidelight from the crowd. Verse 16 tells us that some of the crowd exclaimed, "May this never happen!" (Should the reader be unaware of the Greek text, there is absolutely no word for God in the text. It is simply an expression conveying the idea of prohibition of something that might be done or said. There is no reason at all for any version, including King James, American Standard or Revised Standard to translate as they do. One wonders what the translators were doing when such was allowed to happen. The same expression occurs some fifteen times in the New Testament, all carrying the same idea as noted above.) Whether they had reference to the action of the tenants or that as expressed by the rest to be a just punishment is impossible to tell.

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Once again the gospel writers call to our attention the fact that Jesus would have been killed if the admiration of the people for Him had not deterred the chief priests and company. So these men greatly rejoiced when Judas came with a plan to take Jesus in secret, Mark 14:2, 11; Luke 22:3-6.

(4) The last part of this four part answer on authority is recorded for us only by Matthew, in 22:1-14.

The setting for the parable is that of a king and his subjects. The occasion: The prince and his marriage supper. The invitations were given early, and when the feast was actually ready, the servants sent to inform those already invited to come. It seems that those people would have realized that the invitation might largely, if not altogether, have been given through grace, not merit—which is certainly the case in the kingdom. Too, one would not often have an opportunity to attend the wedding of a king's son. Despite all these and other reasons, people made the issue revolve around their own interests, which were both trivial and transient. Those who were invited later were like the first group in that the invitation was conditional. The wedding garments had been furnished, and all were to wear them. Hence, the man who was found without his garment was not really different in principle than any of the others who refused to come, for he had despised the authority of the king. Thus all who came or did not come were subject to the king. Those who held their relationship to the king in the proper light were treated to a great occasion.

Thus the issue was clearly presented again of authority—and Jesus' relationship both to God and God's people. Those who spurn God by rejecting His Son cannot claim Him as their father, no matter how they may attempt to do so, Luke 10:16; Jn. 5:23 and I Jn. 2:23. And the tragedy of it all was not being thrown into outer dark-

ness with the punishment there, but rather in missing the feast!

(5) Our next incident brings a group of people together who surely were strange bedfellows. Yet, the common enemy named Jesus glossed over their differences. The men only had one purpose and that was to deliver Jesus to the governor, Luke 20:20. The gospel writers point out that Jesus knew these men had sinister motives in their question. Not many things the Herodians (a political party which was pro-Roman) did were otherwise. The Pharisees were not a great deal better.

The question posed to Jesus was fraught with problems, and one designed to alienate Jesus with the crowd. No Jew liked the Romans, or the taxes levied upon him by them. So the men supposed that 1) if Jesus upheld the taxes, the people would become haters of Him, or 2) if He spoke out against Rome, they would have ample reason to arrest Him. The reader will remember that one of the charges leveled against Jesus at the trial was that of forbidding payment of taxes to Caesar, Luke 23:2.

Though such were the issues, the men remind Jesus that they knew He does not respect anyone above another, so He will no doubt tell the truth about the matter without fear or favor. The Greek word used about respect for position carries the idea of lifting one's face up by compliment, and so to regard with favor.

The question about taxation being lawful was asked in connection with rightness, not public policy or necessity. The people had been reminded by Samuel that such would be a problem to them when they asked for a king, I Samuel 8:4-20. Of course, a theocracy would have no problems along this line, but the world got in God's people, and now they were paying for it.

Jesus asked for a coin, and someone gave Him a denarius, which had Caesar's likeness upon it. He then

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expressed the principle that service (implied in coinage) gave the right to ask for support, or stated a different way, the laborer is worthy of his hire, Deuteronomy 24:14-15; Matthew 10:10; I Timothy 5:18. So Paul in the ethical section of Romans reminds the Christian of his duty to God, 12:1-2; and related to the duty (since it was the will of God) was the Christian rendering to Caesar, 13:1-10.

Because the people listening readily saw the principle involved when Jesus pointed it out, as did the questioners, the first round is scored as 1-0 in Jesus' favor.

(6) Not to be outdone by the Pharisees, the uniformitarians of the day came to Jesus with a question about the future life. (The word "uniformitarian" conveys the idea that the past is identical to the present so that the present is the key to understanding the past. It also has the idea that man can thus determine all things for himself by proper use of the present. But see II Peter 3:1ff.) Somewhat ironical, and yet madly methodical was their question, since it not only involved a subject upon which the Bible said nothing directly and a very little indirectly (which they thought placed Jesus in a position of arguing about implications of verses or admitting He did not know) but also presented an ethical problem apparently without solution.

So that the reader may appreciate better not only the question but Jesus' answer, we give the following statement of the Sadducees' position: they did not believe in any future state for anyone, arguing against both a resurrection (which implies a future life) and any heavenly beings, Acts 23:8. The issue must be clearly understood: they asserted *no one* lived after death, and thus no future life, obviously.

The rabid evolutionist of our day is little different, if he believes in the evolutionary theory all the way. He

will assert no cause for the world, and no future life in another world, since no god. Very often the commonly accepted principle of cause and effect is rejected, since the world (an effect) argues for a cause at least as great as it is. (Yet, they expect this argument to cause every person who hears it to accept their position. Is that not operating on the principle of cause and effect?) Things in the past can be understood by the present! Man is the measure of all things. Some people try to maintain the dubious position called theistic evolution, which asserts in general that God exists and just used the evolutionary principle to produce the universe. We think the position without any basis in fact, and is but a poor substitute for the position of either going all the way with the theory of evolution or the Biblical position of creation. The article on evolution under selected studies will present the case a bit more in detail.

The answer of Jesus clearly stated one thing, among others: all live to God in the future state, Luke 20:38b. The statement was not equivocal at all, and asserted the position of the Sadducees was dead wrong. Those who argue for the idea of annihilation of the wicked are just as wrong as the Sadducees were, for "*Everyone* (in contrast to *no one*) lives to God." As Jesus pointed out (a bit of a slam against the Sadducees, since He quoted from the Pentateuch, which they held was divinely given, not to mention their adherence to Moses) God was not a God of dead beings but of living beings. He argued from His own statement in Exodus 3:6 about the relationship of God to dead people (remember, now, that He is deity, and is actually quoting what He Himself said, which utterance Moses recorded under His direction). The text in Luke 16:19-31 clearly argues the same point, which is the reason those who hold the position of annihilation of the wicked always attack it so ferociously. The text in

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question negates their arguments just as well as the Sadducees in fact, as the principle being discussed is the same: does "death" mean cessation of existence or something else? Jesus said in effect, it only means that the personality involved passes out of one state into another. Compare the discussion under # 62 about the word death, and these passages which use that term; Luke 15:24, 32; 16:19-31; John 5:28 (tomb=dead people); I Corinthians 15:30; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:20. The article about death in the selected studies should also be read.

The question about future existence settled, the future state was presented as being considerably different than the Sadducees assumed. (It is definitely of interest that Jesus spoke so clearly on these questions. As He pointed out to Nicodemus in John 3:13, He knew about His subject because He came from heaven. Check the text in John 17:5 for this idea.) The Old Testament text Deuteronomy 25:56 was thus properly applied only to mortals, not immortals. We can only guess at the great number of hours foolishly spent by people who attempt to ask or solve some problem such as this one. If God had told us everything we could think to ask, we would not want to search through the immense volume that would be needed to answer such questions. If we did, we might not understand how the answer could be true. God has revealed enough to allow us all to accept Christ, become saved and stay that way. He can take care of the rest of such problems as the above until such time as we are adequately prepared to receive what He will give in this area.

(7) Round two finds the score at 2-0 in Jesus' favor. As the Pharisees noticed, Jesus effectively muzzled (meaning of the Greek term) the Sadducees. The Pharisees were game for a third round, and came asking Jesus about the greatest commandment in the law.

NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY: THE CHRIST

Now the Sadducees held to the written law alone being authoritative, but the Pharisees held both law and tradition equally binding. Someone has said that later Judaism had 248 affirmative precepts, one for each member of the body, and 365 negative precepts, one for each day of the year. Whether the Jews of Jesus' day had that many or not is unknown, but the efforts of Jesus to lift the heavy burdens (Matthew 23:4) imposed by the scribes and Pharisees probably indicate that they had a goodly number, and a cursory look at the Jewish Talmud (a collection of interpretations by Jewish scribes of the Old Testament law) which has many, many laws, will show that heavy burdens had been imposed by the rabbis. Most of what was extant in Jesus' day is probably contained in a work known as the Mishna, compiled c. A.D. 150-200 by a Jewish rabbi named Judah the Prince.

To the question: the Greek term used to ask about the command may have to do with the idea of quality, the idea being this: what quality makes a command the greatest? Jesus promptly quoted Deuteronomy 6:4ff. and Leviticus 19:18 as inseparable from it. One cannot separate life into unrelated areas if one is to be godly. A relationship to God is not what it must be to please Him if the person in question ignores the obligations within his societal relationships. Jesus often pointed this fact out, as in Matthew 5:21-26; and Paul did, in Romans 13:8-10.

As the scribe answered Jesus, he too had caught the idea: the inner man is all important—mere externals are abhorrent to God (read Isaiah 1:10-20) if the whole person is not involved. Saul had to learn the bitter lesson, I Samuel 15:22-23. Jesus said that God sought those to worship Him who would do so with the inner man, the spirit, the real "us," and by means of truth (reality),

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rather than the hypocritical formalism which characterized the majority of worship in that day.

So we learn that obedience is better than sacrifice, but love directed in the right action is better than all. We will to love the right things. The emotion of love may be inately ours, but the Scripture clearly teaches that, whether we actually produce the emotion or not, we must direct its expression. What we (the real personality that is spirit in its nature, and the actual "us") will to do through our physical body, whether in love, hate, or whatever, is the subject of God's interest and divine Word. Let the one having ears to hear, listen in!

(8) The Lord now asks a question of those listening about the famous king of Israel, David. Read Matthew 22:41-46; Mark 12:35-37 and Luke 20:41-44. The reason for the question was that the people from the apostles down through all the rest held false concepts of the Messiah (and his kingdom, naturally). They carried too much of the idea of an earthly empire like David's or Solomon's. This question Jesus asked spotlights the divine/human nature the Messiah was to have. Hence it was to be that David's son was to be David's God. Paul described this deity/humanity combination in Romans 1:3-4. We do not read that Jesus explained how it was to be; He just stated it for all to accept it upon trust in His word.

It is worth calling to your attention that Jesus taught David was Spirit-led to write the words of at least Psalms 110:1. The New Testament does not equivocate in regard to the inspiration of the Old Testament, and many times such ideas as we have here are stated.

(9) The crowds were eager to hear Jesus, and He proceeded to warn them about false shepherds who were like hirelings, John 10, and only cared about their own interests. In Matthew 23:1-39; Mark 12:38-40 and Luke 20:45-47 is about as scathing a denunciation as is recorded

anywhere. Perhaps if we could see the tremendous hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees and the consequent results in the general religious life of Israel, which ultimately meant hell for many who otherwise would have gone to heaven, we might be able to appreciate much better the "why" of this sermon. We just have a difficult time seeing sin for what it is, and does. Sin pervaded the whole nation of Israel, for so many had allowed the "god of this world," II Corinthians 4:4, to blind their eyes. It is no accident that Paul warns believers about sin, hardness of heart, and the consequences, Hebrews 3:7—4:13 (read this text!).

The men whom Jesus denounced "sat in Moses' seat" —were one of the means to dispense the law. What they taught, the law, was to be observed by all who heard. Jesus is not talking about the accumulated interpretations of the Jewish scribes, but the law itself. The lack of translation into life of what they (the scribes and Pharisees) themselves taught was absolutely no excuse for those who listened to so live. We too have no excuse for failure to practice what we know is right whether others do or not, including those who teach us.

On the other hand, the flashing red light of James 3:1 should make every teacher count the cost of so great a responsibility. Binding unnecessary burdens on those listening, in various and sundry ways exalting self in society, (seeking the chief reclining seats!) and failure to live as we expect others (Matthew 7-12!) is contemptible if intentionally done. No one is to be more than an earthen vessel through which a message is channeled, for all have only one teacher or father. Jesus obviously did not forbid the use of the name "father" for common use. If He did, Paul's usage in such places as I Corinthians 4:15 and Ephesians 6:2; and John's in I John 2:13 are surely "anti-Christ." He meant that the relationship of one disciple

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to another was to be as a servant, v. 11, who did not seek the title of "my chief one" (rabbi) but rather a way to serve brethren. Hence, all important are motives (attitudes) about positions and titles. Some may make much of one who is teaching and/or serving, but what is forbidden is seeking the place of teaching and/or service for such acclaim.

The verse about phylacteries, v. 5, was in reference to Exodus 13:3-16; Deuteronomy 6:5-9 and 11:18-21; which was taken rather literally in respect to "binding" things between the eyes, etc. So little leather boxes containing portions of the law were worn between the eyes and on the arm. Naturally, these soon became hallmarks of "the religious" among the people. Such importance was attached to phylacteries that the rabbis taught they were one of the things which could be snatched from a fire on the Sabbath.

One of AEsop's fables was that of the dog in the manger which would not allow the stock to eat the hay even though the dog itself did not eat hay either. Such describes verses 13-15, which show the purposeless enthusiasm and misdirected energy of the scribes and Pharisees as far as eternal values were concerned. Someone remarked about the proselyte: the more converted, the more perverted.

These verses use the word "woe" which occurs seven times (eight if you use the King James version, which has v. 14, an interpolation from Mark 13:40 and Luke 20-47). The word carries the idea of sorrowful pity, as one who is witnessing a tragedy but powerless to stop it. Certainly verses 32-37 convey the idea that such hypocrites as Jesus was denouncing could not escape condemnation to hell if they did not repent. Opportunity always carries responsibility, and so these men, with such tremendous places of service, were to be held more liable, Mark 12:40b.

An old saying goes, "There is more than one way to skin a cat." Verses 16-24 elaborate that such a principle of practice is at least as old as the first century. Matthew 15 and Mark 7 had mentioned some ways of avoiding the law that one did not want to keep. These verses point up the same sort of thing: weasling out on one's word. The unsuspecting, no doubt, were numerous who fell into the trap of the Pharisees and scribes, a trap that hinged on the backing for an oath. These men had decided that if one invoked an oath upon himself, and used the temple as surety, he could fail to keep his word and not be the worse for it, as they figured. But if the gold of the temple, etc., was used, then the man was bound to keep his word.

Jesus pointed out the hypocrisy of such practices, showing that all things were ultimately traceable to God (as also in Matthew 5:33-37). This sort of practice is yet around. That is the reason that Jesus (also James 5:12) forbid any oaths unless the law demanded such, and enjoined the Christian to make his "yes" mean "yes."

As further evidence of these "fools" (the same Greek word as is used in Matthew 5:22) character, Christ accused them of not doing the really important concepts of the law, but observing the less important things in the external realm such as tithing. He might well have added the "great" commandments to the list of justice, faith and mercy, all of which were absent from the lives of these men and without which God is not pleased, Micah 6:8. How perverted the men were is shown by His rather lucid illustration of the knat and camel, both of which were unclean to the Jews.

Tithing is mentioned by Jesus as something the Jews ought to do. However, they were obligated to tithe as the Mosaic law commanded it of them. But for preachers and others to take this text and apply it to Christians is

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poor exegesis, to say the least. We have been freed from legalism, and tithing is legalism. Those who use the Old Testament or any part of it (such as Mal. 3:10) to enforce tithing upon Christians are poor scholars in such efforts. There is not one text in the whole New Testament that expects Christians to tithe, and to use some Old Testament text to prove it is to do as badly as the groups that enforce Sabbath-keeping upon people from the Old Testament. We surely ought to practice that which we purport to teach, and that is we are New Testament Christians. To use the Old Testament, or texts like this one from the Gospels is to do the same thing as the men sought to do in Acts 15:1ff. The same sort of treatment for such attempts ought to be accorded those who do such things as was given those in the Acts passage: whole-hearted resistance. No one affirms that the Christian is not to give, for such is taught in the New Testament in plenty of places. All we affirm is that the law of tithing is not any part of the Christian life. Tithing may be a good practice, or percentage to give, with that we are not arguing. We are opposing such things as laws, however. We suspect that the current success of the faith-promise movement among Christians in general is what could happen anytime people are freed from the idea that some law governs their giving, such as the law of tithing. Cause a person to fall in love with the person of Jesus, and to give themselves to Him, and their giving will take care of itself (Read the passage in II Corinthians 8:1ff., and see if that is not what the Macedonian brethren did, which resulted in plenty of offerings. We can do the same thing, and to some extent are doing it, when we teach people that they are to trust God to help them give what is needed, which He will do if they give themselves to Him. This putting giving on the basis of love and need is the secret of success in the faith-promise movement).

Externals are only pleasing to God when they actually represent the inward man. Such is the point of vv. 25-28. The outward appearance is important as that is what (and all) men can see, but God knows our inward state, and that is eternally important.

The reference to whitewashed tombs is interesting, as anyone who had an unmarked tomb was expected to mark it in some way, especially so just before Passover time that men might not become defiled by it (see Luke 11:44; John 11:55).

The last "woe" was directed to people who had in practice mimicked the very worst of their father's deeds. As had been previously pointed out by Jesus, Luke 11:45-52 and 13:34-35, the generation of people in His day generally were "chips off the old block" in respect to reception of God's messengers. In fact, the heir had come, and they were planning to kill the heir, Matt. 21:33-43. Hence, they stood condemned, Jn. 3:36, and the sentence was just. God had drawn lines before, as in the forty years wilderness wanderings and the Babylonian Captivity, and they were drawn again. Constant rejection ("How often would I, but you would not") brings one into a state of the unpardonable sin, Matt. 12. Jesus could see that this generation as a whole was in such state. Thus the reason for a part of what He teaches in Matt. 24, (12).

(10) The widow's mite (Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4), so familiar to most, is a shining example of giving, far exceeding any tithe, and actually exhibiting the real "spirit of the law". (By the way, do you see the connection between the idea of "spirit of" and the fact that the real "you" is actually a spirit being?) To be commended by Jesus was something, and this lady understandably was a refreshing person among a multitude of external law-keepers.

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There is no real accurate way of discerning just what any coin used in Jesus' day might equal in ours, but we give the following list more for purposes of understanding the relationship between coins of that day than in our day.

The Greek word translated here is known as a lepton. It was the smallest coin in value used then. We list the following with at least one reference if possible, and some of the various ways the Greek words are translated.

mite (coins, copper coins, coppers)—worth 1/16 of American penny.

farthing (penny)—worth 1/2 of a penny, Matt. 10:29; Luke 12:6.

denarius (penny)—worth .08, Matt. 20:2; John 6:7 (a day's pay).

drachma (piece of silver, silver coin)—worth .09, Luke 15:8.

didrachma (piece of money, shekel)—.28, Matt. 17:27 (equal to Hebrew shekel, the half shekel was the yearly temple tax.)

mina (pound)—9.60 (or equal to one hundred drachmas), Luke 19:13.

talent—either silver or gold, and of varying weights, hence varying amounts of money.

The reader may consult various sources, and none agree among themselves as to the exact value of each of these, though some agreement exists about various ones of these listed. Hence the above list should be considered in this light.

(11) In many ways, some of which we have pointed out, Jesus was cosmopolitan. Some Greek people, perhaps proselytes or people interested in being so, were at this

particular Passover. They contacted Phillip (who had a Greek name) about seeing Jesus. The records do not say whether they ever got to see Jesus or not, but the lessons Jesus gave as a result of their inquiry not only comprised a great challenge to total service, but also formed the final public discourse by Jesus. Much private teaching was done after this, but none in public (that we have recorded).

The lesson Jesus taught in vv. 23-26 was that the only possibility of increase in the vegetable world of nature was through death, as that of a grain of wheat. Certainly wheat will not grow unless in some means it gets in contact with soil (or its equivalent) and moisture (wheat three to four thousand years old has been found in Egyptian pyramids). Such was also the way, Jesus taught, that His kingdom would increase. He would give his life for the increase of the kingdom. All who followed Him must lose their life in His by following Him.

Much the same lesson had been taught at different times however, such as Mark 8:34-38, that self-gratification brought no gain. Verse 26 uses Greek verbs in the present tense which, in the particular mood Jesus uses, teach that the ones who are His servants must keep on following Him. Hence, no service without sacrifice. Self must die, that new life can be produced.

Now read v. 27 in your version, as any will at least present some rendering of this text. It is definitely a problem to translate, though the surrounding context may help decide the more probable rendering. This is why you need to keep in mind what Jesus said, both before and after it.

Christ had expressed the thought of death. He knew His own was soon to happen. He then said, "My own life is even now troubled (had been and still is)," and "what shall I say?" So far, so good. However, the next

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sentence though not difficult of translation is hard to understand. Should we consider that it is 1) a suggested response He might make to the preceding question, 2) a rhetorical question for the sake of discussion, 3) a command, indicating that He does not want to die, or 4) a prayer, much as that in Gethsemane, Math. 26:39 and Mark 14:36? Each of these possibilities has its adherents. The first possibility is less likely than any of the rest. The second is a form of teaching (like Romans 6:1) which could have been followed up by the denial and commitment to God in verse 27b and 28. The third is distinctly possible, since He was human, and emotionally unwilling to endure the cross, though He would not change His mind. The fourth is echoed again in Gethsemane, and only the conditional "if you will" is left out, and could be understood in the light of the garden utterance.

God was very much aware of His Son, and promptly answered. Some could not decide what had taken place, so Jesus informed them, v. 30. Whichever possibility Jesus meant in v. 27, v. 31-32 definitely indicated His will for the future. He intended to bring life through His death. The cross, as John interprets for us in v. 34, is that avenue by which He will give himself. The reference to the ruler of this world and the judgment of it bring to mind ch. 14:30; 16:33. The sentence was in effect on both sin and Satan. The cross was the end of sin's dominion, I Cor. 15:55-57.

The question of the crowd may tell us that they equated "Son of man" and "Messiah." If He was to die, as they understood Him to say, how was it possible for the equation to be true, since the Messiah was to remain, as they thought. The old problem: false concepts of the nature of the Messiah.

Jesus' reply in v. 35-36 was intended to tell them that the opportunity to follow what they could "see" was theirs, and to follow while opportunity presented itself.

Vv. 37-43 inform us that the public ministry, with perhaps the exception of vv. 44-50, is over. The remaining chapters will record private ministry and the events during and after the death on Calvary. These verses also informs us that the rejection of Jesus was not unlike that in other times, and was one of the fulfillments (see Acts 28 for another) of Isaiah 53:1 and 6:9-10. The texts in both Math. 13 and Acts 28 show that the predicted unbelief was because the people willed it to be so. The passage in Romans 10:18-21 is a good parallel to this text. God has so willed the affairs of men that though men may have free choices in respect to obedience or disobedience of His will, the results are already determined. To refuse is our privilege, but it brings a consequent hardened heart, and the final end, if the will is not changed, is death in hell. The state of mind that would bring such a result can be seen in some of the authorities, as John wrote of them in vv. 42-43. Self had not died for them, and no life would be forthcoming until it did!

A sad day for Israel was the day Jesus uttered vv. 44-50. The basic ideas had all been presented before, that of 1) Jesus' relationship to God, with the 2) consequent relationship of Jesus and what He had taught to the world, and 3) the consequent condemnation (note v. 31) of those who refused what He had taught. And the majority of Israel was among the last.

(12) (13) This section, Math. 24:1-25:46; Mark 13:1-37 and Luke 21:1-36, begins a private ministry of teaching that extends through John 13-16, as well as the teaching done after the resurrection. Within this section

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Jesus develops a rather extensive description of the end of the Jewish nation and Jerusalem, His second coming, His relationship to His disciples and theirs to Him, and the Holy Spirit's person and work.

The immediate text deals with 1) the end of Jerusalem, and consequently the destruction of the temple, with the effect these things would have on the Jewish nation, and 2) His second coming and the end of the world. The following outline of the whole section will present the text as we view it.

There are no solutions to this section that are without their problems, both exegetically and theologically. Whatever view of the millennial problem one holds will inevitably determine some exegesis here. As before stated under #64 (4), there are no authorities in interpretation (See the article "Interpretation" in selected studies). The best method of interpretation is an inductive method, which ascertains all the facts and then draws a conclusion. It has its problems, obviously, since the facts may be overlooked, misunderstood or misevaluated. We hence always should remain interested in any view of anyone, since no one has a corner on all the truth, and definitely not how it should apply in every circumstance.

When the Master left Jerusalem, the disciples made some remarks about the beautiful temple. Herod the Great had worked on it for some twenty years prior to his death, and work had continued over the intervening thirty years up to the time of our text. It was completed in A.D. 64, just prior to its final destruction by the Roman army in 68-70.

In their response to His surprising expression about the city, they asked and He answered four questions. The disciples confused the questions because of their mixed-up concepts of the relationship of the Jewish nation to the kingdom. The identical problem yet exists, which is

why we have commented as we have already under such texts as Matt. 21:33-45.

Perhaps some few comments are pertinent. The oft heard remark about "wars" and "rumors of wars" was not said in connection with the second coming of Jesus at all. It is not right to so quote it in that light. Besides, what sort of a sign is something that always happens? As the point about Noah shows, it will be life as usual when Jesus comes, not unusual.

One problem with the analysis presented of the text is the interpretation of the word "immediately" in v. 29 of Matthew. As we have interpreted it, Jesus used it differently than we might use it, since it has been some twenty centuries ago. Yet, the New Testament writers invariably warn that the second coming is to be expected any moment (and life thus lived in this light, James 5:7; II Pet. 3:1-18); so maybe that is how Jesus meant for it to be understood. The second epistle to the Thessalonians was written because the people had understood Paul to say that Jesus was coming right away. But there is no other way to teach about the second coming except to teach that it is to be expected anytime.

The following arrangements of the disciple's questions as Jesus answered them, with the texts for each answer, is given.

THE QUESTIONS

Math. 24:3

Mark 13:4

Luke 21:7

1. When is the end of Jerusalem?
2. What is the sign of the end of Jerusalem?
3. What is the sign of your coming?
4. What is the sign of the end of the world?

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THE ANSWERS — ABOUT JERUSALEM

1st question as to 'when'

Math. 24:4-14 Mark 13:5-13 Luke 21:8-19

2nd question as to 'what sign'

Math. 24:15-28 Mark 13:14-23 Luke 21:20-24

THE ANSWERS — ABOUT 2ND COMING

3rd question as to 'sign' of your coming

Math. 24:29-31 (vs. 27) Mark 13:24-27 Luke 21:25-28

4th question as to 'end of the world'

Math. 24:37-25:30 Mark 13:33-37 Luke 21:34-36

Note carefully the review and contrast in the two different events as recorded in Math. 24:32-36; Mark 13:28-32; and Luke 21:29-33. ("this" vs. "that")

Consider carefully what Jesus teaches about His second coming:

Parable of master and the thief—time unknown, so danger

Parable of faithful steward—time unknown, so duty

Parable of the porter—time unknown, so loyalty

Parable of 10 virgins—time unknown, so be prepared

Parable of talents—time unknown, so be wise

The days of Noah are like the end of the world (and 2nd coming): *fact* of rain was certain and sure, but *when* the rain was to come was *uncertain* and even *unknown*. Note vs. 37-38 "until the day . . . they did not know."

The description of the Judgment: each is *rewarded* as life *required* (Math. 25:31-46). Jesus said: Do not let this life divert you from faithful service. Each one has his work. What I say to you (apostles) I say to all: watch at every season.

The value of parallel accounts is again apparent, when Matt. v. 15; Mark v. 14 and Luke v. 20 are compared.

When Jesus spoke of the terrible suffering among the Jews when the end came, His prophecy is borne out by the Jewish historian, Josephus. The man was in command of a part of the Jewish army in North Palestine, and when the Roman army captured him, and moved on to Jerusalem, he was taken along. He witnessed the siege of the city by the Romans, extending over a period of some two years, and thus wrote from an eye-witness viewpoint. Among other things, he told that the Romans crucified so many Jews that wood for the crosses was exhausted. So they impaled them, or did other things as terrible. The dissension among the Jews inside the city became so great over the long period of time, that they warred among themselves, and one faction finally opened the gates and let the Romans in to take the city.

He also chronicled the fact that the Jewish Christians as a group believed the warning of Jesus in this section, and many left the city early and fled across the Jordan to the area of Perea, thus escaping the slaughter in the city of Jerusalem, where many had fled for safety.

A comment about v. 14 of Matthew is in order. Read Col. 1:6 and 1:23. This epistle was written about A.D. 63, just prior to the fall of the nation, and the prediction's fulfillment. As you meditate about the fall of the nation, reread Deut. 28:58-68.

We pointed out in the discussion of Luke 17:37 that the Greek word in v. 28 of Matthew would be better translated vultures than eagles, since eagles do not eat carrion.

Many in the theological world have projected theories about the second coming of Jesus, using Math. 24 and Daniel as a basis. Perhaps a comment here will be thought-provoking at least. Jesus had access to the book of Daniel just as we do, plus any or all of the other books in the Old Testament (not to mention the fact that He

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directed the writing of these books). He was the person who gave the information in Math. 24. Now if he could not figure out the time, from all this information which men use today, of His second coming, one might do well to hold all such attempts by other men as a bit doubtful, if not a waste of time, would you not say?

Another item of interest is the repeated use of the flood as being an actual historical event and in some ways an illustration of the status of things at Jesus' second coming. Other passages dealing with His second coming are Math. 13:36-43, 47-50; Luke 12:35-40; I Cor. 15:51-52; I Thess. 5:1-11; II Thess. 1:5-2:11; James 5:7-11; II Peter 3:8-14.

As you read the various illustrations Jesus gave concerning His second coming, note that all convey an idea of "soon" but "unknown" with respect to time. Did you catch the same drift in the passages from the epistles? Each illustration or comment describes a possible time to prepare even if the exact time of appearance is not known. Hence, the present imperative form of the Greek word in v. 42 (the same in 25:13) is most important: "keep watching!"

The theme of judgment is likewise present. It could not be otherwise, for life on this earth is over, and the life with no end begins. Hence, John 3:36 becomes most meaningful to this discussion. Time to change will be over, for time will be over. The deeds done in the physical body will determine the future without end, II Cor. 5:10. The parables of the ten virgins and of the talents highlighted the idea that no excuse for being unprepared was acceptable, and all were to be judicious in the stewardship of time. You see, judgment not only will involve use of things, but use of time in regard to those things. Hence, each of the parables or illustrations pinpoints some one facet about the second coming, as

the outline above shows. The judgment scene in 25:31-46 only enforces the idea: how you let your faith work decides which eternal state you will experience. Varying degrees or number of "talents" are unimportant—all have equal responsibility in respect to that which is entrusted to their care.

The mention of the preparation of the kingdom from the foundation of the world calls to mind such passages as Eph. 1:3-14. The remark about the place prepared for the devil and his messengers, v. 41, perhaps implies that God never intended for anyone to perish, II Pet. 3:9, and did not prepare hell just so people could be condemned to be there forever. The reader may wish to read the article in the selected studies on death for discussion about punishment forever for the wicked.

(14) The texts of Matt. 26:1-3, 14-16; Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 and Luke 22:1-6 recount several items of interest. One of those is that each of the three accounts mention the upcoming feast called The Passover and/or the feast of Unleavened Bread. Luke's account clearly shows that the two terms can and/or did mean the same thing, depending on the frame of reference. This may help in the understanding of a passage like John 18:28. Another point to be remembered is that the discussions in the temple apparently occurred on a day which was two days prior to the beginning of the feast. For discussion of the actual time of the Passover, see under point (15). A third item to remember is that Luke specifically points out that the decision of Judas to betray Jesus occurred at this juncture of time (in Luke's words, the Passover was *near* in time, the other two accounts are more specific). The decision of Judas to deliver Jesus to the rulers in exchange for thirty pieces of silver (an unknown amount which the rulers weighed out to him in the most orthodox way. Note their thinking in Math. 27:3-10)

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perhaps was made at the anointing of Jesus by Mary some three or four days earlier, and the inclusion of the event by Matthew and Mark help in understanding his action, since he was indirectly chided by Jesus for his attitude and was not able to get his hands on the money, which he could "see" being poured out of an alabaster box.

We have pointed out before that the rulers were not willing to accept Jesus, though the people were. This text spells this situation out in detail. You can easily appreciate the great advantage the action of Judas gave the rulers. They could go to the Garden of Gethsemane late at night and know that Jesus could be taken without a lot of people around. They may have first gone to the upper room, since Judas knew where that was. (No one but Peter and John knew until they got there, doubtless a precaution taken by Jesus, since He knew of the contemplated action by Judas.) But Jesus and the disciples left before the night was over, so the garden became the place of arrest. After the arrest, the hasty trials and sentence could be over barely after sunrise, and the crucifixion by 9:00 a.m., because Judas so acted. We might add that Luke's account states that Satan entered into Judas at this time. John 13:27 also mentions this idea when two (?) days later at the Passover supper, Judas refused to accept the chance to change his mind, and decided to go through with the betrayal. However, the fact had been pointed out almost a year earlier that Judas had so given his life over to the devil that Jesus used the Greek word that elsewhere describes Satan in reference to Judas, John 6:70. He had called Peter Satan in Math. 16:23. Did he consider that anyone who refused to do what was godly became a henchman of the devil in that moment? What about the remarks in John 8:39ff. along this line? Jesus mentioned in John 14:30-31 about the

relationship He sustained with Satan—that He had ever refused to allow any deviation in His life from God's will, thus Satan had no power over His life. Read again Matt. 12:43-45.

(15) The Fourth Passover—the accounts in Matt. 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16 and Luke 22:7-13 pinpoint for us 1) the fact that only Peter and John knew where the room was in which they would prepare the feast, as Jesus did not specify anything definite to them except that a man unnamed would have a room prepared and that a man carrying a jar of water was their means of finding this man, 2) the day on which this was done was the day which was called the first day of unleavened bread. It was called this since all leaven and anything with leaven in it had to be removed from the house in preparation for the Passover Feast, Ex. 12:19. The account in Exodus 12 specifies only three items were required for the feast: a lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs, v. 8. Nothing else was demanded—hence those who say that Christ drank fermented wine at the Passover Supper because the drink had to be that simply do not say what the Bible said. Any kind of drink or none at all could be used. We are anticipating the events a bit, but the accounts never say that Christ took wine and used such to institute the supper. Rather, all the accounts describe the drink as the "fruit of the vine." See under #17 for other discussion on wine.

We call the reader's attention to the fact of a definite set of standards the lamb sacrificed had to meet. By Jesus' day, the priests were selling the lambs which they approved, and it soon became such a business that Jesus had to attempt to stop it twice in four Passovers. Annas and his family made a lucrative business out of the temple. The priests could reject any lamb brought by a family

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for sacrifice, and the only recourse would be for the family to buy one from the flock the priests had. Neat, huh?

Actually, the thirteenth of the month, Nisan, was the day when the house was cleaned of leaven; the lamb killed in preparation for the night's feast, along with the bread and herbs. The fourteenth, the house was ready for the seven days of leavenless food.

When the fourteenth of Nisan occurred is a definite problem. The Jews held that the first appearance of the new moon was to be the starting point for the new month. The moon would then be full at the beginning of the feast on the middle day of the month. However, the means of determining when that new moon appeared is not easy for us to find out from this point in time, nor even for the Jews in that time. The normal custom seems to have been (according to Edersheim, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services*, pg. 200ff.) that the Jewish Sanhedrin met on the day following the twenty-ninth day of each month, and upon the testimony of credible witnesses, determined if the new moon had been seen or not the preceding evening. If, according to the witnesses, the moon had been seen the evening of the twenty-ninth, then the Sanhedrin declared the new month had begun. If no such testimony was forthcoming, then the month was declared to begin at sunset of the day of the meeting. Hence, we cannot determine what the Jewish Sanhedrin decided in regard to the year in question.

The only way we can even get close to the day upon which this particular feast began is by the record of the New Testament writers. The lambs were sacrificed by the temple priests in the afternoon prior to the fourteenth day. The Jewish custom of deciding that evening had begun (and a new day) when the first three stars were seen may have been followed by those at this feast. At any rate, the lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs

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were to be consumed by morning. But at this feast, the evening and morning of what day, as we reckon time? Consider the following ideas: 1) John 19:14 specifically states that the crucifixion occurred on the day called the Preparation. Friday was this day. Since the Sabbath always fell on Saturday by our calendar, the day preceding (Friday) was the day to prepare for the Sabbath. In Jewish circles, it came to be called the Day of Preparation (and still is by some Jews) easily enough. 2) Now turn to Luke 23:54 and Mark 15:42, and you will note this exact fact is recorded by both. Luke 23:56 notes the Sabbath followed the day called Preparation and in 24:1, the first day of the week (Sunday) followed the Sabbath. Three successive days occurred then, the Preparation Day, upon which Jesus ate the Passover, was killed and buried, the Sabbath, upon which the women rested, and the first day, upon which the women came to the tomb to find Jesus who was not there but resurrected.

Now some have argued over the centuries that Jesus ate the Passover Supper early, so that 1) He might die at the exact time the paschal lambs were being sacrificed in the temple. However, there is nothing ever implied in the relationship of type to antitype that demands this particular thing must occur. Or 2) because He had prophesied that He would be in the tomb three days and nights, that the crucifixion must have occurred on Wednesday, in order that the literal three days and nights might be fulfilled. There are several good reasons why this is rather improbable and even false.

One is that the Scripture does not use the idea of days any more closely than we do. We noted at Luke 13:32 that Jews obviously did not mean three literal days. We must decide what He meant by it in Math. 12:40 and other places where He used it. Consider Gen. 43:17-18 and I Kings 15:1, 2 and 9 as an example of reckoning

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time. Secondly, sometimes the gospel writers record Jesus as saying "on" the third day, while at other times they record the idea of "in" three days, or "after," John 2:19, 20 (the rulers understood Him to say "within" three days); and Math. 27:63-64. In this last passage, the rulers used a Greek conjunction which may mean until, while, up to, as far as, or various similar ideas. Did they then mean three days from the day of burial, the day after when they were talking, or what? Note the statement of the men in Lk. 24:21, then read I Cor. 15:4.

Consider this idea which we have urged before, that Jesus never broke any Old Testament commandment. Now if the theory put forward by some be correct, He did not eat the Passover at the appointed time at all, nor did His disciples. Too, the eating of the Passover early would necessitate the killing of the lamb early. Which priest or Levite do you think would do that (especially if he knew it was for Jesus!)?

We do not use the expression under consideration to mean exactly seventy-two hours, rarely, if at all. We will specify the hours in mind if we intend for the period to be exact. We note that the accounts do not make a point of telling just when Nicodemus and Joseph placed Jesus in the tomb. As far as the women were concerned, He was not completely anointed yet—was He considered buried or not?

Another thought: since the resurrection obviously occurred after the Sabbath was over, or after sunset in the evening, if we take the three days and nights to be seventy-two hours, no more and no less, (as some insist they must mean) counting back from some time after sunset in the evening (the accounts do not say when Jesus arose, only that He was gone when the women arrived. So anytime after sunset in the evening He would have arisen on the first day of the week) would take us

to a point of time on Wednesday, but after sunset Wednesday, our time. But the accounts plainly teach that Jesus was buried before sunset. Thus the time span is greater than seventy-two hours. So it does not fit the facts.

Some argue that the first (and sometimes last) day of the feast was called "Sabbath," because it was a day upon which no work could be done. But the Bible does not call this day by such name, and the Hebrew word does not mean "Sabbath." It conveys the idea of a holy day in nature, and is better translated convocation. So that idea is not very sound, either.

We conclude that the view of the church over the years is correct, that Jesus ate the Passover Supper at the proper time, the fourteenth of Nisan, was crucified that same day and buried before sunset. The day following this Friday (called the Preparation) was Saturday, a Sabbath Day. Sometime after sunset (which closed this Sabbath day and began the first day) Jesus arose, as He prophesied. From this perspective, we must understand His expression "three days and nights." The major emphasis, in Math. 12 or elsewhere, is that He would be killed, buried and resurrected. Those things were done, and we may rest our faith in Him, Whom sin could not conquer, and death could not hold.

(16) and (17). The upper room brings us to the section of the Gospel accounts that is replete with grand themes to study, great subjects to ponder, and difficult ideas to grasp.

The text of Luke 22:24-30 apparently recounts an incident which occurred about the beginning of the evening's activities. We may imagine the sunset, and through the last rays catching a glimpse of the disciples on their way to the room and feast prepared. Perhaps the thought of reclining at the table, and the various positions each might have in respect to Jesus brought about the never-

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ending argument about who was the greatest (see under Math. 18). Jesus surely must have winced as the men, thoughts on themselves, argued about the subject, while He was on the edge of death itself. He again had to point out that service is the highwater mark of greatness and the footwashing in John 13 reinforces this principle. (Perhaps even resulting from this argument. The obvious humiliation of Jesus in so doing would not be lost on these men, who would doubtless be chagrined by the rebuke given, both by word and deed). False greatness was everywhere around them. They needed to adhere to Jesus, as they had in the past days, and all they could imagine, and more too, would be theirs. Loyalty is honored in God's kingdom.

John's section from 13:1 - 17:26 is so full of subjects that the scope of this book will permit only a small amount of discussion on each one.

The section opens with several assertions about Jesus, 1) He loved His disciples prior to the feast of the Passover, 2) He knew His impending death was at hand which preceded 3) His return to God. The text does not assert that He ate the Passover Supper before the proper time, as some teach. It simply asserts that Jesus had love for the disciples prior to the time of the Passover, and the events on the morrow were but a prelude to His departure for heaven.

V. 2 in the King James version is badly misleading. The words "being ended" (the Supper) are quite incorrect. The Greek text means "during" or "while," thus placing the footwashing in the midst of the feast, not after it, even as v. 4 shows. We refer the reader to the comments on Luke 22:3 for Satan and Judas.

The reader may know that the custom of the day was that people reclined on one side, rather than sat on chairs, to eat. The common pictures of the last supper

are untrue in this regard. The arrangement of the men at the table is not stated, though a few things are implied.

The text in John 13:24-26 probably tells us that Peter was not close enough to either John or Jesus to ask what he wanted to know. John was reclining on the mat immediately in front of Jesus (that is what "lying close to the breast of Jesus" means). Why Peter beckoned is not clear, though the above position mentioned might show why he did if Peter did not want others to hear his question to John (or maybe John's answer also). So we tentatively locate Jesus and John together, with Peter reclining in a place where John could see him. The only other person whose location is possibly given is that of Judas. Considering the exchange of words between him and Jesus, and the failure of the rest of the disciples to know whom Jesus meant by His "one who betrays," it seems likely that Judas was close enough to Jesus for them to talk, perhaps reclining immediately behind Christ, but not for others to hear. Read Matt. 26:25 in this light. If the disciples did not hear this exchange between Jesus and Judas (or that between Jesus and John, mentioned above), then the result in John 13:27-29 would be possible.

"Deity serves!" Jesus said, "My Father is busy until now, and I am too," John 5:17. The character of Jesus was yet an enigma to the disciples, even though He had tried to explain it in various ways. One can hardly expect Peter to react differently than he does, v. 6, 8. But Jesus quickly pointed out that refusal to accept what He wanted to do severed disciple/master relationships. That fact is still true! The response of Peter in v. 9 is no better, for he is still telling the Master what to do. The primary requisite to becoming a disciple of Christ is submission. It is also the basic ingredient to remaining a disciple.

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Peter was so in error, but Jesus loved him anyway. Such is also the case with any disciple, we presume. Peter's heart was in the right place, though!

The act of Jesus, as He laid aside His outer garments, and began to wash the disciple's feet, is a clear example of the way those who follow Him are to do. We are commanded to do *as* He did (be willing to minister in behalf of others, regardless of what that service is), not necessarily what He did, though nothing would be wrong with so doing. In some cultures today, even as then, this gesture would be a sign that the host was cognizant of the physical needs of his guests, if walking were the common means of travel. Hence, we think it not strange that I Tim. 5:10 contains the idea of footwashing. It was a common cultural courtesy of that day. It is the principle of humble service that is expected of the disciple, however it may be expressed in daily activity.

The lesson Jesus emphasized was that the desire for greatness must be preceded by a knowledge of what true greatness is, and then the life so lived as to accomplish such. One never gets too great to serve, we learn. Nor does Jesus' humble service deny His authority. Hence, the one serving others need not consider that the station he occupies in life is degraded by serving others, regardless of what they may think. The disciple represents Christ as he goes, and if any feel offended by the disciples' willingness to serve and reject the disciple, rejection of both Christ and God takes place at the same time. Luke 10:16 contains the same lesson in respect to the three-fold relationship of disciple/Jesus/God. The Master, the messenger and the messenger are inseparable, John 15:23.

Perhaps a remark about Jesus and Judas will be appropriate, as we consider vv. 18-19. Many times in the New Testament the accounts state that some act or event fulfilled scripture. Jesus remarked about Judas in refer-

ence to the betrayal that Scripture was being fulfilled. The question in reference to such things is this: did people do certain things because they knew the scripture had foreshadowed it, and they thus felt that it had to be fulfilled? or were they constrained to do so by God, having no choice of their own? or did their choices, known of old by God, simply bring about the fulfillment of a certain prophecy? What did Jesus mean by the statement in v. 19—that whatever Judas did was actually of his own free will, or that all he did was destined beforehand, and Judas had no choices? Note such passages as John 19:23-24, 34 and 37; Acts 28:24-28. The situation is changed, though, in respect to Jesus. What He did while on earth He had previously predicted through His servants, the prophets. Hence, He merely kept His Word.

“My body—My blood: for (each and all of) you!” The Passover meal having begun (Math. 26:20-29; Mark 14:17-25; Luke 22:14-23), Jesus took occasion to express His great longing to partake of the meal with the disciples, and pointed out that it marked a definite point in history. The fulfillment of the kingdom promised was at hand, and the message preached by the prophets, John and Himself, was about to be replaced by a new one; the king is on His throne (and the kingdom has a new constitution for its citizens).

The use of the loaf of unleavened bread to represent His body, and the cup of juice from the grapevine to represent His blood were acts of lasting importance. The communion service is one of the ways to recall the sacrifice of Christ on behalf of every person. As John 3:17 states, that was the primary aim in Him coming to earth. The elements Jesus used were of a simple nature, doubtless meant to keep the partaker's thoughts off the elements themselves and on the actuality they represent. Whether we can ascertain if Jesus meant for these ele-

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ments, and these alone, to be used in the communion service is difficult if not impossible to decide. Though we are unable to decide how much bread to take, whether it was taken from one piece, or already broken up, or whether the juice was hot, cold, strong, weak, etc., we can mostly certainly use these and rest assured they will help us recall our Savior. That is important wherever, however or whenever we observe the service. To recall the fact that sin demands death, and the sin of all was represented at Calvary in Christ (II Cor. 5:21) is the crux of the memorial. Sin's penalty was not repealed by God—Christ took the penalty, and with His stripes sin was healed. His death, represented in the memorial, is the basis for any hope we have for God's mercy, and faith is the means of appropriating it.

Thus Jesus taught His small group that His blood was shed *for the purpose* of sin's forgiveness (by the way, the Greek text is like Acts 2:38—and both indicate the purpose of the preceding action. Here, Jesus' death for the purpose of remission of sins; there, the believer's repentance and immersion for the purpose of remission of sins).

The harmony outline indicates that Judas left before the institution of the Lord's Supper. A careful perusal of the accounts will seemingly indicate this fact, though the reader will note that John's account does not record the institution of the Supper, while the synoptics do not record that Judas went out, though all record the fact that Jesus spoke of betrayal by one of them. John's account does not say at what point Judas left in relationship to the meal. Paul's account in I Cor. 11 states that the juice representing Jesus' blood was not given to the men until the supper was over, though the emblem of the bread was given during the meal. So we

do not know if Judas was present for any of this, or all of it.

Judas gone—Jesus glorified: is there any connection between the two? When Jesus spoke of glory, He had direct reference to His death. He did not teach us to glory (or even remember) in His birth. But when a friend has gone to betray Him, and Calvary is hard upon Him, then He is glorified. Judas had left to bring about that death (though he may have understood very little that such would actually happen) even though Jesus had tried to prod his conscience into action, and get his mind to change. One can but ask if Judas' life does not in some aspects forshadow ours—he gloried in other things than Jesus, and caused death. But we have also done such, and Jesus died because of us, too. Perhaps we should not exonerate Judas, nor self, but how little we understand the magnitude of our own choice for self over Christ.

John 13:31-38 contains a most familiar text, and yet, though centuries have come and gone; its depth of meaning always beckons the disciple. We can but admire Peter—he really did not understand His master (even as we also fail) but none can deny his love, nor find fault with his "I will give my life for you." Could we who meditate on this thought find the resolve in our life to so love!

Jesus spoke of departure, and Peter wanted no part of such a thing. Yet, growth demands that we "make it on our own" in some ways. Faith is not a product of possession, but rather of evidence (Romans 8:24-25). The disciples only knew the amount of faith they had when Jesus left. So it is with every disciple.

Dark sayings in reference to betrayal and death, rebukes for seemingly innocuous requests, refusal of acclaims in one place and time, defense of such at another, thrones, servants, life, death, love, denial—all doubtless

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were present in the minds of that small group of men in the upper room. No great wonder that the text found in John 14-16 was spoken by Jesus to those men.

These three chapters outline Jesus' care for these men, how fruitful they can be through Him, and how victorious in their life because He has provided the way.

Consider some of the provisions Jesus mentioned: personal preparation for them 14:1-5, and the way to get it, 6-12; answered prayer 14:13-14 (15:7); another helper to take His place, 14:15-25; with assurances that the thing probably absent from their lives at that moment (peace of mind) would be theirs through Him, 14:26-31; assurance that His personal absence would not hinder a satisfying life, 15:1-11; nor indicate that they were aught but His friends, 15:12-17; and would but share the life they admired in Him, 15:18-16:4; confidence in the future both as to direction, 16:5-15; and a life-long experience culminating in joy perfected through being in Him 16:16-33, added the icing. All this, and heaven, too!

The response of the men in 16:29-30 is almost as hard to understand as anything they had said. What did they really mean? Did they not understand any of His extended discourse, or His references to the helper to come? Could they not share any or little of what He taught because they were too troubled in mind over their dispute about greatness, or the footwashing, or that abrupt exodus of Judas? Or had the various bits of teaching finally fallen into place as they listened, and now they felt the subtle implications of things Jesus had said and done had become meaningful? His obvious ability to anticipate their questions, the varied pictures He had drawn reflecting a particular aspect of their relationship to Him, and through Him to God—perhaps this was the burst of knowledge now theirs. It may be that they were finally convinced that Jesus knew exactly what they needed, and

their faith was in His knowledge (though not in their understanding)—such knowledge being so like God's that they accepted Jesus as from God.

Some study spent on the smaller sections of this large discourse will be rewarding, not only for gleaning information that can be applied to our own personal life, but also in increasing our knowledge of how much Jesus promised the disciples.

Those of you who do not read Greek will perhaps be interested in a few remarks along about the words Jesus used. 14:1 presents an interesting problem in translation. Some forms of the Greek verb are ambiguous (*every language* has some problems of this nature!) and only context can determine what is to be understood. John 5:39 is like this (see *in loco*). Various translators thus take the passage different ways, depending on what they believe the context is. As an illustration, the first verb translated "believe" can either be understood as a statement or a command. So also with the second verb "believe." Did Jesus mean that the disciples had faith in God, and they also did in Him, and this was to be continued (thus both verbs were to be understood as commands to continue the status quo), or that they believed in God, and they were to keep believing in Him (the first a statement, the second a command, etc.?). Hence no final decision that has no problems can be made. Each person must study the immediate context in the light of the larger context of the whole evening's session, and even in the yet larger context of the disciples and their relationship to Jesus and to God.

The Greek word in 14:2 (translated "mansions" in King James) simply means "dwelling place" and has none of the connotations of our word "mansion." The same word in the verb form is found in 14:23 describing what

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Jesus and God would do for those who love Christ and keep His word: make their home with such a person.

The Greek word in 14:16 translated "comforter" in King James means 'someone who can help.' Consider then all the ways the Holy Spirit was going to help the disciples, as you read 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15. List them!

In 14:18, the Greek word translated "comfortless" in King James is the word for "orphan" in Greek. So the promise of 1) the Holy Spirit's presence when He left, 16:7ff., and 2) the promise that both the Father and Himself would dwell with them, 14:23, would take the place of Jesus' bodily presence and be to their benefit. Only by such a method could Jesus be personally with the disciples everywhere, since the physical body would not limit Him as when He was on earth.

The word "peace" in our vocabulary has several ramifications (like most other English words). The Biblical usage very often is intended to convey an idea of a right relationship with God regardless of what the external circumstances might be. It carries little if any of the idea of "ceasation of hostilities" as is normally the case with us. With this idea in mind, consider 14:27; 16:33; Rom. 5:1; then compare Math. 5:3-12, where Jesus described the really happy man, with II Tim. 3:12. How do you now understand Math. 5:9? By the way, our English name of Irene comes from the Greek word in question.

Note that Jesus commanded the disciples to trust Him as actually being the embodiment (Heb. 1:3) of God, or to consider the deeds He had done in order to come to this conclusions, 14:8-11. The disciples' confusion of the relationship of Jesus to God was again shown to be deficient. The lesson of Math. 22:41-45 had not yet been understood by them. Jesus had expected them to deduce His deity through observation and reason

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(see also Rom. 1:18ff.). Hence, if they wished to know what God would do or say under given circumstances, they only needed to "see" Him through Christ.

14:12 is a problem to some. We understand Jesus to mean that the new dispensation of grace which was inaugurated by Him would permit the disciples to "perform" greater things that He did. He could not usher people into the kingdom but only call to their attention that it was near, Mark 1:14-15. All who accepted Christ through the message proclaimed would become a part of the kingdom, characterized by light and God's power, Acts 26:18.

The promises contained in 14:13-14; 15:7; or as in James 5:13-15 should be understood in the light of I John 5:14-15.

14:15 (note that 15:13 is one of the commands to keep) highlighted the motivation for obedience. They would not obey primarily from fear, but rather because they had considered the loveliness of all Jesus is, and then gladly obey whatever He desired of them. Motivation and/or attitude was always to be the checkpoint for anything they did or encouraged others to do. Note that active obedience was the mark of love, v. 21, and love for Christ would habitually manifest itself in submission to His will, v. 23, whereas the habitual non-lover would not obey Him, v. 24. Nothing was thus said about or contemplated for the erratic "lover" because such a person did not really love Christ. The manifestation of Christ (the Holy Spirit and Christ are so alike that when the Holy Spirit came, it could be said that Christ came) to the believer depended upon 1) their knowledge of Christ, 2) acceptance of Christ through believing (having faith) in Him, so that 3) their love could be directed into doing His will.

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14:25-31 revealed that the Holy Spirit would complete the revelation of Christ's will to them, thus they were not to be troubled in mind, v. 27; 16:7-15. The disciples' understanding of Christ was not what it could be, which fact would necessitate added guidance. The failure of the devil to have any claim on Jesus' life was a glorious truth, but the disciples needed help (cf. Luke 22:31ff.), which would come through the Holy Spirit, so that they could resist the devil as Jesus had done.

14:31 seems to point up the fact that the remainder of the discourse was given elsewhere than the upper room. Perhaps the men arose and Jesus taught them on the way to Gethsemane, though it is difficult to place the prayer of ch. 17 in such a situation. Math. 26:30 and Mark 14:26 record that a hymn was sung before the departure to Mt. Olivet.

(17) 15:1-11 presented a beautiful picture, easily comprehended, of the necessity of Christ for the disciple and the disciple for Christ. The vine is dependent upon the branch to bear fruit, but the branch (the individual disciple) only produces by virtue of receiving life from the vine. Each disciple (branch) must then expect two things: 1) a drastic handling at the discretion of the vinedresser (the Father). Grapes are only borne on new wood, thus each year the old wood is pruned away, so that new wood can grow (how drastic God used His own Son so that fruit might be borne!) and 2) the determined will and expectation for life is to be a fruit-bearer. Anything else means that the "branch" will be removed from contact with Christ (the vine) and the fires of hell will have added fuel. Note the words in this text that describe a lifetime habit: v. 2 "bears," v. 5 "abides," v. 8 "hear"—all present an habitual disciple who is just that (a disciple) because of a willed contact by that disciple with Christ. No other "lines" are drawn

in the Scripture to describe a disciple except this one: service habitually, unto the culmination of physical life, Rev. 2:10b. Since God alone (the vinedresser) determines which branch is fruitless, only He knows whether the individual disciple (branch) is saved or lost. The disciple's part is ever to teach and exhort both self and others (Heb. 10:19-24) and leave it up to God to "draw the lines." If God is not willing that any perish, on His part, the disciple should be like Him in this respect. Each disciple should be glad if everyone went to heaven, should he not?

15:13-17 enlarged the idea of "how" the men were to love others who are Christ's—as 1) friends and 2) as Christ loved them. God had made the first move, and they had no merit to claim, only obedience to perform. Perhaps this section hit a trifle close to home, because this very evening love for each other had been conspicuous by its absence, and selfishness clearly evident among them.

15:18-16:4 presented the actual state of affairs in the "real" world—the world that Paul mentions in Eph. 6:10ff. The disciples, as are we, were easily led away from the reality of life. How the devil wins victories is to get one's thinking turned away from the actual reality to something secondary to it. This is done by getting us to not remember that any word we speak (Matt. 12:37) or any act we do (II Cor. 5:10) is related to eternity. There are no "vacuums" in life—no times or places in which the responsibility to *be right with God* are not present.

Because this is true, the disciples could take a cue from their master's life—the going would be rough, and some of that difficulty would come from those who would believe what they did was God's will. The rest of the N. T. is but one long illustration of just such as Jesus predicted. See here Acts 26:9ff.

Jesus mention in v. 26 that the Holy Spirit would bear witness to Him. However, there is no record of any such

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witnessing except through men willing to be used by the Holy Spirit. See Acts 2:4; Eph. 6:19.

When such testimony was given, men were held accountable, whether the testimony was by word or work, v. 22-24, Heb. 2:4. The disciples were thus advised of three distinct relationships in this section we call ch. 15:

- v. 4—a personal relationship to Christ
- v. 12—a personal relationship to each other
- v. 27—a personal relationship to the world.

16:1 made it clear to the listening men that Jesus cared enough for them to prevent their apostasy, though the sin of others directed against them could not be prevented. Certainly the soon-to-come religious persecution challenged their loyalty to Christ. The worst persecution of all is that of religious people upon other people. Much of the trouble in countries in and around India today is a result of religious differences. Hence "are you big enough" was the problem the disciples would face in the future—big enough to believe that faith could help them keep contact with Christ, Who would be able in every circumstance to lead them unto victory.

The coming of the Holy Spirit as "counsel for the defence" into the lives of these men would mean that the truth about Christ would be presented to the world. A partial list of what the Holy Spirit was to do through and for them is as follows:

1. be with them forever
2. teach them all things
3. bring to their remembrance all Christ had said to them
4. bear witness of Christ
5. convict the world of sin, righteousness, judgment
6. guide them into all truth
7. speak as He heard
8. reveal future events

9. glorify Christ by sharing with them what was Christ's (which also belonged to God, John 12:44-50).

His work then was that of correcting and convincing men in regard to Christ. His was not to glorify Himself, but Christ, much as the harmony supports the melody. Perhaps you would profit by comparing the people at Calvary with the people at Pentecost in relationship to the work of the Holy Spirit.

In thinking about the three items in vv. 8-11, compare the sermons in Acts 2:22ff. and 24:24ff.

16:16-24 presented the men with a future to be marked by sorrow followed by joy. How vivid the colors would become against Gethsemane and the blackness of Golgotha! But Acts 4:29-31 and 5:41-42 follow hard upon these verses—and bear testimony of faith seen in these men that was greater than persecution, or people or anything else.

16:28 sums up the whole life of Jesus: 1) His entrance into the stream of humanity, and 2) His departure back to His rightful place with God: humanity sandwiched between deity. And because these facts were true, the thoughts expressed in vv. 31-33 reminded the disciples that the world at its very worst could never win! Certainly the peace that Jesus wanted them to have through Him was a state of mind regardless of the external circumstances—seen in the knowledge that they shared a right relationship with Him Who had the whole world in His hands!

The texts found in Math. 26:30-35; Mark 14:26-31; and Luke 22:31-38 fit in someplace before the scenes in the Garden, perhaps after the prayer in John 17, or maybe before it, since in John's order of events, the prayer is the next event succeeding the discussion in ch. 13-16, as he leaves out the events of our texts. The parallel texts of Matt. 26:36 and Mark 14:32 place the above discussion on

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Mt. Olivet and preceding entry into the garden of Gethsemane.

Though Peter is the main character presented for our consideration, it is well to point out that 1) all the disciples vowed they would not "be skandalized" (caused to stumble, or fall away—to sin, as in Matt. 5:29-30; Luke 17:1) because of the events to follow, and 2) all vowed they would die before they would deny Christ. All made the same mistakes, which cause the downfall of many Christians. They all contradicted the Lord, asserted they were better than others, and relied on themselves. All fell—let everyone who stands beware lest he fall! But Jesus had foreseen just such denials and had predicted through Zechariah the prophet, 13:7, that the shepherd would be smitten, with the sheep consequently scattered. May we learn that it is not wrong to be determined, but it is tantamount to failure to trust in that determination! Well did Solomon write, "Pride precedes destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall," 16:18.

Yet they were loyal, and Jesus knew that. Hence the prayer for Peter, since Satan had particularly asked (how did Jesus know this?) for Him. As Jesus pointed out, they had never lacked anything, nor would they, if they remained faithful to His will. Certainly it is heartening to realize that faith will cause us to repent and continue with the Lord, v. 32.

The remark in Matthew, v. 32, and Mark, v. 28, has several important points: 1) Jesus would be raised up (implying His death and burial) and 2) He would precede them into Galilee (implying that they would still be His disciples, and that a meeting in Galilee would take place with Him there after the "raising up"). It is important to remember this in the study of John 21. That chapter is often used to point out the fact that Peter, John and five others lost their faith in Christ and returned to the fishing

business. It makes a good sermon some think, but such are not the actual facts in the case. The men were there because they were told to go (Matt. 28:7, 10; Mark 16:7) and when they arrived, Jesus was there as He had prophesied. Their problem was that of unbelief in any resurrection of Jesus, Jn. 20:9, which unbelief was finally removed. Faith then issued in obedience, and the men went to Galilee as commanded.

The reader will need to compare the texts of Matthew, v. 34; Mark v. 30 and Luke v. 34 for the total statement Jesus made to Peter about his denials and the crowing of the rooster. Note also the fact that the disciples were armed with two short swords, somewhat akin to daggers. They apparently understood Jesus to say they should be prepared, Luke v. 36, for violence, and took the reference to the fact that He would be reckoned with the transgressors as indicative that a fight would result soon. The command to sell an outer garment (more costly and more valuable than the inner garment) to purchase a sword gave some impetus to such a response. Whether Jesus intended for them to understand Him in such a way is problematical in view of Matt. 26:52.

The prayer of John 17:1-26 has been the basis for sermons and devotional thoughts almost without number, and rightfully so. The simple but profound heart cry of Jesus to His Father is hardly matched by any other text. Without question, it is the real "Lord's prayer."

Perhaps uttered somewhere between the upper room and Gethsemane, surely in the presence of the eleven disciples, Jesus prayed about Himself, vv. 1-5; about the eleven, vv. 6-19; and about the church, vv. 20-26, all in relationship to God through Himself, with the end in view: eternity together!

The total impact of the prayer is one of success, achievement, work done, God's will accomplished in His life, in

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the lives of the men listening, and in the lives of those who would believe on Christ through their message.

Jesus implies that many counterfeit "gods" existed, but the only *true* God, the heavenly Father, was known through His Son Jesus Christ. The quality of life known as "eternal life" was only shared by people who habitually kept Him in their knowledge, v. 3. Those who wish to glorify God should consider v. 4—it is done through accomplishing God's will. Jesus spoke about Himself—the final act of submission was considered accomplished (in what perspective should we view the prayer in Gethsemane as we compare the request there with the statement here?) and the utterance from the cross in 19:30 expressed it for all to hear. A final unselfish petition was for the restoration of His former state, a state of glory (how many different shades of meaning do the eight occurrences in this chapter of this word have?) shared equally with God, and partially seen in such manifestations as mentioned in v. 2. See also ch. 1:1-18 etc. The closing verses will reiterate this same point, with the additional idea of the believers eternally "seeing" that glory, which encompassed a death on a cross. Thus the prayer was not selfish—it exhibited the fact His earthly life was only meaningful in relationship to God, Who was known only through His Son, Math. 11:25-27.

The thoughts expressed audibly turned to his listeners, who surely must have remembered these moments with appreciation. Their Master had spoken about His own life, one of total committment to and accomplishment of God's will. Now He will ask the priviledge for them of repeating the same thing, and set Himself apart from all else that total submission might be given to the Father's will, v. 19, and accomplished through the sending of them unto a world, of which they must not be a part, but in which they must share.

God had a personal interest in these men. He had chosen them, and given them to Christ for the work of ministry, v. 9-10. God had been declared to them, v. 6, they had been given His message, v. 8, and, having received it, v. 7, 8, became persuaded that the message was true. The same plan of operation was to be followed by each of them—they were to proclaim God's word, the truth, to any and all. Those willing to receive and believe it would become a part of the great eternal kingdom.

Judas would teach us that the knowledge of God rejected in one's life causes rejection by God of one's life. He deliberately chose to go his own way, all that Jesus could do notwithstanding. Others did and do follow in His train despite the gifts and grace of God. God knew he would, and predicted it, even as He knows others will. But His sovereign decree of free choice for each and every man is not less wonderful or merciful because some will not to believe in Him through Christ.

God has created each of us with a destiny—that of loyally serving His will, whether we perfectly keep it or not. This we were created to do—we may be the means of bringing glory to Christ or not, as we will. If we trust Him to keep us from the world which hates us, verse 14, (15:18) and the evil one, verse 15, we can do exactly that, being kept by God's power through faith, I Peter 1:5.

Verses 11-19 predicted at least one thing: a lump of leaven that would change the world around it. That leaven was to be as Christ was, verse 16, and as the Father was ("holy"), even if the surroundings were not conducive for easily influencing others. Adherence to the only reality in this life, God's word, was to be the key to victory—the Master had so lived, and promised that what had been His could be theirs (and ours): victory! How utterly sad that some chose to lose rather than win, to bet their life on a lie, and suffer eternal loss, reaping what was sown,

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Galatians 6:7-8. (The same term used to describe Judas is used to describe the man of sin, II Thessalonians 2:3-6.)

The expression "these things" fell from the lips of Jesus eight different times in chapters 13-17. In later years the disciples remembered what Jesus had said, and took heart because of it, John 2:22.

The prayer for the eleven petitioned God that their witness might be to the world, not of it. Those who had heard the distinctive news from heaven became the subject of intercession. Christ did not expect defeat for these "hearers" (Isaiah 55:10-11) but success. The unity of the ministry, in which all were sent by God, both Himself and His chosen men, the oneness of their message, and harmony of purpose assured the results of believing men and women.

But the petition was for believers in the special way that each believer would sustain such a deep relationship to the message heard that the same type of oneness as existed with the Christ and God would exist between those believers. The result would be a continual persuasion among those in the world that Christ had been sent by God.

A last unselfish request: in His earthly life Jesus had both glorified God, and had also manifested His glory for all to see, John 1:14. Now the prayer is for those who will to believe that they might have the privilege to behold His glory forever. In the years to come, some would trade their birthright for a bowl of pottage, but others would look for a city whose builder and maker was God, abhorring the transient pleasures of sin and choosing rather to suffer with Christ. To these, God's four-square city in the land of endless day would be given. Love, peace, glory, and the fellowship of redeemed spirits made perfect (Hebrews 12:23), the joy of God Himself—good measure, pressed down and shaken together, yea, the life runs over! Thus the prayer ends as it began: with eternal things—the only reality in life.

(18) "The spirit is willing—it's the flesh that is weak!" Gethsemane, a small garden on Mt. Olivet, has often been the source of consolation for believers. The prayer of Christ reflects a very real human problem, yet it surely points to the only acceptable solution. No part of life is free from the subtle desires of the flesh in which we live. So often the "outer man" wins, and even when we do not wish it so. Jesus had to learn obedience even at the cost of self, but totally gave self for the only lasting good—that of God's will. The would-be disciple will not be spared because the same trials will be a reality in any life. The human part of us always wants the apparently easier way, will settle for less than full surrender. But God's way is best, and Jesus was willing, not for Himself, but every soul, sinful, degraded, devilish—yet worth the life of Christ Himself.

Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42 and Luke 22:38-46 give the agony and struggle of Jesus in the garden of the "oil-press" (Gethsemane's meaning). The eleven placed as Jesus wished, He began to ask about God's will. The humanity of our Savior was not less real because He was deity. A cross at the end of sham trials and unjust beatings was not less horrible for God than anyone else. Why should we think it unworthy of Jesus to present an example to be followed as long as time shall last? What better place or way to reveal how to deal with the part of us which revolts at any thought of sacrifice, even if it be for high and holy causes? Discipleship is really that only when the issues are squarely faced, whatever they be. No wonder that Jesus was displeased with the disciples, even if they were tired, and sorrowful. He did not request their prayers for Him—each needed to bear their own burdens. Life is rarely without deep, sorrowful distress, or even discomfort or bewilderment. Jesus shared all of these emotional states in the garden. "Your will be done" was His unwavering

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response! So He had taught His disciples to pray, Matthew 6:10. And this in the face of the fact that a friend was on his way with soldiers to betray and arrest Him, for the clock of life had struck the "hour." Why did He go to a garden known to Judas (since He often went there, Luke 22:39; Jn. 18:2)? Why drink the cup of appointment, Matt. 20:22; Jn. 18:11? He loved you, and me.

The gospel writers present four accounts of the arrest of Jesus. Matt. 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52; Luke 22:47-53 and John 18:1-11 reveal that Jesus was ever in control of the situation in life, whatever it might be. And He promised to do exactly as good for every one who would entrust their life to Him.

Men in years gone by have wrestled with the text at hand, not that any doctrine depends upon the settlement of the several problems in it, but rather to perceive accurately just what was said and/or happened. One of the problems is in the translation of what Jesus said to Judas, Matt. v. 50. The Greek text will permit several renderings, partially because it seems to be abbreviated. Sometimes intimate acquaintances so understand each other that abbreviated discourse occurs. Even our "yes" and "no" are abbreviated, symbolizing more complete answers. Whether this is the case or not, the following among others have been suggested: 1) "Friend (or comrade), do what you came for" or 2) "Friend, is this what you came for?" or 3) "Friend, what kind of work you came for!" Some help might be had if one could decide whether Judas kissed Jesus before anything was said, or if Jesus' statement followed the kiss, which kiss was preceded by the statement in Mark v. 48. If this last is the case, then proposed suggestions 1) and 3) are more likely. We can not even be sure what sort of inflection Jesus used (which often indicates what is meant) even if we could settle the translation otherwise.

Another problem is to decide just how the synoptics are to be fitted into John's account, assuming, as we do, that all accounts are true. Perhaps the solution is to assume that the traitor preceded the crowd enough for the exchange between himself and Jesus to take place before Jesus spoke to the crowd, or between v. 3 and v. 4 of John's account.

A third interesting problem is found in Luke, v. 51. Again the problem is of understanding, which determines the translation. The context does not indicate to whom the statement is directed, the apostles, the crowd, etc. Is Jesus to be understood as asking for permission to heal Malchus? Or that Peter's act might be forgiven since He was going to replace the ear? Or a statement to the apostles in regard to His arrest by the men, without reference to the ear, forbidding the apostles to intervene further in the proceedings?

Several things are more certain: Jesus loved His men, and provided for them to the very last; also that the men, with only two short swords with which to fight a large group, including as many as six hundred soldiers (the Greek word is "cohort," with a varying number of soldiers in it), were not cowards. But the remark about perishing by the sword, and healing the ear of Malchus may have so bewildered the men that they could no longer keep their courage to stay.

Certainly the remarks Jesus addressed to the rulers cut to the quick. Jesus remonstrated with them that they were acting like he was a highwayman (the same word is in Luke 10:30, and describes Barabbas, Jn. 18:40).

The determination of Jesus to drink the cup given Him by God was plainly evident when Jesus refused to have the support of seventy-two thousand angels, Matt. v. 53, Jn. v. 11. Certainly the principle stated in John 10:35 about God's expressed will is beautifully fulfilled in Jesus, even as He points out that which it demanded of Him,

Matt. v. 54, and then did it, Jn. 19:30. But then His entire life was sacrificially given in this way from the very beginning, Heb. 10:7.

The power of darkness seemed to have won the day, as Jesus, His disciples escaping in a moonlit garden, was led away to begin the trials. The unnamed man (some suggest John Mark) who fled, leaving his outer garment in the hand of some would-be captors, also ran. Truly, Jesus' words in John 16:32 came alive as darkness enveloped the departing giver of light. But a cross would be followed by a crown, Acts 2:36, and death defeated forever because the Son perfectly resigned His life for others, Jn. 12:24ff., and God was glorified in ". . . My Son, Who is well-pleasing."

(19) The departing mob took Jesus to the household of the actual Jewish high priest, Annas, as John 18:12-18 indicates (as noted under the remarks on the beginning of John's ministry, Mt. 3; Mk. 1; Lk. 3, Caiaphas had been appointed by the Roman government as a replacement for his father-in-law, Annas). According to Jewish law, the high priest was appointed for life. Hence, the Jews still recognized Annas, if not as high priest, as the power behind him. So the trials began.

The trials might be considered this way: John's account informs us about the trial before Annas, which trial could be labeled prejudgment. Matthew and Mark relate the trial before Caiaphas, where the real direction of things was set. Luke 22:66-71 chronicles in detail the final ratification before the hastily assembled Sanhedrin, which marked the send-off to Pilate's judgment hall. (See also Matt. 27:1, 2; Mark 15:1)

The departing crowd did not leave by themselves, for two disciples of Jesus followed them. John apparently knew someone in the high priest's household, as he was able

to enter himself, and also get Peter in, Jn. v. 16. The late night air in early spring was "coolish," and while the important business was going on before Annas, Peter joined the crowd around the charcoal fire in the courtyard. Seemingly the courtyard was below (Mark 14:66) the living quarters of Annas, or at least provided access (Matt. 26:69) to what was going on before Annas. Many sermons have used the idea about Peter following afar off, standing and then sitting as being an analogy of the way a person denies Jesus. This may be a good thought but the actual fact is that Peter was much closer to Jesus around the fire than perhaps any time after the arrest in the garden. He went to see the end, Matt. v. 58, and was close enough to see Jesus look at him, Lk. 14:61, after the crowing of the rooster. Peter had the right idea, in spite of the apparent failure in the garden. Jesus knew that the devil would sift Peter, like a thresher, but the Lord also knew that Peter was not chaff!

The gospel accounts are not too plain in regard to the location of the places of trials before Annas and before Caiaphas, whether they were in adjacent houses, etc. John's account seems to locate the denials of Peter around both trials, that of Annas and Caiaphas, but the synoptics place the denials only in the trial before Caiaphas. John's account records a denial by Peter to the maid when Peter entered the courtyard, 18:17, which perhaps is the same one as noted by Matt. v. 60-70, and Mark v. 67-68. Maybe the maid was the kinsman of Malchus, Jn. 18:26. Certainly the attempts of Peter to deny any relationship to Jesus were hopeless, for every time he attempted to speak, his accent shouted to all within earshot that he was a Galilean and highly suspect. Finally in desperation, he invoked a curse from God upon himself, and called God to witness to the truth of his assertion. Alas, Jesus knew Peter too well, and the crow of a rooster "jarred" the proper neurons

in Peter's brain together, and he, remembering Jesus' predictions, went out and wept bitterly.

An observation or two about Peter's denials. One thing to be noted is that the accounts do not present them in a form easily harmonized. It is even difficult to decide if we can locate them all in the same place, since a period of time elapsed, Mark 15:59, during the denials. The only sure things are contained in the prediction of Jesus: three denials before rooster crows two times. A second observation is this: the Revised Standard version correctly translates the action of Peter when he attempted to enforce his claim about himself to Jesus. It may sound good from the pulpit to depict Peter as a typical sailor (or fisherman): cursing and swearing. It is poor exegesis however, besides being a false insinuation upon sailors and/or fisherman, either of whom do not necessarily use bad language. The action of Peter was to call God as his witness to the fact that his denial about being Jesus' disciple was truth, and for God to place a curse upon him if he was lying. See Matt. 23:16ff. for other occasions of men swearing to a statement and invoking a curse upon themselves. Matt. 5:37-38 and James 5:12 refer to this practice, and instruct the disciple to be such that the necessity of proving his credibility will not be needed, unless the law requires it. The only reason for oaths in court is because men are not credible, not honest, but deceitful.

The trial before Annas was clearly a farce. Jesus had said nothing different in secret than what He taught openly everywhere. No pretense at a defense for the accused was even made. Having accomplished nothing except perhaps a gain of time that the men of the Sanhedrin might be assembled, Jesus was sent to Caiaphas.

Matt. 26:57-68 and Mark 14:53-65 recall for us the trial before Caiaphas. It is interesting that Jesus was condemned only on His own testimony, as all other witnesses

could not agree (though some recalled His statements from three years earlier, Jn. 2) among themselves. When Caiaphas asked Jesus if He were the Son of God, Matt. v. 63, Jesus affirmed that He was, and was promptly accused of blasphemy and declared worthy of death. Some commentators, past and present, have gone into print with the affirmation that Jesus never claimed to be the Son of God, not even at this trial. The action of Caiaphas flatly denies their theory. He understood Jesus to respond affirmatively to the question (as did the council later) and upon that response Jesus was condemned. That ought to be plain enough for all to see.

Jesus not only revealed His relationship to the Messiah so long prophesied, but also declared events to come as concerning Himself. The future would reveal a great reversal of positions, and Jesus would become judge, Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin the ones on trial. Perhaps one would wonder why Jesus responded under oath to testify against Himself (which was contrary to Jewish jurisprudence) before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. But the answer to such wonder would be that Jesus never denied the truth about Himself, even if circumstances were adverse. Could His disciples but faithfully mimic that example!

Again the value of parallel accounts is seen, as we read Matt. v. 67-68, and then Mark v. 65. Note also that though the penalty for blasphemy was death, Lev. 24:15-16, the Jewish council did not have the power to carry it out. Hence, please note the charge leveled upon Jesus here in the courtroom of Caiaphas, and then read the text of Luke 27:2. Consistency is conspicuous by its absence, eh?

Passing by the accounts in Matthew and Mark and Luke concerning Peter, as the morning dawns we follow Jesus into the presence of the Sanhedrin, and an instant replay of the trial before Caiaphas, the same question/response occurring (Matt. 27:1-2; Mark 15:1; Luke 22: 66-

23:1). The only pressing need remaining: a sentence from the Roman governor to end the life of Jesus. So off to a sleepy Roman governor and a remarkable description of both Jewish and Roman officials practicing situation ethics!

Matthew intersperses the tragic figure of Judas into the trial events, and how pitiable is the sight of this man. Whether he had ever imagined the betrayal would go as far as it did is unknown to us, but Judas could not live with his conscience as the end of the trials became apparent.

Day having arrived, he took the now-hated money and traveled some unknown road to the temple. Herein were the temple priests engaged in the routine business of a feast day, soon to be immortalized by the sight of a remorseful man and the sound of a sack of money cast into their very midst.

Maybe the action of Judas is to be adored by all, but the remark of the man in Matt. v. 4b is surely one ne'er to be forgotten. One's sin is one's own responsibility, always and ever. More truthful words have never been spoken! Granted that the men who said it were also guilty, though disclaiming such, the truth yet remains: all must answer to God for their own sin!

It is worth remarking that the men were so indifferent to the fact that a man was being killed, yet so technical about the money given to take that life. Note Jesus' word in Matt. 23:23. Another interesting item is that the versions in general have so translated the text that Judas is portrayed as repenting. Such is not the actual case, as he did not change his life and start doing God's will again. Peter is the example of repentance, not Judas. The Greek term is only the description of the state of mind that leads to repentance. Repentance is a decision of the will, not an emotional feeling.

Comparing this text with that of Acts 1:15ff., Judas left the temple area and, unwilling to repent so that God

might use him henceforth, went to a place near the city and took his life by hanging himself. The rope in some way failed to hold him until someone found him. He subsequently fell, and the force of the fall was so great (or perhaps the object upon which he fell of such nature) that his body was burst open. The place wherein he fell received one of its names from this happening. The field received a second reason for its name when the chief priests decided to take the money Judas returned and purchase a field in which strangers could be buried when they died. The way in which the same field was both the place where Judas fell and also the place purchased is not stated, however. The fact of his betrayal together with the purchase price were foreknown, however, by God, and as He had said five hundred years earlier (Zech. 11:13) Judas and his money figured in both the betrayal of Israel's shepherd and the purchase of a field. If God would reveal your future five hundred years from now, what would He write?

Judas confessed to the fact that he had sinned, v. 4. Some of the most famous, or infamous men in the Bible made the same confession, as Pharaoh Ex. 9:27; Balaam Num. 22:34; Aachen Josh. 7:20; Saul I Sam. 15:24, 30; David II Sam. 12:13; 24:10; Ps. 51:4; Shimei II Sam. 19:20; Nehemiah Neh. 1:6; Judas Matt. 22:4; and the younger son in Luke 15:18. Yet the Scriptures can be searched in vain to find those words falling from the lips of Jesus!

The accounts have presented us with a sequence of events as follows: 1) arrest in the garden, 2) appearance before Annas, 3) before Caiaphas, 4) before the Sanhedrin. Now we leave the Jewish phase of the trial and the accounts present the following: 5) appearance before Pilate, 6) before Herod Antipas 7) before Pilate (final condemnation), then the beating and crucifixion.

Matt. 27:11-14; Mark 15:2-5; Luke 23:2-5 detail the first phase of the Roman trials in the appearance before

Pilate. Notice the charges are all political in nature (which were in fact true of the men making the charges) whereas the charges in the Jewish phase were religious in nature. We call such activity situation ethics!

Jesus again affirmed His identity to Pilate, while refusing to argue with the trumped-up charges placed against Him. A confession of identity can be several things, especially as it is expressed by our lives concerning Jesus. We must believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God. When we pledge ourselves to obedience under His lordship, we have done so because, like Peter, the revealed information from God has convinced us. Too, a lifetime of daily confession is a matter of the will, and asserts that we are enrolled in the school of one Jesus. Such activity as we have in mind is personal, as it is never sufficient for us that others obey Jesus. We as individuals must do such for ourselves. It is our expressed oath of allegiance through life and lips that is needed to purchase our redemption. Thus the truth expressed by Jesus to the Sanhedrin and to Pilate about Himself is all that is essential in our salvation. Acceptance (in the total meaning of this word) of that truth throughout our earthly life is obligatory—nothing else will suffice. Jesus died with that truth the cause of death. We too must daily die to self and continually live to Him in the light of the same truth.

In passing we notice the reference to multitudes in Luke v. 4. We doubt that the same people are involved in this group that were in Sunday's crowd at the triumphal entry. One reason is that the Jewish leaders were the only ones who would have known about the arrest plans, and doubtless did not broadcast the fact. After the arrest, though the disciples fled, it is problematical as to whether the disciples would try arousing people to prevent any further events to befall Jesus. They would not even know where He had been taken for a while. If they arrived at

Pilate's judgment seat with people "pro-Jesus", no such reactions as are recorded would have taken place. We assume that the crowd present at sunrise were people "pro" Rome, anti-Jesus, informed of the proceedings by the Jewish hierarchy, and gathered for the express purpose of bringing an end to the trouble maker from Galilee, Jesus by name,

"A tempestuous fellow!" Thus did the people describe Jesus to Pilate, as they reacted to his first attempt to release Jesus. The word translated "stirreth up" in K.J. is the same one used to describe the action of the chief priests in Mk. 15:11, and the root word is found in such passages as Mt. 8:24 describing the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

When Pilate learned the Jesus was of Galilee, he sent him to Herod Antipas who was over that part of Palestine. Arriving at Herod's court room only accomplished one basic thing: the cementing of a friendship between Herod and Pilate. Jesus refused to be used by anyone and Herod was no exception. Being made a spectacle and a joke, not taken seriously, contemptuously treated: these were the things Jesus experienced in Herod's presence. Which do you think hurt worst: the mockery by Herod or the beating from Pilate? No marvel that He refused to satisfy this "fox."

Arranging the texts concerning the events from the point of the arrest is somewhat difficult. Each account does not mention some events the other three do. John's account does not apparently mention the first appearance before Pilate, and the succeeding one before Herod as illustrative of this problem. Skipping these events, John takes us from the courtroom of Caiaphas to Pilate's courtroom for the second appearance of Jesus before him. The reader should remember that the accounts can omit events, or add to accounts of events and yet not deny the truthfulness of other accounts, as this instance. The only time

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a conflict would be evident is if one account denied what another affirmed.

We assume the text beginning at John 18:28 chronicles the return of Jesus to Pilate's hall from Herod. Perhaps a comment about the Jews, the Passover, and potential defilement. As pointed out on the discussion of 72 (1, 4) the word Passover is used to mean both the day and the week. Since it is early morning, the Passover meal has been eaten (as did Jesus and His disciples) by all Jews, including these men. Hence the defilement in question was in relationship to the ensuing day's activities. Any defilement as herein contemplated could be removed by evening anyway. (We can but wonder which was considered greater: a defilement ceremonially or morally?) The only real item in the coming day's activity which they would be unable to keep was a festive offering called the "Chagigah," a later addition to the seven day feast.

A word concerning Pilate is in order. He was appointed procurator in 26 A.D. He is little spoken of outside the gospel accounts, from which we glean most of our information concerning him. He was knowledgeable concerning Jesus and the Jewish hierarchy, enough to quickly see the charges were untrue and Caesar had nothing to fear from Jesus. He knew jealousy was the cause of the whole thing. However, the politician in him was too great, and he capitulated to the desire to keep down trouble for himself by sacrificing Jesus, even though he knew no reason existed for the crucifixion. Note that he came out to the crowd, since they would not come into his palace.

Pilate attempted to bluff his way out of the sticky problem, tried to shove Jesus off on Herod, proposed a deal for Barabbas, and presented the remains of a whipped man to a obstreperous crowd, yea, did everything but what he should have done: released Jesus. He might have thought that he could wash his hands of the affair, but life is not

so ordered, as pointed out in II Cor. 5:10. Jesus implies as much in the remark in Jn. 19:11. Though others (Caia-phas? Judas?) had sin for their part in Jesus' betrayal, Pilate also did.

The text of Jn. 18:28-38 reveals that Pilate was probably unaware of the desired aim of the Jews: the death of Jesus. At least Pilate is reminded by the Jews that they can not *legally* (note Stephen's death in Acts 7; also the attempt to kill Paul in Acts 22, all in a mad fury) execute Jesus. He asks for some reason to continue the trials, since he has declared Jesus innocent, as has Herod. The response (v. 30) might be translated "If you know what is good for you, stop asking questions and grant our request." The Jews had caused him some trouble with Caesar in previous years, so this was no idle threat.

The exchange of words in vv. 33-38 present both truths and questions. Certainly one of the last is Pilate's expression in v. 38. The tone of his voice, his facial expression, the timing; none are known by us. Hence we are unable to settle upon any sure interpretation of his words.

The statement of Jesus in v. 36b is capable of various meanings. That the church is not a physical entity is known from other scriptures. That the church is not a product of man, not conducted as men wish, are also facts. That no one could "use" it and remain innocent is likewise true. That Jesus did not intend that the church exist or spread by such devious principles as were in evidence at the trial going on is patently (plainly) true. His whole life was lived that the world might know reality (=truth) was and is an actuality, and the divine purpose for His life included adherence to better principles than Pilate was then practicing. Had Pilate considered the issues honestly, truth would have been observed as standing before him embodied in the person of Jesus, ultimately his judge!

The particular arrangement of texts we are following presents the text in Luke 23:13-16 for consideration. When Pilate responded to the chief priests and company, he rejected every one of the alleged charges against Jesus. As we before suggested, this was doubtless not the first time Pilate had heard of Jesus. The charges were rather transparently false, and Pilate was certainly astute enough to discern the fact. Had he the moral fiber to match his mental acuity, the outcome would have been different. By the way, have you tried to count up the times Pilate said Jesus was innocent?

If you are interested in words, the Greek term translated "chastise" is the word used in Acts 22:3 in reference to Paul's education, in Titus 2:12 as to what "grace" is to do for us, and in Heb. 12:6, 9, 10, etc., back of the idea of discipline or its synonyms.

Changing his tactics, Pilate tried to release Jesus by presenting Him as the best of a bargain. He reckoned amiss. The depraved Jewish leaders could already "taste" blood and they did not intend to be thwarted. Barabbas, guilty of murder, robbery and inciting a revolt against Rome (remember the charges against Jesus?), was to see the light of freedom and the Jewish hierarchy to a man for it! Matthew v. 20 points up the fact that they persuaded (Mark "stirred up") the people to ask for Barabbas. Despite a warning from his wife, and oft-repeated (but unanswered) requests for any evil Jesus had done, Pilate's self-preservation was too strong to permit aught but satisfaction for the crowd. Pharaoh was not the only one whom God tried, nor was Peter the only one whom Satan sifted—Pilate, like Belshazzar, had been tried, and God found him wanting!

One final try to shake the murderous Jewish minds: present to them the grisly spectacle of a man flogged. Pilate struck out. He capitulated to their envy and the

man in whom he could find no crime was at last on the way of the cross.

Such is the gist of the Gospel portrait of the trials—truth went out the window, and sin materialized on every hand. Truth attempted to “out” at times, but perverse men exchanged it for a lie, and another reason for Jesus’ death came into existence. Pilate was not uninformed about God, nor aware of truth. He simply refused to be as much for right as the Jewish leaders were for wrong. All that is needed for wrong to triumph is for the right to be crucified.

The texts of Matthew 27:24-31; Mark 15:16-20 and John 19:12-16 relate the final moments of choice for Pilate, the chastisement of Christ, and the scuffling of sandaled feet on stone streets as the way of sorrows takes shape for a Roman centurion, his guard of soldiers and a victim of love named Jesus.

Perhaps the remark of the crowd in Matt. v. 25 is worthy of attention. How truthful was the remark. Peter said as much in Acts 2. This attitude was a characteristic too often a part of the Jewish nation at any given time in their history. It is little wonder that God would make the new covenant universal in nature, with the condition of trust alone demanded of those a part of that covenant, Acts 10:34-35.

“Take Him away—now!” Thus at about sunrise, Friday Nisan 14, the day of Preparation, Jesus walked out of a place of evil to a place of justice, the cross. At the hands of men, evil had become a reality. At the cross, truth and justice would be presented as eternal absolutes. God spoke for all time as He died on a cross of human making that He kept His word. The law that demanded death for sin would be honored. Righteousness was neither forgotten nor dismissed, even if it seemed so at times. God, though snubbed by people given over to the devil, yet gave Him-

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self for those people. Love, honor, duty: forever silhouetted against a background of people who disclaimed any king but Caesar. The message to be proclaimed by all followers of the Christ: In Him you may escape from the snare of the devil, who captured you to do his will, II Tim. 2:24-26.

"Do you weep for Me? I have wept over you. And you will weep because you did not weep sooner!" The accounts of Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:21 and Luke 23:26-31 carry us along the still sleepy-eyed streets of the city of peace toward destiny outside its walls (Heb. 13:13). Gathering onlookers expressed various feelings as Jesus passed them. He was innocent, a green tree, and yet punishment had become His. Would not a guilty nation burst into flame even as a powder-dry tree? Yes, it would and did. That which would normally be a reproach (childlessness, Lk. 1:5ff.) then would be a blessing. Every one would bear his own cross during that time of justly deserved punishment, because they had refused to accept Jesus.

(20) A small matter of interest: did the lack of food and drink, emotional exhaustion, various buffetings by inconsiderate men, loss of blood and strength through a whipping, so incapacitate Jesus that Simon was forced to carry Jesus' cross? This fact that Simon was carrying Jesus' cross is often missed by artists (and preachers too) who attempt to portray the procession to the place of crucifixion. An incidental mention of Simon as being the father of two sons perhaps indicated that the first readers knew a Simon, or knew his sons. Paul mentions a Rufus in Romans 16:13.

God keeps His Word! "The soul that sins, it shall die . . . but the grace of God appeared!" The cross depicts the reality of sin, which is a word describing the transgression of God's will by moral beings, ie., humans. The cross likewise teaches the extent of God's love for those same undeserving moral beings as He personally became

the substitute for all. The perfect understanding of what the cross means is perhaps beyond anyone's ability, but we can certainly grasp what we have just said. Consider the facts that 1) all (have) failed and 2) mercy by its very nature can not be demanded. Yet "in the fullness of time God sent forth His son . . ." (Gal. 4:4) that mercy could be extended.

The cross is the exact time and place where God took the place of every sinner, not only that His word might be kept, but also that His mercy could be available.

Perhaps the necessity of the sacrifice of Jesus can be understood better in the light of Hebrews 9:1-10:18. Though men in faith offered sacrifices God had decreed, yet two facts were evident: 1) such sacrifices could not make the offerer perfect, because 2) only the blood of Jesus actually atoned for sin. Do you see a new import to John 3:16?

In thinking about the cross, perhaps the following bits of information will be helpful. Jesus, Simon carrying His cross, was led by the Roman soldiers to some place outside the city, Heb. 13:13, though near it, John 19:20. John records that Jesus was crucified within a place containing a garden which contained Joseph's new tomb, 19:41-42. No text says that the place of crucifixion was on a hill, or even near one necessarily. The remarks of Matthew 27:33, found also in the other accounts, do not say the place of crucifixion was in the shape of a skull. It may well mean a place of skulls. The only name the Gospels give the place is a Hebrew name, Golgotha, which means the place of the skull. (The word Calvary is a Latin term carried over into English translation.) Isaiah, some seven hundred years earlier, had clearly drawn several aspects of the crucifixion, and one of those was in the statement that Jesus would be crucified with transgressors, 53:12. The

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gospels note that Jesus was crucified with two other men who were criminals, and His cross was between their crosses.

The method of crucifixion varied greatly from time to time, and we have only some statements in the Gospels, along with some inferences, to help us decide just how Jesus was crucified. The traditional shape of the cross is only an inference from the accounts. The text in Matt. 27:37 states that the inscription of Pilate was placed over Jesus' head which may indicate the traditional shape. The shape is really unimportant, however.

The text in Psalms 22:16 seems to imply that the soldiers used nails to place Jesus on the cross. Yet the text of John 19:36 makes the reader wonder how nails could be used and yet no bones be broken.

Perhaps it is of interest to the reader that crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of putting people to death (see Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13; I Cor. 1:23). Within the Roman Empire, no Roman citizen could be crucified, only slaves and criminals. The Jews hated the Romans, but no love was lost, because the Romans hated the Jews. See then how much the Jewish hierarchy hated Jesus to put Him to death in such a way, but do not overlook with what smug satisfaction Romans must have put the Jew's king on the cross (do you see why Pilate might have written what he did, and refused to remove it from over Jesus' head?) Does not God's love grow bigger in this light?

The procession having reached the place of death, the men went about the business of putting the three "criminals" on the crosses. The gospels (Matt. 27:33-38; Mark 15:22-27; Lk. 23:32-38; Jn. 19:17-25) record that a drink of wine, apparently with an additive of myrrh (does the word "gall" in Matthew describe the bitter taste of the mixture, or is it the same as the myrrh, or even a third element in the drink?). The drink refused by Jesus, the cross transfixed its victim in space, to keep him there until

the last labored gasp of air was drawn. Sometimes men lived for days before merciful death became a part of their earthly existence. Settling down to an indefinite length of watch, the soldiers were understandably devoid of any feelings in the matter since (one could hardly pity any Jew anyway) death was such a commonplace event in their life. We could understand, too, that one dare not get "involved" to the point that such things would keep one awake at night.

"Bring the dice!"—The harsh voice jerks the onlookers to attention as the division of the Jew's remaining items of clothing begins.

The garments of Jesus were being divided, but the seamless inner robe (the outer robe was worth more, but could apparently be made of several pieces of cloth, as well as in one piece, since the soldiers divided the outer garments) was not torn into pieces, but gambled for, Ps. 22:18 being fulfilled.

Pilate's inscription was not a necessary part of the crucifixion, so one wonders just why he went to the trouble to have it made and placed over the head of Jesus. Perhaps, as suggested above, it was out of spite, a way of making up for all the trouble the Jews had caused him. Yet we wonder just how much Pilate's remark of 18:38 is to be seen in this inscription and refusal to change or remove it.

The Gospel accounts record seven expressions by Jesus while on the cross. The hours between 9:00 and 12:00 (John 19:14, Roman time, is 6 a.m.) or the third unto the sixth hours as the Jews counted time are the hours within which three of these utterances occurred. These are, in probable order of occurrence.

1. Lk. 23:34 "Father, forgive them because they understand not what they are doing."

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2. Lk. 23:43 "Today, you shall be with Me in Paradise."
3. Jn. 19:26-27 "Woman, behold your son. (John) behold your mother."
During the time of darkness, and close to or at the 9th hour (3 p.m.), the expression found in Matt. 27:46 and Mk. 15:34:
4. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
Then after the 9th hour, perhaps in rather quick succession,
5. Jn. 19:28 "I am thirsty."
6. Jn. 19:30 "It is finished."
7. Lk. 23:46 "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit."

We then have a total of three separate utterances recorded by Luke, three separate utterances by John and the same one recorded by both Matthew and Mark.

"Father, forgive them!" The loveliest and rarest jewel in any person is forgiveness. Humanity is approaching godlikeness when forgiveness is extended, especially if it is not deserved or requested. Jesus set a great challenge before us in this respect, and as well in the use of the word Father. In spite of the adverse circumstances, His total outlook on life as being in God's hands had not changed. And all of this despite the evil intent of the Jews, and contemptuous indifference of the Romans. However, we do well to consider that Jesus does not specifically identify who "them" is. He may have meant the Jewish leaders, the Jewish people, and or the Roman "establishment." All were in need of forgiveness from some points of view, whether willfully ignorant or otherwise.

Ignorance is not excusable, however, in the realm of responsible morality, even though it is more forgiveable. The men might not have known (understood) the griev-

iousness of their deeds, but they were still wrong. Peter underscores ignorance in Acts 2:36 and 3:17; Paul likewise in Acts 13:27; I Cor. 2:8 and I Tim. 1:13. Yet all were sinful anyway. They could have had the opportunity to know but rejected the opportunity. Sin was the result. Hence, intercession for guilty men has begun.

The texts of Matt. 27:39-44 and Mark 15:29-32 are always interesting, and much has been written on the groups around the cross. It does seem somewhat strange that one of the two thieves could see enough of God shining through Jesus to change his mind, while the rest could not. One of the taunts implies that if Jesus were really God's son, then a son's privilege should surely include escape from the cross. Too, the fact of the cross obviously(?) precluded the assertion by Jesus that He was the Messiah (Ref. Jn. 12:34). The men mocked Jesus with words, but also with action. The Greek word translated "mocked" in Matt. 27:41 implies acting somewhat as children do. Perhaps more of their character came through than they realized?? So, some like the Jews saved themselves only to lose. One, even Jesus, saved others at the expense of Himself. Which of these, think ye, made the wiser choice?

The intense hatred for Jesus by the Jewish leaders is amazing. They had so programmed themselves to accomplishing Jesus' death that nothing moved them. The Gospels recount the beginning of it in John 2, and a year later in John 5 and Matt. 12. Jesus' popularity grows and they snap at His heels all the second year of ministry and down into the third year. John 7-10 records their feelings. Another three months go by, and John 10:22ff. records how far they had progressed in hatred of Jesus. Despite His great power even to raising the dead, John 11 shows their planning and when Judas came with a way to accomplish it, they "rejoiced."

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Such is the way with hatred. Nothing known to man will cure it save love. It is a deadly poison in one's life, and the hurt it brings is beyond measure. Hatred divides friends and dries up the soul. It doubtless makes the devil shout for joy when Christians hate wrongly. But we can find a way to express hate that is scriptural! We can hate as Jesus commanded in Luke 14:25ff.; John 12:24-26; and evil of all kinds, Rom. 12:9; Jude v. 23; Rev. 2:6. Love and hatred are so strong that both must be channeled in the right ways or we will be consumed by them. Let us determine not to love or practice falsehood, but rather hate it, and to love righteousness and light, Psalms 26:5; John 3:18-21; I John 2:15-17; Rev. 22:14-15. We can be as God, hating divorce, Mal. 2:16; and lawlessness, Heb. 1:9. We know that some people will hate us as they did our Master, John 15:18—16:4. Let us make sure that it is with us as with Him: they hated Him *without cause*; Psalms 69:4.

Luke adds the information in 23:39-43 to the everlasting credit of one thief. Apparently he had earlier sided with the others in lashing out at anyone, especially Jesus. But for some unknown reason, he changed.

As we remarked under John 3, it is entirely possible he was one of the many who was immersed for the remission of sins during the ministry of either John or Jesus. We may have then a reason for his change from earlier hours on the cross. Hence he responded to the other thief who was speaking against (the Greek word is the word for blaspheme) Jesus as Luke records in v. 39. The man's question to Jesus about being the Messiah (Christ) expects a "yes" answer, but he like many others did not really comprehend the nature of the Messiah. The penitent thief reprimanded him, and asked Jesus to be remembered. Whether he meant before death or later we do not know, but Jesus probably gave him more than he expected.

"Today (there is little point in translating it any other way than with the idea that enjoyment of Paradise would become a reality on this very day) you will be with Me in Paradise." Such is but evidence of what the Christ of the Cross can do!

The quibble by some over the thief being saved without immersion is just that. As stated, the silence of the account proves nothing, and some evidence is available to at least show the possibility of a prior immersion. He is not the first one for whom Jesus forgave sins anyway. We doubt that anyone can be saved in the same way as the thief on the cross except the thief on the cross.

Paradise is a word of unknown quantity. It occurs here, in II Cor. 12:4 and Rev. 2:7; apparently always a description of the abode of the blessed. Whether it describes the same state in life as the state enjoyed by Lazarus and Abraham (Luke 16) is also unknown and unprovable. It may well indicate heaven. Consider the following Scriptures in the order presented with the thoughts in mind of 1) where Jesus is, and 2) where we are when out of the physical body (we call ourselves "dead"): Acts 2:33, and 7:55; then Phil. 1:23 with II Cor. 5:6-8.

The hours are passing and yet among the crowd was John and Mary, Jesus' mother, and other women of His followers. Even with the tremendous burden of the sins of the entire world upon Him, Jesus did not forget His mother. He was perfect, yet appreciative of the help of others. She may have little understood this unique Son of hers, but she cared about Him. "John" (this is now) your mother." Whether the expression directed to Mary was about John whom she should behold or Himself is debatable, but there was no mistaking the words for John.

Perhaps it will be worth the space and time to discuss the relationship of the various women John mentions in

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19:25-27, for it is from these accounts that we are able to distinguish the relationship of the Lord to James and John.

Matt. 27:56	Mary Magdalene	along with Mary the mother of James and Joseph,	and the mother of the sons of Zebedee
Mark 15:40	Mary Magdalene	and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses	and Salome
John 19:25	His mother and Mary Magdalene	Mary the wife of Clopas	and His mother's sister

In McGarvey's *Four-fold Gospel*, page 225, he remarks as follows:

"Matthew and Mark each name three women, whence it is thought that Salome was the name of the mother of James and John. But the solution of the problem depends on our rendering of John xix. 25, which is translated thus: 'But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.' Now, was Mary, the wife of Clopas, named and also additionally described as sister to our Lord's mother, or was it the unnamed Salome who was her sister? Does John mention three or four women? The best modern scholarship says that there were four women, and that therefore James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were cousins of our Lord. In support of this it is urged:

1. That it is unlikely that two sisters would bear the same name, a fact which, as Meyer says, is 'established by no instance.'

2. John gives two pairs of women, each pair coupled by an 'and.' The first pair is kindred to Jesus, and is unnamed and is paralleled by the other pair, which is not

kindred and of which the names are given. Hebrew writers often used such parallelism.

3. It accords with John's custom to withhold the names of himself and all his kindred, so that in his Gospel he nowhere gives his own, his mother's or his brother's name, nor does he even give the name of our Lord's mother, who was his aunt.

4. The relationship explains in part why Jesus, when dying, left the care of his mother to John. It was not an unnatural thing to impose such a burden upon a kinsman."

"Why?? (have you forsaken me)" The word hauntingly echoes down through the years of history to even us. But we really know the answer, do we not? Because God made Christ, Who knew no sin, to be sin for us, II Cor. 5:21. Our sins had separated us from God, Isa. 59:1-2, and His Son took our place, our sin, our sentence, Isa. 53:4ff., Ezek. 18:20. When Jesus became sin(ful), the effect of sin became a reality for every believer, if such believer would become crucified and buried with Jesus, Rom. 6:1ff., and Gal. 6:14; henceforth to live in Christ, John 10:10b; Eph. 2:1ff., Col. 3:4.

How Jesus can sympathize with us, Heb. 4:14-16! But can we measure His anguish? The cost of sin? God's love for sinners? Perhaps the reason for the expression at the end of the dark hours is to incite our thinking on questions like these! We can cherish Him for suffering desertion by God on our behalf even if we never satisfy our questioning mind.

The darkness is like other events surrounding the death of Jesus: a paradox, stated as fact but unexplained for cause. The moon was full, so no chance there for an eclipse. It is stated the entire world experienced darkness, but not why the sun was eclipsed. Some have suggested the darkness was for our benefit, a symbolic lesson

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on the effects of sin. Perhaps—but we can only speculate. The effect seemingly helped to create a change of mind in the Roman centurion. At least a change took place, and this was one of the things he “saw,” Matt. 27:54.

For those whose interest is in points of grammar, and/or word studies, the expression of the people as found in Mt. 27:49 is in the form of a future participle of purpose: “Let’s see if Elijah will come *for the purpose of saving Him.*”

The Greek word translated “forsaken” is a compound. The root word in compound form is found in such passages as Mt. 4:13; Lk. 5:28; 10:40; Acts 6:2; Rom. 9:29; II Cor. 4:9 and II Tim. 4:10. The desertion was real, whether we understand or not. Maybe we simply have not realized the penalty for sin. Yet, Jesus’ expression was “My” God. His faith in and allegiance to God were yet realities. (He could well have asked about others forsaking Him—Peter, James, etc., but He did not do so.) Jesus certainly uttered these words, but these words were not the last to fall from His lips!

The cross is a space-time event. History is composed of just such things: an event in space and time. The believer rests his hope on the reality of the sacrificial death of Jesus on a cross, or he rests it on nothing. The O.T. pointed to this time in type and prophecy.

The death, the burial, the resurrection—these form the basis for any and all we do. See the reasoning throughout ch. 15 of I Corinthians as an example of this idea, noting especially verse 58, “Therefore . . .” These events confirm the person of Jesus as the Son of God. As such, He has the authority for what He taught, Acts 17:30-31. We are not left to our own thinking or choice—He does our planning and choosing if we accept His authority—and that through the N.T.

The text of John 19:28-29 seemingly presents another evidence of the perfect fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus had before remarked in Jn. 10:35 that not one word of Scripture would fail to be accomplished. All was to be kept, Mt. 5:17-18. Whether or not we can decide if the natural thirst of Jesus, augmented by the bodily suffering of the preceding hours, prompted the remark, or whether He purposefully said this to keep His own Word (given hundreds of years earlier through His servants, the prophets) or both, we can feel keenly once again His humanity! The passages in Psalms 22:15 and 69:21 are probably the passages to which He refers, though there is no direct quote of any O.T. passage. We translate v. 28 as follows:

After this Jesus, knowing all was now completed, said (fulfilling Scripture) "I'm thirsty."

The parched lips and dry throat moistened, a cry of victory leaps out: Finished! The Greek form is in the perfect tense, indicative of a life that had never swerved from God's will, even for a moment. He had come to do God's will, perfectly, always. Heb. 10:7 reads, "Behold, I have come to do, O God, your will." The cross was always in His sight, Heb. 12:1-2, beginning with Luke 2:49; then Jn. 2:19; Mk. 10:45; Jn. 12:24. Now, with that purpose a reality, God could be both just and the justifier, Rom. 3:26. Christ was true to His Father's will unto the point of death, which is exactly what is expected of us, Rev. 2:10b. Thus we, like Paul, glory in Christ and Him crucified, I Cor. 1:18—2:5.

"Father, into Your hands I entrust My spirit." Jesus died with a winner's cry of victory and assurance on His lips. So had He spoken in Jn. 16:33 "Be of good courage, for I have overcome the world." Dare we follow aught but His steps?

The parallel accounts are rather interesting in this

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particular place. We present them in sequence according to R.S.V.:

Mt. 27:50 "Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit."

Mk. 15:37 "Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed his last."

Lk. 23:46 "Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father into thy hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last."

Jn. 19:30b "he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

These show that to the very last breath, Jesus had this earthly life under control. The flesh was made the servant of the spirit—and His life reflected this fact. I Peter 2:22, "He did no sin." In a greater way than we understand, He came, He saw, He conquered.

The Roman soldiers had doubtless witnessed many deaths, whether upon crosses or otherwise. But this life/death was not as the others had been. First, the demeanor of Jesus had been decidedly different than most if not all. Next, the darkness that occurred was unusual. Lastly, the moment of death brought an earthquake of enough magnitude that the ground trembled and rocks were broken into, with some graves being disturbed to the extent that some were opened.

The accounts of Mark 15:38-39 and Luke 23:47 are basically contained in Matt. 27:51-54. This last account shows two events that happened aside from the earthquake: 1) the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was torn into two pieces, and 2) the resurrection of some people who had died, and their appearance to people in the city. Two questions left unanswered are these: Does the expression about the veil "from top to bottom" mean the tearing began at the top and went

to the bottom, or is it simply a way to emphasize that the rent was complete; and did the saints arise after the resurrection of Jesus, or did they appear in the city after the resurrection (what happened to these resurrected ones after their appearance?)?

The focus is now upon the centurion. He is described as having witnessed the events of Jesus' death, and 1) he praised (the Greek word means glorify) God, 2) and said, "Certainly this man was righteous." Mark's account records that he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God." Matthew's account has the group of soldiers expressing this thought.

A moment spent considering this man and what he said will be worthwhile. First consider the Greek word translated "certainly." It occurs in the following texts, as given in R.S.V., with the English word italicized which translates the Greek word in question.

Mark 11:32 "(the people) all held that John was a *real* prophet"

Luke 24:34 "who said, 'The Lord has risen *indeed*,'"

John 8:36 "you will be free *indeed*."

I Tim. 5:3 "Honor widows who are *real* widows."

Other texts to consider are I Cor. 14:25; Gal. 3:21; I Tim. 6:19. The man was rather definite about his deduction.

Now, the word translated by R.S.V. as "innocent" is the same word that occurs in the following texts, with the English word again italicized.

Mt. 1:19 "Joseph, being a *just* man."

Mt. 10:41 "he who receives a *righteous* man . . . *righteous* . . . *righteous* man's reward."

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Romans 1:17 "He who through faith is *righteous* shall live."

Heb. 12:23 "the spirits of *just* men made perfect."

He was rather specific about the character of Jesus also. That we do not know if he had been an observer of the trials before Pilate and Herod should be kept in mind.

The expression in Matthew and Mark is often deprecated because of the man who uttered it, i.e., a Roman soldier. Hence, the man is variously represented as saying that Jesus was *the* Son of a god (or gods) or *a* Son of a god (or gods) or *a* Son of God. Which did he say? Several points are of interest here. One is that the man was a Roman, but also a centurion. Consider the character and attitude about God and God's way in the following texts: Matt. 8:5-13; Acts 10:1ff.; Acts 27:1-3, 42-44. Three men in the preceding texts are of special interest, other than Jesus, Peter and Paul. What nationality were the men with whom Jesus, Peter or Paul had dealings? What kind of character did these men have in common? What position did these men hold in common? How do these three men compare in *faith* or *honesty* with the Jews as a nation? What makes you think that this Roman centurion could not have as much faith and ability to honestly weigh the facts as anyone else, be he Jew or Gentile?

The text of what he said is of interest too. As noted, you are given various alternative readings depending upon what translators think the man could have said. However, within a space of fourteen verses, we have texts that are comparable to v. 54b. in construction. Let us compare the following verses, considering 1) the Greek text, 2) the translation in R.S.V., and 3) the people who expressed the words recorded. (the Greek text is given in English transliteration for comparison.)

Mt. 27:40 (those passing by) "If you are the Son of God,"

Ei huios ei tou theou
(if son you are of the God)

Notice that there is an article (the) before the word "Son" in English, but there is no article in the Greek. Conversely there is no article before "God" in English, but there is one in Greek.

Mt. 27:42 (chief priests and scribes) "He is the king of Israel."

basileus Israēl estin.
(king of Israel is)

Notice that there is an article (the) before "king" in the English, but none in Greek.

Mt. 27:43 (chief priests and scribes) "He (Jesus) said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

hoti Theou eimi huios.
(that of God I am son)

Notice again that there is an article before "Son" in English, but none in Greek, but no article before "God" either in Greek or English.

Why not footnote these expressions to show that the Greek could be translated several ways? Is it because of a prejudice about what men could or could not say? Now, consider the centurion's expression with the Greek text transliterated.

v. 54b. "Truly this was the Son of God."

Alēthōs Theou huios ēn houtos.
(Truly of God son was this)

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We do not see any real good reason for deciding the centurion could not mean every bit as much by his expression as others who believed in God or Christ. He had seen signs for which there was no natural explanation—why could he not accept the natural testimony of such things? We think R.S.V. is correct in their translation. We do not see any good reasons for the footnote, if they are not going to footnote other texts that have similar constructions (laying aside the arguments over the problems of presence or absence of articles in Greek). The same criticism is applicable to other translations which do the same thing.

Matt. 27:55-56; Mk. 15:40-41 and Luke 23:48-49 mention the facts about onlookers at this time other than the soldiers, especially the women who were followers of Jesus. Luke notates that the multitude as a whole, when they observed the unusual events, went away in a state akin to that of the people who heard Peter recount facts about Jesus in his sermon in Acts 2. We wonder if some of these people standing around the cross were not also some of those who were convicted by Peter's sermon.

The day was Friday, but since this was Passover week, it was somewhat more special—a "high" day. The Jewish law, (Deut. 21:22-23; Josh. 8:29) had instructed the people of Israel that a man hanged was to be buried the same day. The day following was the Sabbath—no work was to be done on that day at all. If the men were not removed from the crosses before sundown, just a short time away, then they would have to remain on the crosses for at least 24 hours, dead or alive, until sundown Saturday. This was not a situation to the Jews' liking. Hence the request to Pilate. John 19:31-37 retells the response of Pilate—he instructed the soldiers to break the victim's legs, thus hastening their death, not only from the shock

and pain of such treatment, but also the added weight placed upon the arms and chest muscles which would already be strained from the unusual position.

So the soldiers came up to perform the command, and found the two men on the outer crosses still alive. They broke their legs as instructed. The man in the middle was to all appearances already dead. One of the soldiers, perhaps having been fooled before by a seeming dead man, or just to make positive, thrust his spear into Jesus' side. We do not wish to enter the arena of debate over the remark by John concerning the blood and water (see I Jn. 5:6) that came out at the spear thrust. What is the point to be made is that the soldier intended to make sure Jesus was dead (Pilate was reassured on this very point, Mk. 15:44). This is most important in view of the attempts by some down through the centuries who assert that Jesus merely swooned and recovered in the tomb. We surmise that John's remark in vv. 35-36 is to this end: the man Jesus was dead.

Several texts are of interest here—the type of Jesus in the O.T. was the passover lamb, so read Ex. 12:1-13, 46; as well as Psalms 34:20; Zech. 12:10; John 1:29.

Some have used the idea of blood and water to speak of Jesus' "broken heart." Such is inferred, not said. We seriously doubt that such a conclusion is to be drawn. Jesus died victoriously, not in disappointment. He voluntarily gave His life, Jn. 10:17-18, rather than getting killed accidentally. The cross was necessary, Lk. 24:44-46; the desire of Christ, Lk. 12:50; central in His life as seen in the transfiguration and at Gethsemane; planned right down to the day, Jn. 12:23, 27-28; 17:1; and memorialized until the second coming, I Cor. 11:26.

The spirit was gone, the body now dead (James 2:26). Nothing was left but to bury the fleshly body—

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but who was concerned enough to do it? One can not but wonder where Jesus' disciples were at the time of His death. Were they unaware that He had died? Others were aware He had died, however, specifically Joseph of Arimethea and Nicodemus. Joseph was rich, good, righteous, a counselor of the Jews, a secret disciple of Christ, looking for the coming of the kingdom, did not consent to His sentence, and came to bury Him at a time when the "faithful" were anything but. Nicodemus has come within view before, in Jn. 3 and Jn. 7. We can only marvel that these two were courageous enough to do what others would not do. God always has those who but need the proper time to bring out their best—such was the case with these two.

Nicodemus furnished a wealth of spices (myrrh and aloes), Joseph the place of burial. (Read Mt. 27:57-61; Mk. 15:42-47; Lk. 23:50-56; Jn. 19:38-42.) The sun's fading light cast long shadows from these two men as they first removed Christ's body from the cross and then carried it to the nearby garden tomb, being followed by Mary Magdalene, Jesus' mother Mary and some others. Hastily wrapping the body in the spices (note that women bought more spices and were planning to come to the tomb early Sunday morning to finish the hurried job) they laid the body on the slab of rock, rolled a stone across the entrance and left. It would be an understatement to say that many hopes and dreams were buried at the same time, or that the stone closed upon a body hardly as dead and cold as some of the plans and promises the disciples held prior to this tragedy. What was left but pieces? And these without rhyme or reason for re-assembly! Read Lk. 24:21 and I Cor. 15:19 now.

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive!"

Yet it is true for all time—our sins will find us out (even as Moses told the people of Gad and Reuben in Num. 32:23, and as Jesus implied in Matt. 10:26), I Cor. 4:5! The Sabbath having begun (perhaps the time would be our Friday evening), the Jewish rulers remembered something Jesus had said (wonder why His disciples did not remember the same thing?) about rising the third day, Matt. 27:62-66. They went to Pilate and requested a guard for three days. The purpose: to prevent the disciples of Jesus from stealing His body from its resting place (they had observed not only that Jesus was buried but where and how). The Greek text is somewhat ambiguous, but we understand Pilate to grant their request, give them a squad of soldiers and also place a Roman seal on the stone which Joseph had rolled across the entrance to the sepulchre. The reader may rightly wonder if the Jewish leaders thought that all men, especially Jesus' disciples, were as deceitful as they were. The saying of Jesus about rising after three days (see under # 72 (15) for other discussion about the three days) is hard to pinpoint as to which one they heard. We readily recognize that the Gospel accounts may not record the particular time they are remembering. Jn. 2:13-22 is one time, but Jesus was understood a different way by the rulers. Maybe Matt. 12:38-42 is the text they have in mind.

We believe God provides in so many ways for those who love Him, or who work to see and hear truth. The request of the rulers for a guard greatly enhances the fact that the disciples did not steal the body, nor in any way remove the savior's body. He arose by the power of God, the power of Jerusalem and Rome notwithstanding! How little could God be contained in a tomb? Thus had He taught in Isa. 66:1; thus did Stephen teach in Acts 7:45-50 and Paul teach in Acts 17:24-25. He is so great that the whole universe bespeaks His glory, and so loving

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that He will gladly live in your heart—if you will let Him.

“Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art, How great thou art!”

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(21) “Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week” reads R.S.V. in Matt. 28:1. The text seemingly says that the women came on early Sunday morning. However, the Greek word translated “after” (opse) can also mean “late” as is patently evident in Mk. 11:11, 19; 13:35, which we give in part for study.

Mk. 11:11 “as it was already late (opse)”

Mk. 11:19 “and when evening (opse) came”

Mk. 13:35 “in the evening (opse), or at midnight”

Hence the text may be understood as affirming that “late on the Sabbath” the women came to the tomb, just to see it, with the “ending” of the Sabbath and the “dawning” of Sunday imminent. There was no particular reason why such a visit could not be made. Consider that Mk. 16:1 may be describing part of their activity on (our) Saturday evening, which could have been done while going or coming from the tomb. It is fair to say, however, that this position makes the word “dawning” refer to the beginning of the day, not to the rising of the sun, as is our usage. Thus the text may be understood by some one way and by some another.

We should note that Matthew’s account does not say 1) that the earthquake occurred when anyone was present except the guard, nor 2) that the stone was rolled back to let Jesus out, nor 3) that the soldiers did/did not see