

FAREWELL MATERIAL TO THE APOSTLES

Jesus formally chose the original twelve apostles the day of the Sermon on the Mount (Luke 6:1:12-20ff). That was two years before the crucifixion. However, some of the Twelve had traveled with Him more than a year earlier. Thus some of the apostles had been with Jesus on a day-to-day basis for two years and some for three. At this 30 A.D. Passover, commonly called the "Last Supper", Jesus spoke at length to them in preparation for His heavenly departure. This farewell material is found in three chapters of John (chapters 14, 15, and 16) and in the book of John only.

CHAPTER 14

What church-going person has not heard the words of vs. 1-3 at a funeral? Naturally the apostles were going to be sorrowful at Jesus' departure. He told them why He was going away (to prepare a place in God's mansions for them). Then in time He would come back for them (the second coming). Doctrinally this is elaborated in I Thess. 4:16-18.

When Jesus said they knew where He was going and how to get there, Thomas claimed ignorance of both at which Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is the way to God, the truth that frees men so they can go to heaven, and the life He came to give. When He said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," He was saying about Himself what later inspired speakers and writers said and wrote (Acts 4:12 and I Tim. 2:5).

When Philip expressed the desire to see God, Jesus replied, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The closeness of Jesus and the Father was manifested in Jesus' words and miraculous works. Then it was that Jesus said they also would do miracles as He had (and they did—note their miracles in Acts) plus what He called "greater works". Their miracles in Acts would be

a part of their evangelistic work. Why would their evangelistic works be greater than their miracles? Miracles would open physically blind eyes, but their preaching would open spiritually blind eyes (Acts 26:18). Miracles would resurrect people from physical death and give them a few more years of earthly life, but their evangelistic work would resurrect them from spiritual death and ultimately give them everlasting life (Eph. 2:1; Rom. 6:23).

There will be something about prayer in each of these chapters. See 14:13,14; 15:7; 16:23,24. It is either an instruction to pray, to pray in Jesus' name as our mediator, or a promise of answered prayer.

In v. 15 Jesus spoke about loving Him and keeping His commandments. Notice vs. 21,23,24 in this connection. The same connection between love and obedience is found in John 15:10; I John 2:5; II John 6. It is also interesting to compare John 14:15 and John 15:14.

Next Jesus began telling about the Holy Spirit who would come upon them on the Day of Pentecost. There is teaching about the Holy Spirit in all three chapters (14:16-18,23,26; 15:26; 16:7-15). He would inspire the apostles to know the divine truths they were to proclaim and record. This is why He is called the "Spirit of truth". He would call to their remembrance all that Jesus had taught them, and then He would finish teaching them the things Jesus could not while with them because they were not able then to receive them. Note too that the Holy Spirit in finishing the teaching would guide the apostles into "all truth". Now if He guided them into all truth, there is no further truth to be revealed after their deaths. We, therefore, reject all purported latter-day revelations to Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Mary Baker Eddy, or anybody else. In revealing gospel truth the Holy Spirit would convict the world of the sin of rejecting Jesus, of the righteousness of Jesus and that is obtainable through Him, and of the doom of Satan (the usurping prince of this world). The inspired preaching of Peter on Pentecost enabled the Spirit to begin this important work (Acts 2:4,37).

In v. 27 Jesus raised the subject of "peace" and spoke further about it in 16:33. This peace would be needed by them because of His going away and because of the persecuting hardships that would befall them. We will study their coming persecution in both chapters 15 and 16.

Let us note in the last verse of Chapter 14 Jesus said, "Arise, let us go hence." We assume that after the Passover meal and Judas's departure that Jesus began this farewell material in the upper room, and that before continuing with the Chapters 15 and 16 material He said, "Let us go hence." Where were they going? From where they were (the southwest part of Jerusalem) across town and out the east gate of Jerusalem to the Garden of Gethsemane at the foot of the Mt. of Olives. Since they did not get to Gethsemane until John 18:1, the two-chapter material and His John 17 prayer took place on the way to Gethsemane. We conclude from Mark 14:26 that together they sang a hymn just before leaving the upper room.

CHAPTER 15

Grape growing was a prominent matter in Palestine. Three of Jesus' parables spoke of it (the vineyard workers in Matt. 20:1-16, the two sons in Matt. 21:28-32, and the wicked husbandmen in Matt. 21:33-45). So when Jesus said He was the vine, His followers were the branches, and His Father was the husbandmen, they understood what He was talking about. Naturally the purpose of a vineyard was to produce fruit, and the fruit was produced by the branches. So in this figurative language Jesus was indicating His followers' lives should be fruitful. Let us realize that in these two chapters to the apostles, some material had to do with them as apostles (like their inspiration by the Spirit) while some had to do with them as His followers. The material relating to them as followers is equally applicable to us today while the material to them as apostles is not.

There are two kinds of fruit expected of all Christ's followers: the fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22,23 and the fruit of soul winning

in John 4:35,36. Notice the necessity of being a fruit-bearing disciple and what will happen to us if we are not (vs. 2,6). Notice that it is as important to abide in Christ as it is to accept Him in the first place. Notice “abide” in vs. 4,5,6,7,10, “continued” in v. 9, and “keep” in v. 10. We are to grow (II Pet. 3:18)—not draw back (Heb. 10:38,39).

Having spoken to them earlier at the Passover meal about loving each other (13:34,35), He raised the subject again in vs. 12,13,17. Jesus recognized there are various degrees of love when He said the greatest love is when one is willing to lay down his own life for his friends—which He did and which He wants us to do if the occasion arises for it (I John 3:16).

Knowing from other Scriptures that Christians are to serve (Matt. 4:10; Matt. 6:24; Rom. 12:1), even being called servants (Rom. 1:1; Jas. 1:1; II Pet. 1:1; Jude 1), we are somewhat surprised to hear Jesus say, “I call you not servants.” What did He mean? In His day a man might have both servants (slaves) and friends. He did not converse about things with his slaves like he did with his friends. It is in this sense that Jesus thought of His followers as friends and not as slaves.

While Jesus’ apostles (and followers) agree with Jesus’ choosing them, it was really Jesus who first chose the apostles and us (v. 16). An example would be His calling the fishermen (Luke 5:1-11).

Next Jesus turned His attention to the coming persecutions the apostles would face (vs. 18-20), a very definite matter in the book of Acts. Persecution of Christians has always been as Jesus said—because they are Christians and are not of the world. Paul affirmed that all who would live godly in Christ Jesus will experience some kind of persecution (II Tim. 3:12). Jesus’ most elaborated beatitude had to do with being persecuted for righteousness’ sake (Matt. 5:10-12). The righteousness of Jesus was hated without a justifiable reason (v. 25), and it is the same with Christians.

In vs. 22-24 Jesus showed that opportunity brings responsibility. The more people know and the greater advantage

they have, the more responsible they are as a result (Luke 12:47,48; Matt. 10:14,15; Matt. 11:20-24).

CHAPTER 16

Returning to the subject of persecution, v. 2 speaks of Jewish persecutions incited for religious reasons. Surely the extreme persecution against the church by Saul of Tarsus was an example. After his conversion he explained, "I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (I Tim. 1:13); "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which thing I also did" (Acts 26:9,10).

In vs. 5,6 Jesus spoke of going His way to the Father in the ascension, but even before that He said, "In a little while ye will not see me, and again, a little while, and ye shall see me," referring to His death (gone) and resurrection (back again). Over His death they would "weep and lament" while the world would "rejoice", but His resurrection would turn their sorrow to joy.

Jesus closed the chapter and this farewell material by foreseeing their abandoning Him and scattering in different directions, which they did when He was arrested in Gethsemane later that night. But He said God would not abandon Him—He didn't; He sent an angel to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43).

QUESTIONS

1. How long had some of the apostles been with Jesus on a day-to-day basis?
2. Jesus' "farewell material" to His apostles is found in what chapters of the New Testament?
3. With what well known material did Jesus begin this farewell talk?
4. What well known statement begins, "I am the way, the..."
5. What coming works of the apostles did Jesus say would be greater than His miracles?
6. What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would do after He

came?

7. What did Jesus say about their coming persecutions?
8. What did Jesus say in the closing part of this material?

JESUS' "VERILY, VERILYS"

No doubt as you have read through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you have noticed Jesus opening various statements with either "Verily I say unto you" or "Verily, verily I say unto you". Such is noticeable to us because it is not a usual way of speaking. Let us look into the matter.

FACTUAL OBSERVATIONS

All the cases of a single "verily I say unto you" are found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and not once in the gospel of John. On the other hand, all the cases of a double "Verily, verily I say unto you" are in John and none in the other three accounts. Altogether there are 50 single "verilys" in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and 25 double "verily, verilys" in John. The Greek word from which it is translated is "amane" from which our English word "amen" comes. While the King James and other versions translate it "verily", some versions translate "truly" and some "indeed". All three of the above translations show that Jesus' statements which they introduce are **EMPHATICALLY TRUE!** The New International Version translates it, "It is the truth."

SOME DOUBLE "VERILYS" IN JOHN

JOHN 3:3,5—Jesus was in Jerusalem for the annual Passover, and John 2:23 reports that "many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did" (John 2:23). One was a Pharisee, even a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, who came to Jesus one night and said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2). We have no indication what Nicodemus had planned to proceed saying or asking, for Jesus immediately took over the conversation and said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Since the ruler took the statement literally, he

questioned how such could be possible (v. 4). Then Jesus elaborated, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Since the kingdom had not yet come, since the Holy Spirit had not yet been sent, and since the baptism that brings one into God's kingdom had not yet been inaugurated, it is obvious that Jesus was giving some New Testament teaching ahead of time, and in so doing He was dealing with a very vital matter!

JOHN 5:24—This is a great statement when properly understood. "Hearing my word" and "believeth on him that sent me" are both used in a broad, comprehensive sense—including much more than just "hearing" and "believing", much more than faith in God. So when faith-only people say from this verse that all one has to do to have eternal life is just believe in Jesus, and when they take "shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death into life" to mean "once saved always saved", they are not regarding the teachings of Jesus as given in Matt. 7:24-27 and elsewhere. On the positive side, those who accept the teachings of Jesus as true and the teachings to follow while believing on the God who sent Jesus into the world will be Christians, and Christians are those who accepted Christ and abide in Him. As a result they will not be condemned at the Judgment but will have been redeemed from death and will inherit eternal life

JOHN 6:53—At what is called the "Last Supper" Jesus instituted the Lord's supper in which He took bread, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat: this is my body" (Luke 22:19). At the same time He said the cup was His blood of which they were to drink (Luke 22:20,17). Jesus' "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" answers the Jews' question in the previous verse: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" When we properly partake of the Lord's supper, we are partaking of the benefits of Jesus' crucifixion by which we obtain life.

JOHN 8:58—In the closing part of John 8 Jesus and His Jerusalem enemies were in a real confrontation. They objected to His saying that if a man kept His word, he would never see death

(v. 51). They said, "Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets who are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" (vs. 52,53). When He went on to say, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (v. 56), they replied, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" (v. 57). In this He was referring to His eternal pre-existence affirmed in the Old Testament (Mic. 5:2) and in the New (John 1:1).

JOHN 10:1—When Jesus said, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them" (v. 8), He was talking about false messiahs who came before Him. The true Messiah, as a shepherd, would use the door, but a thief would climb over the wall to get in where the sheep were (v. 1). In v. 10 Jesus drew another contrast between Him and the false messiahs: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

JOHN 12:24—In this passage Jesus was employing an agricultural illustration to encourage Himself as He faced death on the cross. To get a crop one has to plant kernels of grain. Those kernels will be destroyed in the process of giving life to the plants. Jesus said, "If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," but if it doesn't die by being planted, it abides alone—fruitless. This was positive thinking that helped Him face what was ahead of Him.

JOHN 16:23—The thought of Jesus' leaving them made His disciples feel alone. They would not have Him as they had been having Him. He would not be with them for asking Him for personal help. He told them, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you...Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

Let us call Jesus' statements in John prefaced by "Verily, verily, I say unto you" EMPHATIC TRUTHS. This was one of Jesus' ways of teaching.

QUESTIONS

1. In what books (and how many times) did Jesus say, "Verily I say unto you"?
2. How many times did John use the double "verily"?
3. Besides "verily" what are some other ways the Greek word "amane" has been translated?
4. What did Jesus tell Nicodemus was necessary for entering God's kingdom?
5. Jesus said that he who _____ my word and _____ on Him who sent me had _____.
6. What did Jesus say a person will not get who does not eat His flesh and drink His blood?
7. In what way was He older than Abraham?
8. What did Jesus say about false messiahs who preceded Him?
9. What agricultural illustration did Jesus use to encourage Himself as He faced Calvary?
10. What would take the place of Jesus' presence with the disciples after He was gone?

JOHN'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' CRUCIFIXION (John 19:16-42)

The four gospel accounts do not all record the same events in Jesus' life, but they all cover the death, burial, and resurrection and events leading up to them. Let us study John's account of His crucifixion.

The Roman governor Pilate was unduly pressured by the Jewish leaders to condemn Jesus to death against his own judgment.

We note that Jesus was bearing His own heavy cross as He proceeded to Golgotha. Does this not give some meaning to Jesus' statement, "Whoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27)?

Was Jesus crucified on Golgotha or Calvary? Both. Calvary is Latin and Golgotha Hebrew. Both mean "the place of the skull". Many who travel to Jerusalem today think what is known as Gordon's Calvary just outside the ancient city's north wall might be the place since the face of its bluff sports an imaginary skull.

John's account mentions the other two men who were crucified with Jesus and His being the center cross, but it does not give the details mentioned in other accounts. Check in Matt. 27:38,44 and Luke 27:39-43 for those details.

Pilate's feelings of being pressured into condemning Jesus are reflected in his sign on Jesus' cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," which raised the ire of the Jews who asked him to change the sign to read that He said He was King of the Jews. But Pilate, disgusted with himself and the Jews, was adamant: "What I have written I have written."

It is from John's account that we learn there were four soldiers under their centurion who did the actual crucifying of Jesus.

Mary, Jesus' mother, was one of several Galilean women present at the crucifixion. When Jesus was only forty days old and was presented to the Lord in the temple, the aged prophet Simeon had foretold this awful day in Mary's life: "A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:35). Bible scholars generally think Joseph had been dead for several years. Jesus, Mary's oldest son, was dying. With His no longer being able to look after her, His mother, He committed her to the care of His beloved disciple John. Why not to her other sons? Probably because of a rift between her and them because of Jesus in whom she believed but they didn't (John 7:5) until after the resurrection (I Cor. 15:7 and Acts 1:14).

The extreme fever brought on by the crucifixion caused Jesus to cry out, "I thirst." Upon being given some sour wine, He cried, "It is finished," and died. What was finished? Foremost the assignment of dying on the cross. When the legs of the crucifixion victims were being broken to hasten their deaths to get them off their crosses before the sabbath, it was not necessary to break Jesus' legs since He was already dead. Just to be sure He was dead, one of the soldiers rammed a spear into His side. The water and blood that issued from His body were later mentioned by John in I John 5:6. The piercing of Jesus was also mentioned by John in Rev. 1:7.

Since Jews entombed their dead the same day they died, it was necessary to have their places of burial prepared beforehand. The rich Joseph of Arimathea had his, and being a member of the Sanhedrin and having not stood up for Jesus to his council members as he knew he should have, he was a "Johnny-come-lately" by volunteering to take care of Jesus' body and putting it in his burial place. The delinquent Nicodemus, also a member of the high council, joined him in the burial. Both Jesus' enemies and His disciples thought His death was the end of Jesus—but it wasn't. He will be back!

QUESTIONS

1. Harmonize the reports that Jesus was crucified at Calvary and at Golgotha?
2. To what did the Jews object about Pilate's sign?
3. How many soldiers did the crucifying?
4. What did Jesus say from the cross to His mother?
5. Why did the soldier stab the side of Jesus?
6. What 2 prominent Jewish men were involved in entombing Jesus?

FINAL STUDY

In life we hate to come to the last of anything that has been good. We hope you feel that way as we come to this final study in the Gospel of John.

THE "LAST SUPPER" (John 13:2-14:31)

"Last Supper" is a name commonly given the Passover meal Jesus ate with His apostles the night before He was crucified. Unbeknown to the apostles was the fact that their several-year day-by-day association with Jesus was terminating with this meal. From this meal forward Jesus would be in His end-time events that did not include them as had been customary earlier. True, Acts 1:3 speaks of post-resurrection time He was with them, but as you read the various accounts of His resurrection appearances His time with them was of an on-and-off nature rather than constant.

John's account alone tells of His washing the disciples' feet. We have never noticed His doing this before. Why did He do it here? For sometime the group had been discussing among themselves which was going to be the greatest in the coming kingdom. Two of them (James and John) had even gone so far as to ask for the chief seats in it. As you read in Matt. 18:1-4 and Mark 10:35-45 of Jesus' dealing with that problem, you would think the matter would be forever settled, but not so, for Luke's coverage of the Last Supper indicates that even at that supper that strife again broke out among them as to which was going to be the greatest. Among other things Jesus said to counter their behavior, He asked which was greater—he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth (Luke 22:27)? To illustrate that one who serves is the greater, Jesus took a basin of water and a towel and washed and dried their feet—as a servant would do. And yet He was their Lord and Master and said He was giving them an example of kingdom-greatness—it would be service. Before leaving this

incident we observe that Jesus was not instituting the practice of foot-washing in a church service. Any way that we can serve one another is carrying out what Jesus had in mind. Notice His conclusion to this event: "If you know these things, happy are ye if ye do THEM (plural-D.G.H.)"

The rich material in John 14 was also delivered at the Last Supper, but it was already discussed in our study on Jesus' farewell material to the apostles.

JESUS' DIVINE MISSION TO EARTH

Among the various names, titles, and descriptive terms used to designate the great person Jesus, Heb. 3:1 calls Him the "APOSTLE and High Priest of our profession". "Apostle" means "one sent" or dispatched on a mission. That perfectly fit Jesus' coming to earth. He was "sent" of God, and the book of John mentions that fact no less than forty-one times. Here are a few sample statements of that fact: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that SENT me" (6:38); "My meat is to do the will of him that SENT me" (4:34); "I must work the works of him that SENT me" (9:4); "Now I go my way to him that SENT me" (16:5). Yes, He was sent of God, and He perfectly fulfilled His divine mission among men.

A SPECIAL PRAYER **(John 17:1-26)**

Many, many times do the gospel accounts of Jesus' life speak of His praying, but this prayer in John 17 is the only prayer of any length that is recorded for us. This prayer consumes the entire 17th chapter of John.

Observe the setting for this prayer. The time was between the Passover meal and His agony in Gethsemane. That place is somewhere between the upper room in southwest Jerusalem and Gethsemane just east of Jerusalem.

Verses 1-8 are devoted to praying about His own personal concerns. Read and consider this part of His prayer.

Next He turned His attention to His concern for the apostles (beginning in v. 9). He prayed they might be kept by the Father even as He had kept them while with them on earth. He prayed they might not be taken out of the world that needed them but that they might be kept from the evil of the world, which by way of extension to us shows we are to be active in the world as light, salt, and leaven, affecting the world for good while not being affected by the world for evil. He prayed for their sanctification, realizing the work that was before them and their need to be set apart to that work. He prayed for their oneness that His kingdom not be divided in its beginning leadership.

In the midst of His prayer for the apostles, He also prayed for the coming church, those who would come to believe on Him through their preaching—"that they all may be one...that the world may believe."

How important each part of this prayer was!

Near the end of John's long lifetime He wrote in I John 1:1-3, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you," for two expressed reasons: that we who did not get to see Jesus might have fellowship with John and those who did (v. 3) and that our joy may be full as a result (v. 4). Thank you, John, for the wonderful things about Jesus you have shared with us!

QUESTIONS

1. Why was this meal called the Last Supper?
2. Why did Jesus wash the disciples' feet at this time?

3. How many times in the book of John does it say Jesus was sent from God?
4. In Jesus' prayer, for what did He ask for Himself?
5. List one thing in the prayer Jesus said about His apostles.
6. List one thing He requested for them.
7. For what did He pray for all who would come to believe on Him?