

BIBLE STUDY FOR BEREANS

JUNE, 1937

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS

MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE AND JOHN IN THE LIGHT OF PAULINE TRUTH

The four records of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus, we call the Four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They do not contain four different gospels; that is, four different messages or ways of salvation.

We quote first:

Matthew 10:2 to 11.

“NOW THE NAMES OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES ARE THESE: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother: James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother: Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the publican: James the son of Alpheus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus. Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

“THESE TWELVE JESUS SENT FORTH, AND COMMANDED THEM, SAYING, GO NOT INTO THE WAY OF THE GENTILES, AND INTO ANY CITY OF THE SAMARITANS ENTER YE NOT: BUT GO RATHER TO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, AND AS YE GO, PREACH, SAYING, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND. HEAL THE SICK, CLEANSE THE LEPERS, RAISE THE DEAD, CAST OUT DEVILS; FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE.

“Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass for your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.”

We find here some interesting facts: the call of the Twelve; their message, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand;” their “healing and miracle ministry;” their ministry which was limited to the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Twelve Apostles—Twelve Tribes—The Twelve are yet to judge the Twelve Tribes. Matthew 19:28.

Of these Twelve, Matthew, the publican, and John, the fisherman, were chosen by the Holy Spirit to write concerning the earthly ministry of the Son of God, the King of Israel. Before we compare these two Records, which are different in so many respects, let us look at the other two Records, those of Mark and Luke. Mark was the nephew of Barnabas and caused the separation of Paul and Barnabas. Acts 12:25, Acts 11:25 and 26, Acts 15:36 to 41. However, Mark redeemed himself with Paul, “Only Luke is with me. Take Mark. and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.” II Timothy 4:11. Here we find faithful Luke and profitable Mark mentioned together. Some Students have believed that Mark wrote under the influence and direction of Peter. Mark’s is the shortest Record, beginning the story of Jesus Christ at the age of thirty. Nothing of His genealogy, ancestry, birth or childhood. Christ is

presented in Mark as the faithful and obedient servant, obedient unto death. The words, “forthwith”, “immediately”, and “straitly” and “straightway” are found 42 times in Mark’s message. Mark has been called “an abbreviated Matthew”. They are truly synoptic gospels. Quite similar stories and yet each bears the mark of a different man; each man under the control of the Holy Spirit.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

In 1:11 we learn that Luke was, to Paul, the beloved physician. Luke is one of the great heroes of the Bible. This we must learn by tracing his ministry, as a traveling companion of Paul, faithful unto Paul’s end.

“At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me”. “Only Luke is with me.” II Timothy 1:16 and II Timothy 4:11.

How do we trace the spiritual activities of Dr. Luke? He wrote the Book of Acts and we trace him by the word “we” in Acts 16:11 to the “we” and “us” of Acts 28:11—Acts 28:12, 13, 14 and 15.

Acts 28:16.

“And when WE came to Rome the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.”

How interesting it is to thus trace and study the life and ministry of this humble, beloved, courageous soldier of Jesus Christ. He was with Paul when he first reached Europe, when Paul was thrown in jail at Philippi. Acts 16:16 and 17. He does not include his own name in the list of Paul’s companions in Acts 20:4. But he is included—”we sailed from Philippi”. Acts 20:6. Then turn to the we in every verse of the first eight verses of Acts 21. Luke was among those who persuaded Paul not to go to Jerusalem. “the will of the Lord be done.” Acts 21:14. Luke reached Jerusalem with Paul. Acts 21:17.

Now we turn to Acts 27:1 to 7 and read the “we” and “us” in these verses and you will learn that Luke was with Paul in the shipwreck. What a true, faithful, loyal courageous friend he was. Is it any wonder Paul called him the “beloved physician.” Don’t forget those last words, “only Luke is with me.” Luke sailed with Paul in more ways than one.

Although Luke was thoroughly indoctrinated in Paul’s gospel of grace and knew the truth concerning the Body of Christ, which Paul designated “the mystery”, Luke did not write concerning Pauline truth in his Gospel.

It is quite interesting to read Luke’s Gospel and “The Acts” at one sitting, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit used the same human author to write the two messages. In the first chapter of Luke, Christ is born to take David’s throne and deliver Israel from Gentiles. In the last chapter of Acts blindness is sent upon Israel and God is turning to the Gentiles with the grace message of salvation for individual sinners. Before a student of the Scriptures can really understand Paul’s Grace Epistles he must develop the program of God from Luke 1:31 to 80 to Acts 28:20 to 28. In Luke 1, God is speaking to Israelites concerning Israel. In Acts 1 and 2 God is speaking by Israelites to Israelites concerning Israel. In Acts 28:20 to 28, Paul, an Israelite, is speaking to a company of Israelites. Read Romans 9:4 to 6 concerning Israel.

It is likewise interesting to know that the word “Jew” is found a greater number of times in Luke, John and Acts than it is in all of the Old Testament Scriptures. Compare Matthew 15:24

Christ's own statement, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" with these verses in Luke, expressing the same truth

Luke 13:16.

And ought not this woman, BEING A DAUGHTER OF ABRAHAM whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"

Luke 19:9 and 10

"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as HE ALSO IS A SON OF ABRAHAM. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

In Mark 7:27 Christ said, "let the children first be filled". The Jews were the children. In Luke 7:1 to 11 we read the record of the only Gentile man who received a kingdom blessing from Christ while He was a minister of the circumcision. The Greek woman was the only Gentile woman. The woman at the well was not a Gentile. Matthew 10:5 and 6. The Gentile man and woman took a place of subjection to Israel. Read this interesting account of the Gentile man, in:

Luke 7:1 to 11.

"And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus he SENT UNTO HIM THE ELDERS OF THE JEWS beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant And when they came to Jesus they besought Him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom He should do this: FOR HE LOVETH OUR NATION, AND HE HATH BUILT US A SYNAGOGUE. Then Jesus went with them. And when He was new not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying unto Him, Lord, trouble not Thyself: for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee, but say in a word and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh; and to my servant Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed Him, I say unto you, I have not found so GREAT FAITH, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

Christ came to seek and to save the lost sheep of Israel. He came unto His own. He came to the sons and daughters of Abraham.

Ezekiel 34:11 to 16.

"For thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among the sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again

that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.”

Ezekiel 24:22 and 23.

“Therefore will I save thy flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David; He shall feed them, and He shall be their Shepherd.”

Ezekiel 34:30 and 31.

“Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are My people saith the Lord God. And ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.”

It has been taught by many Bible teachers that Christ, in Matthew, is the King; in Mark, the Servant; in Luke, the “Son of man”; in John, the Son of God.

Let us note that in Luke Christ is also the Shepherd-King of Israel, seeking His, sheep.

Jeremiah 50:6 and 17.

“My people hath been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains; they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place.”

“Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon hath broken his bones.”

Who was Israel’s Shepherd-King? King David. Read again Ezekiel 31:23: “And I will set up one shepherd over them, and He shall feed them, even My servant David; He shall feed them: and He shall be their shepherd.”

Christ, in Luke is not seeking Gentiles. He is seeking His sheep; Israel. He was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. “Go not into the way of the Gentiles.” It is noteworthy that Luke is the one who takes the genealogy and ancestry of Jesus back beyond David and Abram: the only one to mention Adam and give us the foundation of Paul’s ministry of reconciliation. It is quite significant that Christ, on earth made no reference to Adam. He is mentioned the first time in the New Testament Scriptures in I Corinthians 15:20 to 23 and Romans 5.

DAVID—CHRIST

Luke 1:29 to 33.

“And when she saw him she was troubled at His saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.”

Luke 2:8 to 11.

“And there were in the same country SHEPHERDS abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day IN THE CITY OF DAVID a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 1:68 to 71.

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for He hath visited and REDEEMED HIS PEOPLE. And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in THE HOUSE OF HIS SERVANT DAVID: As He spake by the mouth of His Holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.”

Luke 2:21.

“And when eight days were accomplished for THE CIRCUMCISING OF THE CHILD, His name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb.”

CHRIST—SEED OF DAVID

In Luke 1:27 and 2:1 we read of “the house of David”; In Luke 2:4 and Luke 2:11, “the city of David”; in Luke 1:32, “The throne of David”; in Luke 2:11, “the line of David”. In Luke 18:38 and 39 Christ is called “the Son of David”. Christ was born in the house of David, in the city of David, to take the throne of David. Only in Luke do we have the announcement to the shepherds that the Shepherd-King of Israel is born in the city of David. Christ was to come as Wonderful, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, in fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6 and 7, to reign on David’s throne—to bring peace on earth. There will be no permanent peace on earth so long as David’s throne is unoccupied. Therefore “pray for the peace of Jerusalem”. Psalms 122:6.

It is only in Luke that we have the story in detail concerning the Shepherd who left the ninety and nine to go after the one. It is only in Luke that we read “fear not, little flock”: “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32. The other sheep of John 10:16 is a puzzling question.

Let us compare Luke 2:25 to 32 with Luke 23:50 to 56. In each of these Scriptures we see a faithful Israelite, waiting for the kingdom of God, with the body of Christ in his arms. One at His birth; one at His death. In the beginning of Luke the faithful Israelite was Simeon. At the close it was Joseph, of Aramathea. “Waiting for the kingdom of God”, did not mean waiting for Titus 2:11, for the grace of God to appear to all men. It meant, for Israel, the coming of their Messiah, with signs and miracles, and with national redemption. Luke 7:20 to 22; Isaiah 35:3 to 9. It meant the fulfillment of Luke 1:67 to 77. Israel’s deliverance from Gentile authority. It meant the coming of Israel’s Shepherd-King to seek out the lost sheep of Israel, in fulfillment of Ezekiel 34.

Note the first kingdom message in Luke 3:3 to 14: “water baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins”; “he that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise”; “be content with your wages”; “bring forth fruits meet for repentance.” This was the message of John the Baptist. Note to whom John’s message was sent: “And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.” Luke 1:16. “And the

child grew and waxed Strong in Spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of His Showing unto Israel.” Luke 1:80.

We have already quoted Luke 13:16 and Luke 19:9 and 10 to prove that the kingdom gospel of Christ was for the sons and daughters of Abraham.

Now let us remember that the Nation Israel is always in view in the fulfillment and realization of the kingdom hope and promise; also baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins; signs and miracles; and the disposal of property, the proceeds brought into a common treasury. Acts 2:5—2:36—2:11 to 44.

Therefore the kingdom program continued into the Book of Acts. In Acts 3:19 to 21 we read of God’s offer to Israel on the condition of repentance; God would send Christ back from heaven to bring about the restitution of all things prophesied in the Old Testament Scripture.

SOMETHING OF KINGDOM PROGRAM

Note these verses in Luke 9:3 and 6; “And He said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor Scrip, neither bread, neither money: neither have two coats apiece.” “And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.”

Luke 9:61 and 62.

“And another also said, Lord, I will follow Thee: but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Luke 10:4 and 9.

“Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”

Luke 12:29 and 33.

“And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens which faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.”

Luke 18:22.

“Now when Jesus heard these things, He said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me.”

Luke 19:8.

“And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him forefold.”

Note why the rich man of Luke 12 was a fool and why the rich man of Luke 16 was not in Abraham's bosom. In both cases it was because of the accumulation of property and wealth and a failure to divide it. Read Luke 12:16 to 21 and Luke 16:19 to 27.

Now compare all these verses with Acts 2:44 and 45 and Acts 4:34 and 35.

Acts 2:44 and 45.

“And all that believed were together, and had all things in common: And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”

Acts 4:34 and 35.

“Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold. And laid them down at the Apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.”

Surely the Kingdom program is found in the early chapters of the Book of Acts. Christ, according to Luke 1:28 to 33, was born to take David's throne. Christ, according to Acts 2:27 to 33, was raised to take David's throne. Surely Christ is coming back to take David's throne. Then Christ will again establish His kingdom program. He will build the tabernacle of David and fulfill Amos 9:11 to 15. The twelve Apostles will sit on their twelve thrones and judge the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Matthew 19:28.

PEACE ON EARTH—NO PEACE ON EARTH

Now let us compare Luke 2:11 and 14 with Luke 12:49 to 52. Note the expression “peace on earth”. It is interesting to note how frequently the expression “on earth” occurs in Luke. And equally as interesting to note how frequently “in the heavenlies” occurs in Ephesians. There is a great difference between “on the earth” and “in the heavenlies”. But note:

Luke 3:11 and 14.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”
“Glory to God in the highest. and ON EARTH PEACE, good will toward men.”

Luke 13:49 to 52.

“I am come to send fire on the earth: and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straitened till it be accomplished? Suppose ye that I am come to give PEACE ON EARTH? I tell you Nay; but rather division. For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.”

In the light of the kingdom proclamation of John the Baptist, of Christ, of the Twelve and of the Seventy, recorded in the first ten chapters of Luke, we should be provoked to dispensational Bible study by this question of the Saviour “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth?” “I tell you, Nay: but rather division.” Luke 12:51. Certainly they supposed it. Christ was born for David's throne. That meant of the increase of His peace and government no end. Isaiah 9:6 and 7. The messengers from heaven said to the shepherds “peace on earth”. But now Christ answers, “I tell you, Nay; but rather division.” “Peace on earth?” Yes—Luke 2:14. “Peace on earth ?” Nay—Luke 12:51. A contradiction? No the King will not be received by

Israel. He is to be the Nobleman and go into a far country, receive a kingdom and return. Luke 19:12: Luke 21:24 and 27 to 31

The language of the Saviour in these verses, Luke 12:49 to 52, seems to indicate a change of program:

1. No peace on earth.
2. Divisions even in families.
3. Christ's baptism on the cross.

Peace on earth is to be when Christ is on David's throne. But now He is going to His crucifixion (His baptism) rather than to His coronation. His crown now is to be thorns—the curse. On We cross Christ made peace by His shed blood. Colossians 1:20. And individual sinners have peace with God when they believe on Christ. Romans 5:1. But “peace on earth” has been postponed until the Prince of Peace shall return. Carefully note these significant words of the Saviour, weeping over Jerusalem.

Luke 19:41 to 44.

“And when He was come near, He beheld the city and wept over it. Saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto THY PEACE! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

Luke 13:35.

“But now the things which belong unto THY PEACE are hid from thine eyes.” Note again: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Luke 21:20 and 24

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.”

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

The “times of the Gentiles” will come to an end when the Son of man returns to deliver Israel. After the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled the kingdom will be restored to Israel: Israel will be restored to the Lord and Israel's true King David will be on Israel's throne.

Israel's desolation did not take place immediately after Christ's rejection and death in 33 A.D.; but more than thirty years thereafter, when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem.

Note these three facts:

1. Christ on the cross prayed for Israel's forgiveness. Luke 23:34.
2. Christ was raised from the dead to take David's throne. Acts 2:28 to 33.
3. God offered to send Christ back from heaven to set up His kingdom, if Israel would repent. Acts 3:19 to 21.

Nineteen hundred years later we are living in “the times of the Gentiles”; Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles and the Jews are scattered among all nations. Israel is waiting the fulfillment of Luke 21:25 to 33.

Christ’s death baptism took place on the cross. For some reason after the announcement of His baptism on the cross (Luke 12:50) no more water baptisms were recorded in the last half of Luke’s gospel.

In Luke’s Record alone do we find the account of the rich man in hades and Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom; the parable of the prodigal son, the lost coin, the parable of the Pharisee and the publican who went up to pray, the salvation of Zaccheus the publican, the salvation of the thief on the cross, and several other parables,

THE GREAT SUPPER

After Christ’s declaration that there would be no peace on earth He told the parable of the Great Supper (Luke 14:16 to 24). It is interesting to study this parable with II Corinthians 5:11 and 20.

In this parable Christ taught that a message of grace would be sent out to the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind, because God was angry with the Jews who were bidden and refused to come. In II Thessalonians 2:7 to 11, we learn how angry God is going to be at the end of this day of grace with those refusing and opposing His truth. But in this period of grace, the ambassadors of grace are to proclaim the “reconciliation” message. Surely all things are now ready.

In II Corinthians 5:21 we have our message, Christ on the cross was made sin that sinners might be made the righteousness of God in Him. We are to persuade, beseech and compel men to come to Christ.

Note the prayers of Luke 14:19; Luke 18:12; Acts 10:4 and II Corinthians 5:20. In this day of grace the sinner is not to beseech God for salvation. God is rather seeking and beseeching the sinner.

MATTHEW and JOHN

Here we have two of the Twelve. For some reason the Holy Spirit led Matthew to write his Gospel, at least forty years before John wrote his. And how different they are in so many respects. More than ninety per cent of the facts concerning Christ, recorded in John’s Message, are missing in Matthew Mark and Luke. There are seventeen chapters of facts in John’s Gospel not even hinted at in the three Synoptics.

But let us gather a few general facts concerning Matthew’s Message. We find in that Record, the first question of the so-called New Testament Scriptures: “Where is He that is born King of the Jews?” Matthew 2:2. In Matthew 27:35 to 37 we learn that the Son of God died King of the Jews. To be sure, then, in Matthew, Christ is the King of the Jews. But in Matthew 1:20 to 23, we learn that He was born Emmanuel, “God with us,” the virgin’s Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, in fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. So we see that Christ is God in human form in Matthew, as well as the King of the Jews. In John 1:47 He was thus saluted: “Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.”

Let us have these verses in mind as we study the outline of Matthew’s Gospel.

1. Romans 15:8: "NOW I SAY THAT JESUS WAS A MINISTER OF THE CIRCUMCISION FOR THE TRUTH OF GOD, TO CONFIRM THE PROMISES MADE, UNTO THE FATHERS."
2. Galatians 4:4: "BUT WHEN THE FULNESS OF TIME WAS COME, GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON, MADE OF A WOMAN, MADE UNDER THE LAW."
3. Acts 2:22: "YE MEN OF ISRAEL, HEAR THESE WORDS: JESUS OF NAZARETH, A MAN APPROVED OF GOD AMONG YOU BY MIRACLES AND WONDERS AND SIGNS, WHICH GOD DID BY HIM IN THE MIDST OF YOU, AS YE YOURSELVES ALSO KNOW."
4. Hebrews 2:16: "FOR VERILY HE TOOK ON HIM THE SEED OF ABRAHAM."
5. Romans 1:3 and 4. "CONCERNING HIS SON JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, WHICH WAS MADE OF THE SEED OF DAVID ACCORDING TO THE FLESH: AND DECLARED TO BE THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER . . ."

With these facts in mind, let us realize that Christ was made under the law; that Christ was a minister of the circumcision confirming prophetic truth; that Christ spent His earthly life in the midst of Israel in the land of the Jews; preaching to those who were under the law; that the miracles which God wrought by Christ (because the Jews require a sign) were to put Christ on display (approved) for Israel's acceptance. Then we can better understand why Matthew 1:1 does not take us back to the forefathers who lived before Abraham. "The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David the son of Abraham." The true kings came from David. The Jews came from Abraham. In Matthew Christ is the King of the Jews. Although Abraham was not a Jew, the Jews came from Abraham. Christ was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. He was Shiloh and He came from Abraham, Judah and, David. Revelation 5:5; Genesis 49:10. God's King, the man after God's own heart, was David, whom Samuel anointed. God made a covenant with David concerning Christ's birth, resurrection and glorious earthly reign. Note Acts 2:28 to 33; II Samuel 7:11 to 15; Psalm 16:10; 110:1; Isaiah 9:6 and 7 ; Ezekiel 37:24 and 25.

Christ was the Son, the Seed of Abraham and of David. He was the Son of the virgin, the Seed of the woman. Genesis 3:14 and 15. He was declared to be the Son of God with power.

Now let us see the outline of Matthew in these verses:

Matthew 3:1 and 2.

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea. And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 10:5 to 8.

"These Twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely ye have received, freely give."

Matthew 10:23.

". . . ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come."

Matthew 5:17.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

Matthew 15:21.

“But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

Matthew 16:20 and 21 “Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples. how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”

Matthew 23:1 to 3.

“Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, Saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses seat: All therefore whatsoever they hid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”

Then carefully read the parable of the vineyard in Matthew 21:33 to 46. We quote verses 37, 39, 42, and 43.

Matthew 21:37, 39, 42 and 43.

“But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.”

“And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.”

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, the Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” “Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

Between the proclamation of John the Baptist, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” (Matthew 3:2) and the proclamation by Jesus Christ, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” (Matthew 4:17) we have John’s baptism. The significance of that baptism for God’s Covenant Nation unto repentance for remission of sins, is told by John in John 1:31: “And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.”

We also have the King’s anointing and His temptation, His victory over Satan, the prince of this world. Satan offered the rulership of the world to Christ in exchange for worship. Matthew 4:8. You will remember that David was anointed, while Saul, the rejected one was king over Israel. Satan is a usurper and will be dethroned by God’s Anointed King, The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of Christ.

I Corinthians 15:25 and 28.

“For He must reign till he hath put all enemies under His feet.” “And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”

Ephesians 1:10.

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth: even in Him.”

Compare Christ’s proclamation, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” (Matthew 4:17) with Mark 1:14 and 15.

Matthew 4:17.

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

Mark 1:14 and 15.

“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.”

Mark 1:34.

“And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak because they knew Him.”

Let us remember the prophecy concerning the coming of Israel’s King to deliver the people.

Isaiah 35:4 to 7.

“Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.”

Now read carefully:

Matthew 4:23,

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people.”

Note what Christ did immediately after the proclamation of the kingdom. Neither this message nor the “sign” program is intended for this period of special Divine favor upon the Gentiles in which we live. Note what Paul writes in:

Ephesians 3:1 and 2.

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward.”

Ephesians 3:8 and 9.

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

The gospel of the kingdom was good news for Israel, concerning the presence of the King and Israel’s national deliverance and restitution. This kingdom is now in abeyance. The King is now Head of the Church which is His Body. Ephesians 1:19 to 22. Although Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, He is not now under the law. Jesus of Nazareth to Israel, a minister of the circumcision, as He was in Matthew. He will again deal with Israel as a

nation, but it is different today. So far as the individual sinner's salvation is concerned, in all ages, it has been by faith in the shed blood of the Son of God.

THE KINGDOM AT HAND—GRACE HAS APPEARED

Matthew 15:24.

“But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

Titus 2:11.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”

Now immediately after the King had conquered Satan and demonstrated His power over Satan's demons, and healed all manner of diseases, He went up into a high mountain and gave forth the Sermon on the Mount, including the kingdom prayer, the golden rule, and the program of His Messianic Kingdom.

In Matthew's Record, about thirty times we find the expression, “the kingdom of heaven”. We have learned by comparing Matthew 4:17 with Mark 1:14 and 15, that sometimes “the kingdom of heaven” and “the kingdom of God” mean precisely the same thing, but this is not always so in the Scriptures. For example, membership in the Body of Christ is quite different from the position and blessing of an Israelite in the Messianic Kingdom under the King. However, the member of the Body is in the Kingdom of the Son of God's love!” and in the Kingdom of God. Colossians 1:13 to 16 and Romans 14:14. But surely we must acknowledge there is a great difference between the gospel of the kingdom, with its program of healing, etc. and the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Compare Matthew 4:23 and Luke 9:6 with I Timothy 1:11 and 5:23.

THE BELIEVER AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Some time ago a gentleman, who did not claim to be a Christian, said to me, “if a Christian is one who obeys and practices the commands and teachings of Christ in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth chapters of Matthew, I have never seen a Christian and I do not believe there has ever been one.” I had to agree with the gentleman. So will you, if you are honest.

There is no message of salvation by grace in the Sermon on the Mount in these chapters.

Neither is there the suggestion in the messages of these chapters that those messages, as a whole, are for the practice and obedience of members of the Body of Christ, described in Ephesians and Colossians. There is quite a similarity between some of the beatitudes of Matthew 5:1 to 12 and the fruit of the Spirit, which is “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” Galatians 5:22 and 23.

Surely the believer, saved by grace, should manifest the fruit of the Spirit and be meek, merciful and a peacemaker. He should fulfill the righteousness of the law by walking in the Spirit. But will he inherit the earth, if he is meek in accordance with Matthew 5:5? Will he be a child of God if he is a peacemaker, in accordance with Matthew 5:9? Under grace we are the children of God, because Christ was the Peacemaker. Colossians 1:20 and Galatians 3:26. “Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”, is a command of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 5:48. But under grace the believer is made for ever perfect by faith in the offering Christ made on the cross, Hebrews 10:10 and 14, Hebrews 7:19.

A prayer to God, “forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” in the “Our Father” prayer of Matthew 6:9 (fully explained in the last ten verses of Matthew 18) is on the grounds of

law and is not compatible with the message of grace recorded in Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 2:13.

Ephesians 4:32.

“And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Colossians 2:13.

“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”

Believers, under grace, are forgiven all and by God’s grace, they should forgive those who sin against them. In the “Our Father” prayer. Divine forgiveness is conditioned upon human forgiveness.

Now let us compare the “golden rule” of the Sermon on the Mount with II Timothy 1:9.

Matthew 7:12.

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for is the law and the prophets.”

II Timothy 1:9.

“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”

Now note the double “do” in the golden rule. Is this not pure law? Surely II Timothy 1:9 is pure grace. What consequences must the individual suffer if he struggles with the Sermon on the Mount and then fails to obey and practice all that is therein commanded? There are spiritual truths in the Four Gospels for the obedience and practice of believers, under grace; but they must be studied in the light of Pauline truth. Those who teach that the Sermon on the Mount is related to the kingdom and is not compatible with the message of grace, which Christ, revealed through Paul to members of the Body, are called, by some “antinomians” and “hyper-dispensationalists.” But the critics’ own inconsistencies do not seem to disturb them; that is, the fact that they make no pretense at obeying or practicing much that is mentioned in Matthew 5, 6, 7 and 8. They are much like some Christians, who admit that they practice none of the nine gifts of I Corinthians 12:5 to 12, but yet insist that those gifts are to be exercised by Christians today. This is the confession of a faithless, unspiritual experience. Many of these critics will admit that Israel’s hope was earthly, and the hope of the Body of Christ is heavenly, and yet they insist that both the earthly and the heavenly blessings and instructions of the Sermon on the Mount are for the obedience, practice and enjoyment of members of Christ’s Body; seated in the heavenlies and blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies.

It should prove interesting to compare Matthew 5:17 with Colossians 1:25 to 27.

Matthew 5:17 and 15:24.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to FULFILL.” “I am sent only to Israel.”

Colossians 1:25 to 27.

“Whereof I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to FULFILL the Word of God Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints. To whom Gad would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

There is a great difference between the fulfilling of the law and prophets by Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of Israel, and fulfilling (filling up) the Word of God with that mystery among the Gentiles, which Christ revealed to Paul. Paul instructs us to follow him as he followed Christ. In Paul’s messages do we find the Divine method for the understanding, interpretation and application of all Divine Truth. Inasmuch as Paul alone received from Christ the special revelations which give to us the key for the intelligent and correct understanding, interpretation and application of the Scriptures, we cannot walk well pleasing to the Lord, and rightly divide the Word of Truth, unless we study all Scripture in the light of Christ’s revelations to Paul.

How do these commands fit into Ephesians and Colossians?

Matthew 5:40 to 42.

“And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.”

Matthew 6:16 and 17.

“Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you they have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face.”

Matthew 6:25.

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?”

Matthew 5:23 and 24.

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

Matthew 8:4.

“And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man, but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.”

Today we have no priest on earth: We have no altar. Our spiritual walk is not according to Moses and the Jews’ religion. If we do not provide well for our own household, in this day of grace, we are worse than infidels. As heads of families we must take thought of life and the morrow. Members of the Body of Christ are wise to store up fuel and food for the winter. We are

not to give our property to every one that asketh us. We do not sell our property and bring the proceeds and lay them at the apostles' feet. This was in order only while Jerusalem stood, while the apostles lived and while God was offering the kingdom to Israel. Undoubtedly true communism, under the direction of the Prince of Peace, will be the order during the coming kingdom age.

Remember that Jesus Christ on earth was a minister of the circumcision, fulfilling Prophecy; sent only to Israel. Romans 15:8; Acts 2:22; Galatians 4:1; Matthew 15:24. Can you tell what prophecy is being fulfilled by Christ now as Head of the Body, instructing His members to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, and preach among the Gentiles riches that were unsearchable, that is, untraceable: not found in Prophecy?

If any religious Christians today and there are many of them are preaching "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," in the United States, as it was at hand in the Holy Land, when Christ was on earth, surely that messenger has not been sent by the Holy Spirit. There is a great difference between the keys of the kingdom given to Peter (Matthew 16:16 to 18) and the dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles given to Paul (Ephesians 3:1 to 3). Read Galatians 2:7 to 9. Compare Matthew 15:24 and Matthew 10:5 to 8 with this glorious blessed truth;

Titus 3:4 and 5.

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

Titus 2:11.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

The word "grace" is not found in the twenty-eight chapters of the Book of Matthew. The word "grace" is found twelve times in the six chapters of Ephesians. In Matthew 4:23 we read that Christ, in the synagogues (sent only to Israel), preached the gospel of the kingdom and bestowed physical blessings. In Ephesians there is no guarantee of physical blessing, but there is a grace message for Gentiles dead in sin. These Gentiles had been alienated from Israel and the life of God. Ephesians 2:11 and 12; Ephesians 4:18—They received Paul's Gospel, a message that put them in Christ Jesus and seated them in the heavenlies, where they were blessed with all spiritual blessings. In Christ Jesus believers are fully pardoned and justified and should forgive others because God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven them. "Justified from all things". Acts 13:39. "Justified without a cause by God's grace". Romans 3:24. From afar off, "brought nigh by the blood of Christ." Ephesians 2:13.

Yes, the superficial student of the Scriptures should see that there is a great difference between "the gospel of the kingdom", God's religious-spiritual program, for Israel, in Matthew, and "the gospel of the grace of God", God's spiritual program in Ephesian, which is for Gentiles. There is grace in Matthew and a saving message there, but it is covered up with religion. Religion has fully disappeared when we reach Ephesians. The modernist cries, "back to Jesus and the synoptic Gospels (They do not like John). The well-taught Christian cries "on with Christ in the Pauline message." How happy a sinner should be to flee from the Sermon on the Mount to "by grace are ye saved!" Ephesians 2:8 and 9.

TWO GENTILES—GREAT FAITH

MATTHEW

In Matthew 8:5 to 10 and Matthew 15:22 to 28, we read concerning two Gentiles.

Read Matthew 8:10 and Luke 7:1 to 11, concerning the great faith of the Roman who received a blessing from the Lord. He built the Jews a synagogue because he loved them. Luke 7:3 to 5. His great faith brought a special ministry of the Lord Jesus. Note in Matthew 15:28 and Mark 7:26 to 30 the great faith of the Greek, who received from the Lord Jesus, the healing of her daughter. Two Gentiles—great faith—both in subjection to the Jews—received healing for their loved ones. But in Ephesians it is not the great faith of the Gentiles but great grace. Ephesians 2:8 to 13. “But God who is rich in mercy, for His “GREAT LOVE” with which He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved).” Ephesians 2:4 and 5. What a difference! “Great faith”—kingdom blessings for two Gentiles—Great love and grace salvation for any kind of a Gentile, whether or not he loves the Jew or comes to Christ through Israel.

Let us not take the Sermon on the Mount, the golden rule, and the “Our Father” prayer out of their setting, Note where God has placed them, in between Matthew 4:17 “the kingdom of heaven is at hand”, and Matthew 10:7, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Then compare Matthew 4:23, “healing all manner of sickness” with Matthew 10:8.

Matthew 4:23.

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.”

Matthew 10:8.

“Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”

Any intelligent student of the Scriptures will readily admit that Matthew 10:8 has no place in our “Grace” program today. Then why follow the inconsistent leaders who have used the “snatch-grab” method of selecting a few of the commands of the Lord recorded in Matthew 5, 6, 7, and 8 and wholly ignore the others? We should exercise great care in studying the kingdom teaching of Matthew 5, 6, 7, and 8 and not bring into this dispensation of grace for Gentiles any part of that kingdom program that will pervert the glorious gospel of the blessed God. I Timothy 1:11.

In Matthew we find eleven times such expressions as “the kingdom of heaven is likened unto” and we have there a number of kingdom parables. But we find none of this in John’s Record. Moreover Paul never in any of his writings, referred to the kingdom teaching Christ gave out on earth.

Matthew divides with Matthew 4:17 and with 16:20 and 21.

Matthew 4:17.

“FROM THAT TIME Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 16:20 and 21

“Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ. FROM THAT TIME forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised again the third day.”

Note the significance of “FROM THAT TIME”. Matthew 16:21 suggests a decided turning point; the truth of the Son in the parable of the vineyard in Chapter 21. The Son, the Heir, is slain. The Stone which the builders rejected is to become the head of the corner. The kingdom is to be taken away from Israel. This truth, suggested in Matthew 21, in the last years of the earthly ministry of Christ, is suggested in the very first chapter of John: “He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” John 1:11. In Matthew 22:7 and Matthew 23:31 to 3,9 we learn what is going to happen to His own—judgment—desolation.

The Gospel of Matthew closes with the so-called great commission. This is missing in John’s Gospel. There is nothing like this in the last two chapters of John. The Sermon on the Mount—the kingdom prayer—the kingdom parables—the great commission would be out of place in John.

JOHN’S GOSPEL

While there are many plain statements in the Gospel of John, yet it is a very difficult message to understand, especially in its relation to the Synoptic Records, Matthew, Mark and Luke. It is not easy to definitely fix the dispensational position of John’s Gospel. If it is true that Matthew wrote his Gospel about 38 A.D. and that John wrote his Gospel not earlier than 88 A.D., we cannot refrain from asking why. Why did the Holy Spirit lead Matthew to write even before repentance unto life was granted unto Cornelius, the first Gentile convert (Acts 11:18); and restrained John, from writing until after Paul had finished his course and written fourteen Epistles? John wrote at least twenty years after Paul’s death and almost as many years after Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army, in fulfillment of Matthew 22:7. There must have been a good and sufficient Divine reason. The Holy Spirit is infallible and was executing the Divine purpose in this, according to the will of God.

Some students of the Bible endeavor to prove by the words of Paul, in Colossians 1:24 and 25, that John wrote the Gospel, his three Epistles and the Revelation, before Paul wrote Colossians, but few have been convinced by their faulty arguments. After a thorough study of the Gospel of John, it is apparent that believers had need of the revelations of Christ through Paul, concerning the message of grace and Body truth before they were ready for this unique message of John. And unique it is! In John’s Gospel Christ speaks of Himself in the first person pronoun nearly 700 times. But it does not even suggest “egoism”.

We learn some very interesting facts in the first chapter of John namely, that Christ was, in the beginning, with God; that He was God and the Creator of all things; that He became flesh and revealed His glory and declared God. In this same first chapter we are taught that the law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Christ. That He was rejected by Israel; that He was the Lamb of God Which beareth away the sin of the world. He came unto His own world and His own race received Him not.

So John’s message is concerning Christ as the Eternal God, a message of grace, good news for the world concerning Christ, God’s foreordained Lamb. John’s message is a

combination message of the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of grace, not limited to Israel, but for the world. It is true that in John 4:22 we are taught that salvation is of the Jews, and that the word “Jew” occurs more than sixty times in John; but the word “world” is found seventy-seven times in John. Note these words of Christ, John 12:31: “Now is the judgment of this world.

In Matthew 15:24 Christ is sent only to Israel. In John 3:16 God loved the world that whosoever believeth may have eternal life. But John 3:16 looks beyond the death of Christ; for even in Acts 5:30 and 31, Peter declared that Christ was raised from the dead to give repentance and forgiveness to Israel. Nothing in this message for the Gentiles described in Ephesians 2:11 and 13. So John’s message is far beyond anything found in the early chapters of Acts. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (II Corinthians 5:20). But John’s Gospel does not mention a single Gentile who was saved while Christ was on earth. The woman at the well was not a Gentile. John 4:9.

It is quite significant that in Matthew, Mark and Luke, Christ was not rejected until He had presented His credentials and preached many messages to Israel. He was beyond the half-way mark in His earthly ministry, in the Synoptics, before He told His disciples that He was going to be rejected by the rulers, be put to death and raised the third day. But in John He is rejected in the first chapter. He is, in that chapter, the Lamb of God. John 1:29.

Note John 2:19 and 21. “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” “But He spake of the temple of His body.” So He is presented as the sin-bearer and the resurrected One in chapters one, and two.

The message of grace, eternal life by faith alone, in John’s Gospel, is on the grounds of the death and resurrection of the Son of God. So unlike the general messages in the Synoptics. In studying the “whosoever” message of eternal life in John, we must see the Saviour as already crucified and raised from the dead. No verse in this Record is more puzzling than is John 3:13: “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.” Whether these words were given by the Spirit to John when he wrote years after Christ went back to heaven, or whether Christ uttered them while on earth, it is true that without the resurrection of Christ there would be no message of life for the individual sinner. While Christ on earth was preaching to Israel the middlewall that separated Israel and the rest of the world was standing. Ephesians 2:13 to 17. So for the message of salvation and eternal life for the world, mentioned in John, we must look this side of the cross and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Only in John’s Gospel does Christ present Himself as the “I AM”.

John 8:58.

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was I am.”

John 8:24.

“I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.”

Before Abraham was I AM—Before Adam was I AM. Yea, before the world was. “And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” “For Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.” John 17:5 and 24.

Now note the I AM’s of John’s Gospel.

John 4:25 and 26: "I that speak unto thee AM He."
John 6:35: "I AM the Bread of Life."
John 6:51: "I AM the Living Bread Which came down from Heaven."
John 8:12: "I AM the Light of the world."
John 10:7: "I AM the Door of the sheep"
John 10:9: "I AM the Door."
John 10:11: "I AM the Good Shepherd."
(John 10:30: "I and My Father are One.")
(John 14:9: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.")
John 11:25: "I AM the Resurrection and the Life."
John 8:28: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM He."
John 14:6: "I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life."
John 15:1: "I AM the True Vine."
John 18:6: "I AM He."

In John 1:1 to 3, we have the plain statement that Christ is God.

Now read:

John 20:28:

"And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and My God."

Then:

John 10:33:

"The Jews answered Him, saying; For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy: and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God."

John 5:18:

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."

and

John 19:7:

"The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself to be God."

They finally delivered Him unto death by crucifixion because He claimed to be God. If Christ had denied that He was God, His life would have been spared.

"So there was a division among the people because of Him . . . Some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people."

If Christ was not God, He deceived the people. We are all agreed that a good man would not purposely deceive the people; that a good man would not be so blasphemous as to claim unity and equality with God. Therefore we conclude that Christ was God, or not good.

Note these verses concerning Christ's omnipotence and omniscience.

John 5:19 to 23.

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

John 10:18.

“No man taketh it from Me but I lay it down of Myself, I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.”

John 10:28.

“And I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.”

John 2:25.

“And needeth not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man.”

John 4:25.

“The woman saith unto Him. I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things.”

John 17:21

“. . . And he (Peter) said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things.”

His Deity is implied in John 6:47: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.”

This is the message of John’s Gospel. Sinner believe and receive Christ and eternal life.

John 3:16 and 36.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

John 8:24.

“I said therefore unto you that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.”

“BELIEVE” IS FOUND IN JOHN’S GOSPEL 100 TIMES.

Note the penalty for not believing on Christ:

John 3:18—“condemned already.”

John 3:36—"the abiding wrath of God."

John 8:21—"ye shall die in your sins."

Does it make any difference then what man believes concerning Christ?

To accept the Christ in John's Gospel is to accept the Eternal God in human form. "If ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die IN YOUR SINS."

NOT CONDEMNED—CONDEMNED

Compare now these two statements:

John 3:17.

"For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

John 12:31.

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

Here we find grace and judgment. God sent His Son; the first time, not to condemn the world. God sent His Son to be condemned for and by the world. Christ said to the guilty one, caught in her sin "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." John 8:11. This fits right into Romans 8:2. . . ."There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Christ declared, in John 5:24. That believers pass out of death into life and shall not come into condemnation. "Now is the judgment of this world." The Creator was judged by the creature; but it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Acts 2:22 and Acts 4:27 and 28.

In Matthew, Mark and Luke Christ was under the law. The law is the ministration of condemnation. II Corinthians 3:9. In John's grace Gospel, "Neither do I condemn thee (law-breaker)". Grace justifies and does not condemn.

CHRIST'S WORK AND THE SINNER'S WORK

In Psalms 119:126, the Psalmist says, "It is time for Thee, Lord, to work; for the people have broken Thy law." This tells the story of John's Gospel: "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:17.

The law was given by Moses. Note these words of Christ in John 7:19: "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill Me?" Grace came by Jesus Christ. Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:21. "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Romans 8:3

Jesus Christ was hated "without a cause". John 15:25. In Romans. 3:24, we find the same Greek word translated "freely". It is "dorian" and means "without a cause". Note that this grace redemption is on the grounds of the redemptive work of Christ on the cross. So we have grace presented in John 1:17, with Christ as the Lamb of God. John 1:29. Isn't the message of grace wonderful? Isn't it a terrible spiritual crime to mix law with grace?

It is true that in Paul's writings Christ is not called the Lamb. But He is called, in connection with His redemptive work, "the Seed of David." and "the Seed of Abraham." Romans 1:3; II Timothy 2:8 and Hebrews 2:16

While the free reign of grace, or the dispensation of the grace of God, did not begin until Paul came on the scene yet it is stated in John's Gospel and demonstrated. The grace message, in John, differs so much from the Kingdom gospel in the Synoptics.

John 4:34.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish HIS WORK."

John 9:4.

"I MUST WORK THE WORKS of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work."

John 17:4.

"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK which Thou gavest Me to do."

John 19:30.

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, IT IS FINISHED: and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost."

In the message of eternal life observe, in John's Gospel, that Christ is doing the works. This reminds us of Paul's glorious gospel of the blessed God. "Not by works"—"Not of works". Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5; II Timothy 1:9

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 9:12.

When the rich young ruler and the lawyer and others came to Christ, in the Synoptics, in quest of eternal life, he referred to keeping the law. In order to be saved by grace there is nothing to keep or do—Simply believe. Christ obtained eternal redemption. Whosoever will may be saved without works or religion.

John 6:28 and 29.

"Then said they unto Him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent."

Now note again John 11:25: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall He live."

Christ is the resurrection because of His death and resurrection. He is life because: "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." II Timothy 1:10. What is the sinner's work for salvation by grace? "Believe on Him Whom God hath sent." See how this fits right into Pauline truth.

II Timothy 1:9.

“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

Ephesians 2:8 to 10.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

In grace the individual must be God’s workmanship, without working before he can be God’s workman. Now compare:

Luke 13:24.

“STRIVE to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.”

Matthew 24:13.

“But he that shall ENDURE UNTO THE END, the same shall be saved’.”

with:

John 6:29 and 47.

“Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent.”

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.”

No striving (agonizing); no enduring unto the end, in John’s Grace Gospel. Hear these blessed words of Christ: “And I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father Which gave them Me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand. I and My Father are One.” John 10:29 to 30.

CHRIST’S HOUR IN JOHN

John is the only writer to mention the significant Hour of Christ, fixed before Adam was created.

I Peter 1:18 to 20.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”

“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,”

John 2:4.

“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? MINE HOUR is not yet come.

John 7:30.

“Then they sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because HIS HOUR was not yet come.”

John 8:20.

“These words spake Jesus in the temple, as He taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on Him: for HIS HOUR was not yet come.”

John 12:23.

“And Jesus answered them, saying, THE HOUR is come that the Son of man should be glorified.”

John 12:27.

“Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save Me from THIS HOUR: but for this cause came I unto THIS HOUR.”

John 13:1.

“Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that HIS HOUR was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.”

John 17:1.

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, THE HOUR is come: glorify Thou Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.”

John 7:6.

“Then Jesus said unto them, MY TIME is not yet come: but your time is always ready.”

John 7:8.

“Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for MY TIME is not yet full come.”

How interesting this hour, peculiar to this grace message! Not found in the Synoptics, even as we do not find in the Synoptics the words of Christ, “I must finish”; “It is finished”; “I have finished.” Note again these words:

“Now is My soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.” John 12:27.

Here we see that Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world to be the Lamb of God. His death was neither premature nor accidental. He was not a martyr who came to an untimely end, His hour was timely, not untimely. He was not the helpless victim of circumstances. Nothing happened as a surprise to Christ. His death was a part of His life’s program, all prearranged.

Note these unique statements John 10:17 and 18. “Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down Myself. This commandment have I received of My Father.”

John 13:3.

“Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God.”

John 18:11.

“Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?”

John 19:10 and 11

“Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest Thou not unto me? knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin.”

Thus we realize in John the truth of Hebrews 2:9. How and why Christ was made or became flesh.

CHRIST’S MIRACLES IN JOHN

1. Turning water into wine. John 2:1 to 11.
2. The Nobleman’s son healed. John 4:46.
3. The Impotent man made whole. John 5:1 to 9.
4. Feeding thousands with broken bread. John 6:5 to 12.
5. Christ walking on the sea. John 6:19.
6. The blind man healed in Siloam. John. 9:1 to 7.
7. The resurrection of Lazarus. John. 11:43 to 45.

Here we will observe that of all the miracles performed by the Lord Jesus Christ before His death the Holy Spirit has selected seven to be mentioned in detail in the Gospel of John. We have been frequently told that “seven” is the Divine number; the number of perfection. In John 20:31, we are told that the Record is given of these miracles, “that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name.” Undoubtedly the reader has been impressed with the frequent occurrence of the words “believe” and “life” in John’s Message, in which Message the Saviour is truly presented as the Son of God: God the Son. Read Hebrews 1:8 and Isaiah 9:6.

There are some religious people today who endeavor to demonstrate the Deity of Jesus Christ by their futile efforts to duplicate His miracles. In their program of miracles they use the slogan, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” Hebrews 13:3. Then they proceed to practice their religious healing. With them it is rather a “hit and miss” proposition; generally a “miss”. If we are to demonstrate the Deity of Jesus Christ by perpetuating or duplicating His miracles, we should follow the program of John’s Gospel, where we have seven miracles, to prove that Jesus Christ is the same as to His Deity yesterday, today and forever. What God has joined together let us not put asunder. While every Christian acknowledges this all-important fundamental that Christ’s Deity is unchangeable and confesses Him to be the uncreated, eternal God, yet, every intelligent student of the Bible knows that the Lord Jesus has

experienced several changes as to His form. And with different dispensations there are some changes in His ministry; for example, compare Romans 15:8 with Ephesians 1:19 to 22. What Christ was doing in heaven for Israel, before His incarnation differs from His present ministry for Church which is His Body.

But now, as to the seven miracles of John's Record, we note that immediately after the miracle of the "bread and fishes" Christ presents the spiritual application, declaring Himself to be the true "Bread" from heaven; declaring that without this Bread no one can have spiritual life or fellowship with God.

But we call your attention to the four miracles which are peculiar to John's Gospel; that is, miracles not found in the Synoptics.

First—Turning the water into wine.

Second—The cure of the impotent man.

Third—The cure of the blind man in Siloam.

Fourth—The resurrection of Lazarus.

First—By carefully studying the second and third chapters of John's Gospel we may learn that "turning the water into wine" was symbolic of the change which the Lord Jesus demanded of Nicodemus; namely, regeneration. At the wedding at Cana, the religious vessels were filled with water, and by Divine power the contents became wine. Wine is the symbol of joy. True joy is joy in the Holy Spirit resulting from regeneration by the Spirit. Nicodemus was a religious vessel, and the Lord Jesus told him that he should be born of the Spirit and the water. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. Here we note that a man cannot see or enter the kingdom of God except he be born "another": from above. While there is a difference and a distinction between the new birth for Israel, in the third chapter of John, and the new creation, in the ministry of reconciliation, in II Corinthians 5:16 to 21, yet, in Titus 3:5 to 7, we learn that salvation is by the washing of regeneration. The sinner, in John, is unregenerated. "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." John 3:5. Compare Titus 3:5 to 7.

Second—The healing of the impotent man. One who is impotent is one who is unable. In the grace message in the Gospel of John, and in Paul's Gospel, the sinner is unable; that is, he is unable to merit, earn or purchase eternal life. He can not. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Romans 8:8. In this verse we have restated the truth of John 3:1 to 7: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh". And in Romans 7:18 we have this confession: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."

As the sinner, in John's Gospel, is unregenerated, so the sinner, in John, is impotent. For instance, let us compare John 6:44 with Matthew 11:28: "No man can come to Me, except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." "Come unto me; and I will give you rest." Can we reconcile God's election and God's part in the sinner's salvation with the gospel call "Whosoever?" The true servant of the Lord will preach both sides of God's Divine truth and permit the Holy Spirit to reconcile them. In John 6:64, we have the plain statement that Christ knew from the beginning who would believe. And in this same chapter, verse 65, we read these words expressing the same truth as we found in John 6:44. "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father."

We also quote confirming this truth, John 3:27: “John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.” Thus, we see how impotent the believer is in the matter of God’s grace salvation. And God has ordained that no flesh shall ever glory in His presence. This is confirmed in Paul’s Message, in Ephesians 2:8 and 9 and Titus 3:5, which verses we quote: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.”

Third—Read carefully the story in John 9, concerning “the man who could not see.” He was born blind. Every son of Adam was conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. According to Ephesians 2:2, all by nature are the children of wrath. According to I Corinthians 2, the natural man cannot discern spiritual things. They are foolishness to him. Every sinner by nature is spiritually blind. The blind man washed in the pool of Siloam, and then he could see. We are told plainly in John 9:7 that Siloam means “Sent”. About forty times Christ in John is the “One Sent”. Therefore, the pool of Siloam speaks of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the dying on the cross of Calvary to provide cleansing and spiritual birth and discernment. Note in John 3:14, Christ’s answer to Nicodemus as to how he might be born again and see. “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up”. Thus we see that in order to receive his spiritual sight the sinner must be washed by the blood of Christ which is the true pool of Siloam,

Fourth—Perhaps we have wondered why this great miracle, the resurrection of Lazarus, is not mentioned in Matthew, Mark and Luke. It is significant that in John’s Gospel the sinner is a dead man.

John 5:24 and 25.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me, Hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”

We are told in John 11:4, why Lazarus was sick. “When Jesus heard that He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.” It gave the Lord Jesus the opportunity to proclaim and demonstrate one of the greatest truths of the Bible. JESUS SAID UNTO HER, I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE: HE THAT BELIEVETH IN ME, THOUGH HE WERE DEAD, YET SHALL HE LIVE.”

Here is the answer to the question of Job 14:14: “If a man die shall lie live again?” As the death and resurrection of Lazarus were for the glory of God: so were the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. By His death and resurrection the Lord Jesus opened up the new and living way to God. Hebrews 10:15 to 18; Romans 4:22 to 24. He established the law of the spirit of life, by which sinners are freed from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2. Note the blessed truth expressed in II Timothy 1:10: But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” The whole spiritual duty of man is to appropriate, demonstrate and propagate the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Lazarus was four days dead. A thousand years is as one day with the Lord. At the time Lazarus died men had been dying for four thousand years. They had waited those forty centuries for the coming of the Seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head. "But we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." "LAZARUS, COME FORTH!" Lazarus came forth. Some day that same Christ will say to all in the graves, "Come forth!" What will take place?

John 5:28 and 29.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice. And shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

I Thessalonians 4:16 to 18.

". . . The dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

After Lazarus arose from the dead, he sat at the supper table with Christ and with those saints who had not died. John 12:1 and 2. Then followed the King's entrance into Jerusalem: "Blessed is the King of Israel." John 12:13. Then came the Gentiles seeking the Lord. John 12:20 and 21. After the Rapture of I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18, the King of Israel will come to Jerusalem and the Gentiles will come to the King. This is the grace dispensation. The gospel of the Kingdom concerning the King is yet to be preached.

When we compare John 5:23 to 25, concerning the dead man of John's Gospel, with Ephesians 2:1 to 6, we again see the similarity in the message of grace for sinners, (dead in trespasses and sins) in John's Gospel, and in Paul's Gospel. The Christian who teaches that John's Gospel is the kingdom gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke, does greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures. Remember the earthly physical phase of the kingdom is not presented in John's Gospel, as it is in the Synoptics. Paul never preached a clearer message of grace than is preached in:

John 6:47.

"Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life."

And:

John 3:18.

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Thus we learn that in the four miracles, peculiar to John's Record, that the sinner is unregenerate, impotent, blind and dead. This is still the condition of millions of sinners. Let's help them into the pool of Siloam. Let's preach to them John 11:25 and 26. Salvation must, of necessity, be by grace.

Grace came by Jesus Christ, but when did the reign of grace begin? Christ was made under the law, and God did not take the law out of the way until Christ died on the cross. Colossians 2:12 to 14. Therefore, we must look this side of Calvary and the open sepulchre to

apply the message of grace in John's Gospel. Some have tried to prove, by Luke 16:16, that the reign of law ceased with the ministry of John the Baptist, and the reign of grace began. But surely Matthew 23:1 to 3 and Ephesians 2:13 to 17 and Acts 5:29 to 32 is the answer to this false notion.

COMPARE

Matthew 15:24.

“But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

Luke 19:9.

“And Jesus said unto them, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.”

Acts 5:31.

“Him hath God exalted with His right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”

and

Acts 11:19.

“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only.”

WITH:

John 3 :16.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

John 1:11 and 12.

“He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

To the mind of the student there comes this question: if Christ on earth was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, how did the “whosoever” message of John 3:16 include the Gentiles?” The fact of the matter is, that in John's Gospel there is no record that Christ preached to a Gentile. He did preach to some Samaritans, as we learn in chapter four. Even after the death and resurrection of the Saviour, the twelve apostles for some years preached only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Acts 5:30; Acts 11:19. About seven years after the day of Pentecost Peter was instructed to preach to the first company of Gentiles. To the household of Cornelius, he preached: “To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name WHOSOEVER believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” Acts 10:43. Some years later the Holy Spirit led Paul to declare the truth of Romans 10:12 and 13. “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For WHOSOEVER shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Again we say that the message of grace for Jew and Gentile, in accordance with John 3:16, pointed forward to a time after Acts 11:18. There are some teachers of the Word who do not believe that either John the Baptist or Christ declared John 3:16 while Christ was on earth;

but that the Holy Spirit led John the Apostle to give that truth when he wrote his Gospel, near the close of the first century. Let us not forget the word “world” occurs 77 times in John’s message.

However, it is not difficult to trace the matter of Gentile salvation from Matthew 15:24 to Acts 14:27. We quote Acts 14:27 because we believe that it indicates a very important turning point in God’s spiritual program. “And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.”

Note when this door of faith was opened for Paul, the messenger of grace, for Gentiles.

THE TWO PARACLETES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

It is very interesting and instructive to study, as one lesson, from John 13:1 to John 17:26. In the thirteenth chapter of John, Christ is washing the feet of His disciples. We would emphasize John 13:7 to 10, which we quote: “Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but THOU SHALT KNOW HEREAFTER. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto Him, lord. not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith unto him, HE THAT IS WASHED NEEDETH NOT SAVE TO WASH HIS FEET, but is clean, every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.” Here we note two facts. The first is, that the believer washed all over needs only the cleansing of his feet by the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, the feet suggests the believer’s walk. And then we note that the disciples could not know the significance of the washing of their feet until “hereafter.” The “hereafter” was after the death and resurrection of Christ. In I John 2:1 and 2, we learn that Christ is the believer’s “Advocate”. The Greek word is “Paraclete”. This is identically the same Greek word that we find in John 14:16,—the word “Comforter” We quote this verse: “And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another COMFORTER, that He may abide with you for ever.” Thus we learn that Christ is the believer’s Paraclete in the thirteenth chapter of John, and the Holy Spirit is the believer’s Paraclete, in the fourteenth chapter of John.

In the Gospel of John we learn more about the Holy Spirit than we can learn in all of the 39 Books of the Old Testament, with Matthew, Mark and Luke included. All of the information about: the Holy Spirit in the fourteenth and sixteenth chapters of John, is given between the Record of Christ, as the believer’s Advocate, in John Thirteen, and Christ as the believer’s High Priest, in John Seventeen. We learn in John 17:9 that Christ is not praying for the world but for His redeemed ones. And surely, the Father in heaven will hear the prayer of Christ, mentioned in John 17:24, which we quote: “Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.” It is interesting to study together John 7:39 and John 16:7. This explains why no disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ could have received Holy Spirit baptism before Christ went to Calvary. These two verses studied with Galatians 3:14 and Ephesians 1:13 should explain to any intelligent student of the Word why no believer today can have the experience of the twelve apostles in the matter of receiving the Holy Spirit. The apostles and the one-hundred twenty were disciples in the days of the Son of man before the Holy Spirit was given; even before Christ went to Calvary to put away sin. We are living in an entirely different dispensation. And a tarrying-meeting to receive the Holy Spirit is not God’s order for today. The Holy Spirit has been sent down from heaven; and He is received, as a person, the moment the sinner believes unto salvation.

There are many other interesting facts concerning the Gospel of John which we have not touched upon in this message.

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come.”

This takes us into truth unknown to the Twelve on earth and to some truth that was revealed to Paul and, through him, to others.

DID THE LORD CHANGE HIS MIND CONCERNING THE GREAT COMMISSION?

Note carefully Matthew 28:16: “The Eleven”; Mark 16:14: “The Eleven”. The great commission, (so-called), was given to “the Eleven”. Paul referred to these men as those “who were apostles before me”, Galatians 1:17. Paul acknowledged that James (the Lord’s brother), Peter and John were pillars. Galatians 2:9. Their headquarters were in Jerusalem three years plus fourteen years after Paul was saved. Galatians 1:18 and 2:1. This was at least 18 years after Pentecost, or about 51 A.D. They resided at Jerusalem at the time of the “great council.” Acts 15:6. Some of them, if not all, were in Jerusalem in 60 A.D. Acts 21:18.

Carefully note the statement of Acts 8:1, that the Twelve Apostles remained in Jerusalem: Acts 22:17 and 21, that Christ sent Paul out of Jerusalem “far hence to the Gentiles.”

Matthew 28:19 and 20

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Mark 16:15 to 18.

“And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick; and they shall recover.”

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” The only reference that Paul made to anything that the Lord said to the Twelve, while on earth is a statement not recorded in the Four Gospels, “Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said it is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts 20:35.

In Matthew 10:5 to 7, the Lord told the Twelve to confine their ministry to the Twelve Tribes. Twenty years thereafter Peter and his fellowapostles gave Paul the right hand of fellowship and agreed to confine their ministry to the Twelve Tribes. On the day of Pentecost they preached to “devout Jews from every nation under heaven.” Acts 2:5. “To all the House of

Israel.” Acts 2:36. In Acts 5:30 and 31, the message of the Apostles was to the Twelve Tribes. The afar off of Acts 2 refers to the afar off of Daniel 9 (Israelites).

“Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” (Acts 5:31.)

The Lord’s orders must still have been “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” The scattered disciples driven out of Jerusalem, (when the Twelve remained in Jerusalem, Acts 8:1), preached to none but Jews only. Acts 11:19. Eleven of the twelve apostles severely criticized and condemned Peter for preaching to the household of one God-fearing Gentile, who loved Israel and gave much money to them, a man who prayed always to Israel’s God, Cornelius. Acts 10:2 and Acts 10:22 and Acts 11:1 to 3. Why did they do this at least seven years after Christ said “disciple all nations?” Matthew 28:19. Was it because they were prejudiced, disobedient, or stupid, or for some other reason? But let us keep in mind that it was long after Peter preached to Cornelius that he and his fellow-apostles agreed to turn over to Paul the task of evangelizing the Gentiles, while they looked after the Jews. Galatians 2:9.

Let us note some of the commands Christ had given in Matthew.

“Shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.” (Matthew 8:4.) “Saying, The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” (Matthew 23:1 to 3.) “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 6:15). “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5). “Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.” (Matthew 5:42). “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.” (Matthew 10:8.) “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” (Matthew 24:13 and 14.)

Now remember the statement, “teach them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.” After reading Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians, concerning his message, “the grace of Christ”, which he received by revelation from heaven, we are sure that Paul did not teach those Gentiles to observe all things that Christ, in Matthew, commanded His Twelve. Paul told the Gentiles in Galatians, that they had nothing to do with Moses and Israel’s law. Paul wrote them, defending his gospel of uncircumcision and explaining the difference between his messages and Peter’s. Galatians 1:11 and 17; Galatians 2:7 to 9.

Then what about “Go ye into ALL THE WORLD?” The Jews from every nation under heaven represented “all the world”, “geographically”, but not “racially”. Now let us note what Paul said concerning “ALL THE WORLD”.

“For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel: Which is come unto you, as it is in ALL THE WORLD; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.” (Colossians 1:5 and 6)

Here we note the gospel had come into all the world. By whom? Not by the Twelve. Christ on earth, as a minister of the circumcision (Romans 15:8) never preached the “uncircumcision” gospel. He gave it to Paul.

“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.” (II Timothy 4:16 and II Timothy 1.7).

Note I Timothy 2:7: "I lie not". Note the same language in Galatians 1:20, "Before God, I lie not". Why such strong language? Let us remember when Jesus, in the Hebrew tongue, spake to Saul of Tarsus near Damascus Saul alone understood Him. The mission of Saul was communicated to Ananias. Acts 9:15. Paul was alone when Christ gave him His revelations and he could not prove by any living man that he had received those revelations from the risen Christ in heaven. The Twelve acknowledged Paul as the messenger of the uncircumcision gospel to all the world (of Gentiles). Galatians 2:7 to 9.

"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the Apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify mine office". "For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward." "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." "And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." Romans 11:13; Ephesians 3:1 and 2; Ephesians 3:8; Galatians 1:15 and 16; Acts 19:10.

Now it is interesting to compare the statement in the great commission, "disciple all nations", with the fact recorded in Romans 11:30. "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief." "Through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." Romans 11:30; Romans 11:11.

Here are some interesting questions: If the "disciple all nations" and "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" were general orders to cover the dispensation of grace

1. Why was it necessary for the Lord to give Peter a vision of unclean creatures seven years after Pentecost, to authorize him to preach to Gentiles?
2. Why did the other Eleven condemn him?
3. Why did Paul preach to Gentiles because Israel put Christ away rather than because "disciple all nations"?
4. Why was it necessary for Paul to receive special revelations from heaven?
5. Why did Paul say, "Christ sent me not to baptize"?
6. Why was it that Paul never preached to a Gentile Peter's message of Acts 2:38?
7. Again, why did Peter and his fellow-apostles agree, 18 years after the great commission was given, to confine their ministry to the circumcision? Galatians 2:9.
8. Why did the Twelve remain in Jerusalem?
9. Why is there no record in the Acts of the Apostles that any one of the Twelve preached outside of the Holy Land, or the Land of the Jews?
10. Why is there no record in "Acts" that any of the Twelve, except Peter, preached to even one Gentile?
11. Why were there two baptisms on the day of Pentecost and only one baptism in Ephesians 4:5?
12. Why do grace preachers today reverse the order of Mark 16:16, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" and preach, "He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized"?
13. Why is it that none of the signs of Mark 16:18 (except in the counterfeit) follow believers today? Read II Peter 3:15 and 16.

14. Why does Paul use the personal pronoun 1300 times in speaking of himself and set himself up as a pattern for believers in the Body of Christ? (I Timothy 1:16; I Corinthians 11:1)
15. What did Paul mean when he referred to the gospel as “my gospel”? (Romans 2:16; Romans 16:25; II Timothy 28)
16. Why did James address his Epistle to the Twelve Tribes? (James 1:1).
17. Why did Peter speak of Paul in the language of I Peter 3:15 and 16: “And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction”?