

SEVEN YEAR WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year Four
Lessons 14-26

Second Quarter
Matthew 23 –John 7

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FOREWORD

Matthew Is the Gospel of the King

The genealogy of Matthew 1 traces His lineage back to David. At His birth the magi come asking, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" (Matt. 2:2).

Eight times the regal title, "Son of David" is ascribed to Christ (Matt. 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30, 31; 21:9, 15). The triumphal entry clearly has kingly significance (Matt. 21:1-11).

In the Olivet Discourse Jesus prophesies His future kingly reign (Matt. 25:31).

Pilate asks: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus then gives the tacit assent, "Thou sayest" (Matt. 27:11).

Over the Cross the words are written, "This is Jesus the KING OF THE JEWS" (Matt. 27:39).

The climax comes at the very end of the Gospel where Jesus in the Great Commission declares: "ALL POWER is given unto me in HEAVEN AND IN EARTH" (Matt. 28:18).

The author of this gospel, Matthew, deliberately presents Jesus as the King!

Characteristics of John's Gospel

1. It is the Spiritual Gospel. His aim is to show who Jesus is and for a practical purpose (John 20:31). Much that is found in Matthew, Mark and Luke, the Synoptics, is here omitted. The Messianic office and deity of Jesus are in clear focus in John's Gospel. Read John 2:11; 3:16; 4:25, 26, 29, 42; 5:17, 18, 6:40; 7:37, 38; 8:36, 46, 51; 9:38; 10:30; 11:40; 13:3; 14:6; 17:3, 5; 20:28.

2. It is the "I Am" Gospel (John 6:35 8:12; 10:9, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:5). The emphasis is upon the KING himself.

3. This gospel records Christ's work in Judea.

4. It is far more definite than Matthew, Mark and Luke, in indicating the time and place of the related events.

5. It abounds in non-parabolic hearing.

6. It dwells at great length on the events and discourses that belong to a period of less than twenty-four hours (John 13-19).

7. It records the promise of the coming and the work of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:13, 14)

8. Its style is rhythmic. It is a very beautiful book. Dr. A. T. Robertson says: This "Gospel is supreme in its height and depth and reach of thought . . . the language of the fourth Gospel has the clarity of a spring but we are not able to sound the bottom of its depths. Lucidity and profundity challenge and charm us as we linger over it.

Matthew 23 through John 7 will make a rich soul-strengthening diet for the quarter ahead in our Whole Bible Study Course.

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 14

Page 1

Matthew 23

Memory Verses: Matthew 23:37

Memory Verse:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37).

Public Reading: Matthew 23:1-12

WOES PROMISED ON FALSE TEACHERS

Matthew 23 is a portion of Jesus' last public discourse. It is one of the most sublime and awful chapters in the Bible. "It records the last words of Jesus to the crowds. He summed up, He reached His verdict, He pronounced sentence."

It was a denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, delivered in the Courts of the Temple, April 4, A.D. 30.

The courage of Christ compels our admiration. Before a great crowd in the temple courts, Jesus denounced the hypocritical religious teachers of the Jews. These "serpents," and "offspring of vipers (verse 33) stood before Him, too. Tones of THUNDER and TEARS of PITY marked his speech that day!

Here we have "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." Note that Jesus denounced these FALSE GUIDES of the people for ...

I. Their Ostentation (Matthew 23:112; Mark 12:38-40; Luke 20:45-47)

"Then spakc Jesus to the multitude. . . disciples" (Matt. 23:1): Jesus spoke in the most public manner. "In the audience of all the people" (Luke 20:45). The withering force of his strong and mighty indignation and tearful sorrow over those sinners who would not be saved can still be felt.

"The scribes. . ." (Matt. 23:2): They were the copyists of the Scriptures. They knew the law by memory. Recognized as authorities on the law, they were sometimes referred to as "lawyers."

"And the Pharisees. . . ." The Pharisees were the most numerous and powerful religious sect in Jesus' day. They were strict legalists. "They stood for the rigid observance of the letter and forms of the law, AND ALSO FOR THE TRADITIONS" which made void the Word of God (Matt. 15:3 6, 9). Some of them were good men doubtless. But as a group they were heartless, covetous, and self-righteous hypocrites!

"Sit in Moses' seat": The scribes and Pharisees were the self-appointed expounders of the Law of Moses. "Sit in Moses' seat" is a brief form for the chair of the professor whose function it is to INTERPRET MOSES! Since the scribes and Pharisees were the only religious guides the people had, they felt obliged to follow them. These leaders "delivered ex cathedra pronouncements" on the Law of Moses!

"Whatsoever they bid you observe . . . do" (Matt. 23:3): While in Moses' seat, they presented the Law of Moses. Jesus told the people to obey the Law of Moses. But Jesus taught that the traditions these false leaders added to the Law of Moses were to be rejected (Matt. 15:39). "Do not ye after their works," don't imitate them or follow their example.

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The Law of Moses was still in force, as Jesus did not take the law "out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14) until He died on Calvary. Hence the people must keep the law until Christ died; they must reject the wicked example of its teachers!

"For they bind heavy burdens . . ." (Matt. 23:4): By the traditions they had added to the law. Peter says the law was a heavy yoke (Acts 15:10). Traditions added to the yoke. These false leaders added a vast volume of traditions, men's opinions, handed down from generation to generation.

"All their works . . . to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5): Their whole object was to appear holy before men. They would not touch a single burden with their little finger. Such fellows did not die in that generation!

In every church fellowship you will find "irreligious professional religionists, parading themselves in holy garments teaching to others what they themselves do not have, pompous fellows, self-important, strutting around like lords, preaching religion, yet having none. They want to "run the program," but they never come to prayer meeting to study God's Word, or to participate in prayer! And giving? Look at the record!

"Phylacteries": "A band was drawn over the forehead or around the arm, and to this was attached a small calfskin box, in which were placed passages of Scripture." To justify this they quoted Exodus 13:16. Passage worn conspicuously were Exodus 12:210; 13:11-21; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:18-21. The Pharisees made huge cases to SHOW OFF their righteousness. They "enlarged the borders of their garments" (Num. 15:38, 39) to appear more religious than the common people. "Such things were useful as reminders; they were fatal when they were regarded as charms (Plummer).

To wear a professional dress, which sets one apart as a religious professional, is condemned by our Lord!

"Love the uppermost rooms . . . chief seats . . . Rabbi" (Matt. 3:6, 7). "Rooms" should be "seats." The highest seats at a feast were the places of honor—the head of the table, as we would say. "Chief seats in the synagogues" were the places where the elders sat with their faces to the congregation. They loved the pre-eminence!

"Rabbi" is an Aramaic word meaning "Master," "Doctor" or master. There were three degrees, Rab, Rabbi, and Rabboni. The last is the greatest. Literally it means, "My great teacher." Only Jesus Christ has the AUTHORITY OF MASTER to us (Matt. 28:18-20). We will not bow the knee to any man, even to the Pope (verse 8).

"And call no man your father . . ." (Matt. 23:9): This is another honorary title. It is not to be understood as condemning the title to one's REAL EARTHLY FATHER. "The scribes delighted to be called Abba, father. So do the priests of the Roman Catholic Church. So do all that welcome such honorary titles as Rev., Right Rev., Lord Bishop . . . these are all forbidden. No apostle was ever so called. All such are to be avoided in the church."

God only begets us spiritually (James 1:18; I Pet. 1:23; Luke 8:11). God is our Father (Mark 14:36). He alone is "reverend" (Psalm 111:9).

"But he that is greatest . . . servant" (Matt. 23:11): Christians are not to seek the chief seats at feasts or church to be EXALTED ABOVE OTHERS. Seek to become SERVANT OF ALL (Matt. 20:26). Are you serving to "show off," or exalt Jesus Christ? You know. He knows, too! Note the universal rule of humility in the kingdom of God (verse 12).

II. Their Partisan Zeal (Matthew 23:13-15)

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees" (Matt. 23:13): Eight woes are given. Why not contrast

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them with the nine beatitudes of Matt. 5:3-11? This is a terrific denunciation. Jesus doubtless had tears in his heart and voice as he pronounced judgment on his hearers.

"Hypocrites": Hypocrite means, "to pretend, to wear a masque, to act the hypocrite, to play a part." A terrible word first used by Jesus in Matt. 6:2, 5, 16; 7:5; then in Matt. 15:7; 22:18. Unless our "righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). The whole character of the beatitudes (Matt, 5:3-12) STANDS IN DIRECT OPPOSITION to the "WOES" of Matt. 23:13-29. If we reject the "blessed," we can ONLY RECEIVE the "woe!" The "poor in spirit" possess the kingdom, the PROUD IN SPIRIT will not enter and "hide the key to keep others from going in" (Robertson).

It is tragic to think how so-called preachers and teachers MAY BLOCK THE DOOR for those who are trying to enter the Kingdom!

"Woe . . . pretence . . . long prayer" (Matt. 23:14): "Would not Christ today apply these words to the breviary of which so many pages are set for daily reading and prayers often done ostentatiously and hastily" (Faivre). See Matt. 6:6.

"Woe . . . proselyte . . . child of hell" (Matt. 23:15): They spared no effort to induce Gentiles to become circumcised and keep the Jewish religion. This is the sense in which "proselyte" was then always used (Johnson). As a usual thing the proselytes of such teachers went to even more foolish and sectarian extremes than their teachers. Such were fitted for and destined for Gehenna, hell.

McGarvey thinks, "proselyte" here, means "Jews converted to Phariseeism."

III. Encouraging Perjury (Matthew 23:16,22)

"Woe . . . blind guides" (Matt. 23:16): They were willfully ignorant guides of the people. "They split hairs about oaths," between the temple and the gold of the temple. "By the temple" was a common oath among the Jews. "By the gold of the temple" was regarded as a binding oath. If the gold had any sacredness it was because the temple, God's house, made it so (verse 17). Jesus calls such quibblers "fools and blind."

"Swear by the altar" (Matt. 23:18): The only altar known in Israel was that of the temple. "The gift" was the offering placed on the altar. Jesus repeats his "Ye fools and blind" charge against the leaders (verses 19-21). "By the temple" is an oath that the Jews did not call "binding"; Jesus traces such to God! See Matt. 5:35. All oaths are by God. There are no distinctions (verse 22).

IV. Neglecting Weighty Matters While Observing Small Ones (Matt. 23:23, 24)

"Woe . . . pay tithe . . . omitted the weightier matters" (Matt. 23:23): Every good Jew paid the tithe or tenth of "all the increase of thy seed" (Deut. 14:22; Lev. 27:30).

"Mint, anise and cumin" were insignificant garden herbs. Mint was a sweet smelling herb, used as a flavoring in salads.

"Anise was used for medical purposes and . . . culinary seasoning." Pliny says, "the kitchen can not be without it."

"Cumin": A condiment and a medicine. Aromatic seeds, the bruised seeds mixed with wine was used as a styptic, especially after circumcision. These Pharisees were determined to tithe all marketable commodities. "The Talmud tells of the ass of a certain rabbi which had been so well trained as to refuse corn of which the tithes had not been taken" (Vincent).

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Jesus does not condemn tithing. WHAT HE DOES CONDEMN IS DOING IT TO THE NEGLECT OF WEIGHTIER MATTERS. Jesus said, "Ye OUGHT" TO TITHE, AND BE JUST, SHOW MERCY, and BE FAITHFUL. If today we believe Psalm 24:1 and I Cor. 10:26, we will not "rob" God, We will "PROVE" God by taking the tithe as a minimum, as a starter, in our material stewardship (Malachi 3:8-10).

"Blind guides . . . strain at a gnat . . . swallow a camel" (Matt. 23:24): A proverbial expression, indicating those who are very conscientious over small, but careless of great matters.

V. Hypocrisy in Regard to Purification (Matthew 23:25-28)-

"Woe . . . clean the outside . . . within . . ." (Matt. 23:25): The figure is plain. Outer forms that are carefully kept, while neglecting to have a PURE HEART, are rebuked. When a man's heart is clean, he is a "new creature" (II Cor. 5:17). His life will be clean inside and outside (verse 26).

"Ye are like unto whited sepulchres" (Matt. 23:27): Before the Passover, the Jews whitewashed all spots where graves were situated. Usually this was done on, the 15th of the month Adair, our February or March period. This was done to beautify the sepulchre, and to prevent anyone from passing over them to occasion Levitical defilement (Num. 19:16; Ezek. 39:15). In the Valley of the Kings and at Samaria we saw many "whited sepulchres." We were reminded that whitewashing moral evil does not make it right -- then, or now (verse 28).

VI. Imitating Their Persecuting Father (Matthew 23:29-36)

"Woe . . . build the tombs . . ." (Matt. 23:29): These men professed to be distressed at the murdering of the prophets by their fathers. YET, they were about to CRUCIFY JESUS who was far greater than any prophet. They would CROWN THEIR MISDEEDS by killing God's "only begotten Son" (John 3:16).

"They honored the prophets and saints by building monuments to them, instead of following their teaching, or imitating their lives. Even Herod the Great, a monster of wickedness, rebuilt the tomb of David!

"Ye be witnesses . . . children of them which killed the prophets" (Matt. 23:31). From the record of Abel's death in Gen. 4:1-8 to the death of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest who was slain in the court of the temple (II Chron. 24:20f) is one catalogue of Old Testament martyrs (verses 32-36). The words of Jesus cut like whipcords. All these things shall come upon this generation" (verse 36) so in his SEVENTH and last woes (verses 27, 29) Jesus addresses the Jewish notion and not merely the Pharisees.

VII. A Lamentation over Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37-39)

"How often would I have gathered thy children . . . ye would not" (Matt. 23:37): The EIGHT "woes" of Jesus merge into a wail of agony, the cry of a mother over her lost child. The prophets had warned the city again and again. The Lord had visited the city at least six or seven times" (Johnson), and four months had taught on its streets. His persistent love commanded "That repentance and remission of sins should BE PREACHED in his name among all nations, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM" (Luke 24:47).

"Ye would not" explains the cause of the rejection of the gospel. God is ready. He WOULD GATHER them. It is that men CANNOT COME. They WILL NOT COME. God willed that they be saved, They WOULD NOT BE SAVED (II Pet. 3:9; John 5:40). "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17; Mark 8:34ff).

"Behold, your house . . . desolate" (Matt. 23:38): In refusing to accept Christ, God would abandon "your house," the temple, and leave it desolate. God will no longer accept its worship. He had cleansed "my house" (Matt. 21:13; John 2:13-17). Now it is "your house."

"Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, 'Blessed' . . ." (Matt. 23:39): Does this imply that the

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temple shall be deserted when He leaves it? He was the Lord of the temple. These were His last words in the temple precincts; they do not shut out hope. Is this a promise of the final conversion of Israel (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:26; II Cor. 3:15)? When Christ abandoned the temple in Jerusalem, it was fit only for the destroyer, Titus.

QUESTIONS

1. In what sense did "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat" (Matt. 23:2)? Who were the scribes and Pharisees?
2. Where did Jesus denounce the scribes and Pharisees? When? Why? Do you think Jesus was courageous in publicly denouncing these "offspring of vipers" (Matt. 23:33)?
3. What were the "burdens" which the Pharisees bound on the people (Matt. 23:3,4; 15:3,6,9)? What did Christ do to the law (Col. 2:14)? What did Peter say of the law (Acts 15:10)?
4. Why did the Pharisees do their religious deeds according to Jesus (Matt. 23:5)?
5. What were phylacteries (Matt. 23:5; Ex. 12:2-10; 13:9-16; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:18-21)? Why "enlarge the borders of their garments" (Num. 15:38, 39)?
6. Are we to infer from these verses that religious garments that identify religious sects are wrong?
7. What rule is to be inferred as to titles, such as "Rabbi... father ... master" (Matt. 23:8-10; Psalm 111:9)?
8. If the "clergy" is angry because the "laity" does not address them as Rev., Right Rev., Lord Bishop, Father," what is indicated? What principle is to govern the children of God in the church today (Matt. 23:10,12)? When was the last time you qualified as "greatest" by being the "slave" of all?
10. How many woes did Jesus pronounce against the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 23:13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 24, 27, 29)? To what do the "woes" stand in direct opposition (Matt. 5:3-12)?
11. How did they "shut up the kingdom... against men" (Matt. 23:13)? What is the meaning of "devour widows' houses," and why make "long prayer" (Matt. 23:14)?
12. What is the meaning of proselytes (Matt. 23:15), and the effect on them? Is it now wrong to proselyte?
13. In what way did the scribes and Pharisees encourage perjury (Matt. 23:16-22)?
14. Can you define "mint, anise, and cumin" (Matt. 23:23)? Was it right to tithe them (Deut. 14:22; Lev. 27:30)?
15. Does Jesus condemn tithing (Matt. 23:23)? Is it right to "rob" God (Psa. 24:1; I Cor. 10:26; Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:8-10), since he is still the OWNER of heaven and earth and all that in them is? What is to mark us as "stewards" (I Cor. 4:2)?
16. Can you explain the figure of the gnat and the camel, and what does the expression "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel" indicate (Matt. 23:24)? Does this excuse us for neglecting small matters?
17. To what cleansing is reference made (Matt. 23:25-28' 15:1, 2)? How would cleansing the inside make the outside clean (Matt. 23:26; II Cor. 5:17)? How were the Pharisees like "whited sepulchres" (Matt. 23:27; Num. 19:16; Ezek. 39:15)?
18. Can you name some of the Old Testament martyrs (Matt. 23:32-36; Gen. 4:1-8; Cor. 24:20f)? What is the meaning of "fill ye up then the measure of your fathers" (Matt. 23:32, 34)? Who were these tomb builders about to kill by hanging Him on a cross?
19. In what sense did all the blood come upon that generation (Matt. 23:36)?
20. What does this lament over Jerusalem show as to His real feelings for the city (Matt. 23:37)? How many times had He been in Jerusalem? Is God unwilling to save the vilest sinner (II Pet. 3:9; John 5:40)? Meaning of "your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:38; Matt. 21:13; John 2:13-17)? What condition of the city is indicated by verse 39?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 15

Page 1

Matthew 24

Memory Verses: Matthew 24:36, 44

Memory Verses:

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 24:36, 44).

Public Reading: Matt. 24:1-8, 27-30

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

On Monday Jesus had cleansed the Temple. Tuesday, after final warnings that the Kingdom of God would now be taken from the Jews and given to other notions, Jesus left the Temple, never to enter it again. He abandoned it to its ruin. His public teaching is over. It was a tragic moment. Jesus ended his public ministry, to await in quiet his death three days later.

We must not read this passage carelessly. Let us "Take heed" (Matt. 24:4) as we read. We must not be led astray, nor lead others astray.

I. The Destruction of the Temple Predicted (Matthew 24:128; Mark 13:1-23; Luke 21:424)

A. The occasion of the prediction (Matt. 24:1-3).

"Jesus went out . . . disciples came . . . to show him the buildings" (Matt. 24:1): The events of this lesson occurred on Tuesday of Passion Week, April 4, A.D. 30. The apostles wanted to show Jesus the many "buildings" in the thirty-five acre (see McGarvey's LANDS OF THE BIBLE, page 149) temple enclosure.

Josephus says some of the stones in the temple fortifications were "nearly seventy feet in length, twelve feet in height, and eighteen feet in breadth." Rich furnishings of crowns, shields, goblets, chain of gold given by Agrippa; a golden vine with vast clusters given by Herod. The Temple was built of white limestone. It took forty-six years to build it (John 2:20). 10,000 skilled workmen are said to have worked on it. BUT THREE DAYS BEFORE the death of Jesus is no time to talk about beautiful buildings, even though the temple was beautiful like a snow mountain (Josephus, WARS V, 5, 6).

"Not one stone upon another . . ." (Matt. 24:2): Jesus made a definite prediction" of the complete destruction of the Temple. That was literally fulfilled in 90 A.D.

Other great temples, which we surveyed in a recent trip, are now in ruins. They include the Parthenon, the Acropolis, the temples of Karnak, Luxor, Petra and Baalbec. Their ruins indicate their former splendor. The temple at Jerusalem has disappeared entirely from the face of the earth; the Mosque of Omar stands there today.

After Titus the Roman Emperor captured and destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D. after a three-year siege, Josephus, tells us that the destruction was so thorough that those who visited the site could hardly believe that it had been a city or temple (Josephus, WARS VII, 1).

"When . . . what shall be the sign . . . and of the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3): Jesus in leaving the city, walked over or through the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and with his disciples climbed the mount of Olives. They sat down on its crest, and had a commanding view of the city and the temple bathed in the sunset. The privileged four, "Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately" (Mark 13:3) for further details:

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1. When shall the temple be destroyed?
2. What shall be the signs which precedes its destruction?
3. What shall be the "sign of thy coming?"
4. What shall be the sign "of the end of the world?"

Jesus had said nothing of his coming, or of the end of the world. To these four disciples the destruction of the temple seemed an event of such magnitude that they could not but associate it with the END OF ALL THINGS! To understand what follows we must keep in mind that JESUS HAS THREE QUESTIONS to answer, nor are the answers blended.

B. The beginning of sorrows (Matt. 24:4-8).

"Take heed that no man deceive you . . ." (Matt. 24:4): By pretending to be Christ (verse 5). As they yet believed that Christ would surely return to REIGN AT JERUSALEM, this admonition was needed. The Jews wanted a political Messiah to overthrow Rome. Many false Christs would arise. Jesus warns us "go ye not after them" (Luke 21:8). I saw an old man in Cincinnati, with gray hair and a long beard, carrying a little valise on which were printed these words: "I AM JESUS." I did not follow Him. He was a false Christ!

Josephus tells us that enthusiasts did come about the time of the end of Jerusalem, claiming to be sent of God. Bar-cocheba, "the son of the star," appeared in 120 A.D.

"And ye shall hear of wars . . . the end is not yet" (Matt. 24:6): Wars and rumors of wars would be the second sign of the city's destruction. The "end" here is the destruction of the temple. Alford lists three threats of wars against the Jews by as many Roman emperors. Three uprisings of Gentiles against the Jews killed thousands of the latter.

"Famines . . . earthquakes" (Matt. 24:7): Famines are the natural result of civil wars. Tacitus, the Roman historian, says of this period: "It was full of calamities, horrible with battles, rent with seditions, savage in peace itself."

Earthquakes are "great NATURAL DISTURBANCES which would constitute the THIRD SIGN." Alford calls our attention to a great earthquake in Crete, A.D. 46 or 47; one at Rome the day Nero assumed the manly toga, A.D. 51; one at Laodicea in Phrygia, A.D. 60. All these signs occurred. They were the "beginning of sorrows" or testing (verse 8). Such woes or birth pangs, says Jesus, are NOT A PROOF OF THE END, BUT OF THE BEGINNING.

C. Persecutions predicted and general spread of the gospel (Matt. 24:9-14).

"Then . . . deliver . . . kill you . . . be hated" (Matt. 24:9): -Persecution was the FOURTH SIGN of the destruction of Jerusalem. Read carefully Acts 4:3; 5:18, 40; 7:59; 8:3; 12:1; 2; 14:19; 16:19-24; 22:30; 24:1; 25:2; 3. Such passages show the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. Nero's awful persecution took the life of the apostle Paul. Tacitus describes Nero's persecutions that began in 64 and says: "The Christians were HATERS OF MANKIND." The name of Christ was a byword of shame then. The disciples rejoiced "that they were counted worthy to suffer SHAME FOR HIS NAME" (Acts 5:41).

"Many shall be offended." (Matt. 24:10): They shall stumble and fall, rather than suffer for Christ. Half-hearted disciples always do then, and now. Jesus warned about "false prophets" (verse 11; 7:14f). See Gal. 1:7; I John 2:12,18; 4:1; II Pet. 2:1; I Tim. 4:1. See also Josephus, BOOK VI. 5, sec. 3.

Persecution always weeds out the weak, and shows who is wheat and who is chaff, to change the analogy. When "iniquity shall abound," such immorality eats out the heart of religion. Love of the brotherhood gives way to mutual hatred and suspicion.

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"He that shall endure unto the end . . . saved" (Matt. 24:13): The Christian Jews who endured to the end were saved by flight to Pella, beyond the Jordan, at the sign pointed out by the Lord. The principle is generally applicable.

"This gospel . . . preached in all the world for a witness . . . end come" (Matt. 24:14): Paul says this was done (Col. 1:23). The gospel was heralded in all the inhabited world of the New Testament before A.D. 70. "Then shall the end come": the end of the Jewish state.

D. The last sign and an order for flight (Matt. 24:15,22).

"See the abomination of desolation . . ." (Matt. 24:15): The Roman army of foreigners (Luke 21:20; Dan. 12:11). When believers saw this army coming, they were to flee at once. They were not to tarry to gather up valuables (verses 16-18). Christ explained the "abomination of desolation" of Daniel as the heathen Roman army that encompassed Jerusalem. With heathen images and standard, it was ready to sacrifice to idols on the temple altar, hence working the desolation of Jerusalem.

"Woe unto them . . . with child" (Matt. 24:19): Pregnant women and women with babies could not travel in haste. The latest brush fire "war" in Laos, or _____ (you fill it in!) illustrates the pathetic figure. They were to pray that their flight be not "in winter," because the streams would be impassable torrents from the heavy rains, nor "on the Sabbath day" (verse 20) because the gates would be closed, preventing departure. The army of Cestius Gallus enclosed Jerusalem in A.D. 69, then deterred by its strength, retired to Caesarea. This was the signal for which the church waited. It then fled beyond the Jordan!

"For then shall be great tribulation . . ." (Matt. 24:21): Josephus in his WARS gives the best illustration of the horrors foretold by Jesus. Women ate their own children from starvation; the Jews within the city fought each other as well as the Roman army. On August 10 A.D. 70, the city was stormed. There was universal massacre. 1,100,000 persons perished, and 100,000 survivors were sold into slavery!

"And except those days should be shortened . . ." (Matt. 24:22): The Jews rejected Jesus (John 1:11). He rejected THEM. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was God's Judgment on them for this rejection! For the believer's sake, God shortened the time of tribulation, or the entire Jewish race would have been exterminated. The "elect" are now the believers in Christ (Rom. 11:5-7). The "times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24) is that period when the church is made up mainly of Gentiles.

E. False Christs and false prophets in those days (Matt. 24:23,28).

"Then if any man shall say . . . HERE IS CHRIST . . . believe it not" (Matt. 24:23): Lying prophets are still with us. They do a thriving business in your town, and mine (verses 24-26). We are not to be deceived by false leaders, nor that Christ has again appeared. HIS COMING WILL BE AN EVENT THAT NEEDS NO HERALD. EVERY MAN SHALL SEE HIM (verse 27). You cannot mistake a lightning flash across the sky. The "coming of the Son of man" shall be LIKE THAT! Those who claim that HIS COMING was the destruction of Jerusalem are grievously wrong.

"The carcass is . . . eagles be gathered" (Matt. 24:28): "Carcass" may represent the utterly corrupted Jewish state. The "eagles" is a fit symbol of the Roman army, every legion of which bore the eagle as its standard. The griffin vulture, larger than the eagle, Aristotle tells us was seen in the wake of any army. They followed Napoleon's retreat from Russia. Sin courts and draws destruction to itself. The crimes of Sodom cried for destruction. The rejection of Christ (Matt. 23:37, 38) CRIED FOR PUNISHMENT. It came. It will come to us if we reject Him (II Thess. 1:8-10).

II. The Second Coming of Christ (Matthew 24:29-51; Mark 13:24-37; Luke 21:25-37)

A. The coming described (Matt. 24:29-31).

"Immediately after the tribulation . . ." (Matt. 24:29): The problem here is how much time intervenes between "the tribulation of those days" and the vivid symbolism of this verse. Here is a prophetic panorama like that of Rev. 1:1 with foreshortened perspective. Here Jesus begins to answer the question of His coming.

Jesus reckons the time of his coming after his own divine, not after our human, fashion as II Peter 3:3-9 illustrates.

"The sun shall be darkened": Christ is "the Sun of Righteousness." After the destruction of Jerusalem, causes began to work that led to the great apostasy of the church and produced the "Dark Ages" of the Church.

"The moon shall not give her light": The moon shines by reflected light of the sun. If the sun "be darkened," so will the moon. The church shines by the light of Christ. When the Lord's church was darkened by the taking of the BIBLE FROM THE PEOPLE, the CHURCH GAVE FORTH LITTLE LIGHT DURING THE LONG NIGHT OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

"The stars shall fall": Stars represent great teachers of the church, as apostles and evangelists (Rev. 1:20). When the apostles were dethroned by the Roman apostasy, "the stars fell from heaven," figuratively.

"And THEN . . . sign of the Son of man" (Matt. 24:30): After the long period of the apostasy. "The sign of the Son of man" is such that every one will recognize when it appears. The Jews had repeatedly asked for a sign (Matt. 12:38; 16:1; John 2:18). His first coming was known to few. His COMING AGAIN will be IN THE CLOUDS WITH GREAT GLORY. The trumpet of God shall sound and time shall be no more. Read carefully I Thess. 4:15-17; Num. 10:1-4; Ex. 19:13, 16, 19; Psa. 81:3-5).

Jesus said He was coming again (John 14:1-4; Matt. 16:27; 24:30).

Angels from heaven confirmed His declaration (Acts 1:9-11).

The Holy Spirit has plainly revealed His coming. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament, 260 chapters, speak of the coming again, of our Lord 318 times -- ONE VERSE OF EACH 25 verses in the New Testament (Rev. 1:7).

The unprepared of "All the tribes of the earth shall mourn" because of their sins. Modern satellites gives us some idea of the ease with which the Son of Man shall be SEEN BY EVERY EYE!

"Shall gather together his elect . . ." (Matt. 24:31): Believers from all countries shall be separated from unbelievers from the four quarters of the earth.

The story told of Queen Victoria, touched deeply by a sermon of F. W. Farrar on the Lord's coming again. "Dean Farrar, I should like to be living when Jesus comes, so that I could lay the crown of England at his feet."

B. When to look for the coming (Matt. 24:32-35).

"Learn a parable from the fig tree . . ." (Matt. 24:32): When the fig tree . . . putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh." It is a SIGN of summer. The fig tree puts forth leaves usually in April. As the change of the season in the natural world has preliminary signs, "so CHANGE OF CONDITIONS in the spiritual realm has its premonitory symptoms. When men see the symptoms that Jesus has described, they will recognize that changes are coming as to the nature of which they only guess. But the Christian is informed that these changes indicate the COMING of the SON OF GOD -- a change from a worse to a better season" (McGarvey).

"This generation shall not pass, till . . ." (Matt. 24:34): Did Jesus refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, or to the Second Coming and end of the world? If he referred to Jerusalem, there was a Literal

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fulfillment. In the Old Testament a generation was reckoned as forty years.

I believe that "this generation" means "race, kind, family, stock, breed," and that Jesus promised that the Jewish nation or family of Israel would be preserved until the coming of Christ! They still exist, and Israel as a state has been in existence since May 12, 1948!

"My words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35): To the disciples, the temple at Jerusalem was permanent. Jesus assures them that His predictions and prophecies are stable and imperishable. His words are true. They abide-always.

C. Uncertainty of the time of His coming (Matt. 24:36-42).

"But of that day and hour . . ." (Matt. 24:36): The angels of heaven do not know WHEN Jesus is coming again. Jesus says He does not know "that day and hour" of His coming. He did KNOW THE CHARACTER OF HIS COMING. God ALONE knows the hour of judgment! The one who sets an "exact date" for our Lord's coming is foolish indeed. Men can never "find out by mathematical calculation and exposition of prophecy that which the Son of God did not say" (McGarvey).

"But as the days of Noah were . . ." (Matt. 24:37): In Noah's day (verses 38, 39) there was PLENTY of WARNING, but utter unpreparedness. Our Lord's coming will find most of the world unprepared. Most are indifferent to it, or have fanciful schemes or programs about it. Few today are really eagerly expecting His coming, and willing to LEAVE TO GOD THE TIME AND THE PLANS!

"Two women . . . grinding" (Matt. 24:41): The millstone and then hand-mill was turned by two women as in Ex. 11:5. The work was too hard for one woman. The Lord's coming will BE THE TIME OF THE SEPARATION OF THE EVIL FROM THE GOOD! "Watch therefore" (verse 42); the COMING WILL BE UNEXPECTED. Mark adds, "Pray" (Mark 13:33).

D. How to be prepared for His coming (Matt. 24:43-51).

"Therefore be ye also ready . . ." (Matt. 24:44): These words of warning confront every generation. The believer in Christ must be in a constant state of preparation (verse 43). Christ's coming is compared to that of a THIEF IN THE NIGHT (I Thess. 5:2; Rev. 3:3; 16:15). The duty enjoined in verse 44 is NOT TO WATCH FOR CHRIST, BUT TO WATCH OURSELVES TO SEE THAT WE ARE READY!

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant . . ." (Matt. 24:45): Jesus in Luke 12:42-48 gives a similar parable in answer to Peter's question. There the Lord speaks of "the faithful and wise steward" here Jesus describes a steward; He speaks of him as a servant. Jesus blesses those who are FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH (verses 46, 47); He will reward all such at His coming.

"Evil servant . . . My lord delayeth his coming" (Matt. 24:48): The worst enemies of Christ are his professional servants whose practices are evil, and who suppose they call, evade punishment for sins. What first disgusted Martin Luther with the faith in which he had been reared was the wicked abandon of the priests and monks. Often the Vatican itself has been the very hotbed of scandal, as history shows us. Read the

"Depths of Papal Degradation" in Halley's BIBLE HANDBOOK, pages 880, 881.

Jesus will certainly come, and come when the servant is UNPREPARED FOR HIM (verses 49-50). The majority of wicked folk who die in their sins HAVE EXPECTED TO BE BETTER PREPARED FOR THE END OF LIFE! Very severe punishment (verse 51) shall be visited upon the unprepared; "weeping and gnashing of teeth" indicate a life of intense suffering. While both expressions must be regarded as metaphors, do they not clearly indicate a terrible and certain punishment?

QUESTIONS

1. On what day had Jesus cleansed the temple?
2. Why is this called "The Olivet Discourse" (Matt. 24:1-3)? On what day did it occur?
3. What did the disciples want to show Jesus (Matt. 24:1)? What does Josephus say about the temple and its furnishings? What prediction did Jesus make regarding the temple (Matt. 24:2)?
4. What questions did the disciples ask of Jesus (Matt. 24:3; Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7)? Had Jesus said anything about his coming or the end of the world here?
5. Against what did Jesus warn the disciples (Matt. 24:5)? Are we to follow false Christs (Luke 21:8)? Are wars a "sign" of the end of the world (Matt. 24:6)?
6. Are famines and earthquakes a proof of the end, or of the "beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8)?
7. Was Jerusalem destroyed soon after His death as Christ predicted (Luke 21:20-24)? Did the disciples recognize any interval of time between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age (Matt. 24:3; Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7)?
8. Did Jesus predict persecutions, and the general spread of the gospel? Were they fulfilled (Matt. 24:9-14; Acts 4:3; 5:18, 40; 7:59; 8:3; 12:1, 2; 14:19; 16:19-24; 22:30; 24:1; 25:2, 3)? How did Tacitus describe Christians?
9. What was the "abomination of desolation" (Matt. 24:15; Luke 21:20; Dan. 12:11)? Can you describe the sad picture of verses 16-20? How did Jesus describe "those days?"
10. In what manner will Christ come (Matt. 24:27)? What is the meaning of "carcass" and "eagle" in vs. 28?
11. What will happen "immediately after the tribulation" (Matt. 24:29)? Does Jesus reckon time after our human fashion (II Pet. 3:3-9)? How do you explain the natural phenomena of verse 29?
12. Who shall see Jesus when He comes again (Matt. 24:30)? What shall sound then (I Thess. 4:15-17; Num. 10:1-4; Ex. 19:13, 16, 19; Psa. 81:3-5)?
13. Did Jesus declare He would come again (Matt. 24:30; John 14:1-3; Matt. 16:27)? How did angels from heaven confirm it (Acts 1:9-11), and does the Holy Spirit tell of His coming in the New Testament (Rev. 1:7)? Who are the "elect?"
14. When are we to look for His coming (Matt. 24:32-35)? What does "this generation" mean (Matt. 24:34)?
15. Who alone knows of "that day and hour" when the Son of man shall come (Matt. 24:36)? What do you think of someone saying he has figured out the exact day and hour when Jesus is coming again?
16. Were those in the days of Noah warned of coming judgment (Matt. 24:37-39)?
17. Will there be a separation of the evil from the good when Jesus comes (Matt. 24:40-41)? What does Jesus command in Matt. 24:42, and why?
18. To what is Christ's coming compared (Matt. 24:43; I Thess. 5:2; Rev. 3:3; 16:15). Are we commanded to watch for Christ or to watch ourselves to see that we are ready when He comes (Matt. 24:44)?
19. How does a "faithful and wise servant" behave (Matt. 24:45-47) and how shall he be rewarded?
20. Into what evil conclusion does the "evil servant" fall (Matt. 24:48), and how does his evil thinking affect his conduct (Matt. 24:49), and what shall the end be for such a servant (Matt. 24:50, 51)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 16
Matthew 25

Page 1
Memory Verses: Matthew 25:46

Memory Verse:

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal"
(Matthew 25:46).

Public Reading: Matt. 25:31-46

THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

The coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ is a certainty. "I will come again" (John 14:3) is His own DECLARATION of that fact (Matt. 16:27; 24:30). Angels from heaven CONFIRMED the declaration of Jesus' coming (Acts 1:9-11). The Holy Spirit has plainly REVEALED the COMING AGAIN OF JESUS CHRIST in the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. In the 260 chapters of the New Covenant His coming again is spoken of 318 times- - ONE VERSE IN EACH TWENTY-FIVE (Rev, 1:7).

Jesus described His coming (Matt. 24:29-31). He told us WHEN to look for the Second Coming (Matt. 24:32-35).

The time of His coming is uncertain. "But of THAT DAY and hour knoweth NO MAN . . ." (Matt. 24:36-42).

How to be Prepared?

How to BE PREPARED FOR HIS COMING is the sixty-four million-dollar question (Matt. 24:43-51). Jesus gave THREE PARABLES to illustrate HOW TO PREPARE FOR HIS COMING. In each parable there is an ABSENT LORD (Matt. 24:43, 44; 25:1, 14) WHO IS COMING AGAIN.

The "good servant" while His master is away is faithful (Matt. 24:45). The "evil servant" shirks his duties, gets drunk, and beats up his fellow servants (Matt. 24:48-51).

Are YOU A FAITHFUL SERVANT of Christ? You can KNOW IF YOU ARE by studying John 14:15; I John 5:2, 3; Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 8:3-9; 9:6, 7; Matt. 23:23. If you are not a faithful servant, YOU ARE AN "evil servant" (Matt. 24:48). REPENT TODAY, while YOU MAY!

I. The Parable of the Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13)

"Then . . ." (Matt. 25:1): The time when the Kingdom of Heaven will be likened to ten virgins. That Kingdom passes through many phases, but JUST BEFORE THE COMING of KING JESUS this will be its character. "Shall be likened" is future tense.

"This parable means just ONE THING," Halley adds, "that we should keep our minds on the Lord, and be ready WHEN HE COMES." Here we see the closing events, the judgment, the closing of the heavenly gates to the "evil servant" (Mat. 24:48).

"Ten virgins." No significance attaches to the number, or to the fact that they are virgins. Then and now, the bridesmaids of a maiden at a wedding are virgins.

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"Which took their lamps . . ." These were probably torches with a wooden staff and a dish on top in which was placed a piece of rope or cloth dipped in oil or pitch. Sometimes "lamps" has the meaning of oil lamp ("luchnos") as in Acts 20:8.

In many spots in our Bible lands tour we saw "small earthenware vessels, with flax wicks, and without glass chimneys."

"Five . . . were wise and five were foolish" (Matt. 25:2): **LOOKING AHEAD FOR THE FUTURE** was the difference between the "wise" and the "foolish" girls. Compare Matt. 7:21-27. Five were "foolish" because they **FAILED TO PROVIDE OIL** for the Lord's delay. This was plain **CARELESSNESS**. "This is not a story of **SERVICE** but of personal relationship" (Morgan). They had **NO TRUE EXPECTATION OF THEIR LORD'S RETURN**. Do YOU? Read again verses 3 and 4.

"While the bridegroom tarried, . . . slumbered and slept" (Matt. 25:5): Or, "nodded and slept," "dropped off to sleep." Many a preacher has seen this happen while he is preaching! A lookout would awaken them from this innocent rest when the Lord approached.

"And at midnight . . . the bridegroom COMETH" (Matt. 25:6): Midnight is the hour of slumber and silence. At that time an outcry is always startling and unexpected. One night about midnight, a member of this church whose home was about fifty yards from the parsonage cried out: "Brother Hill, come at once; my husband is dying." The shrill cry awakened me. I went at once. The man was dead.

The implication is that the cry of the coming of the bridegroom when the trumpet of the Lord "shall sound" (I Cor. 15:52), **WILL BE SUDDEN and UNEXPECTED**. Read Matt. 24:27 and I Thess. 5:23.

"Then all . . . arose . . . trimmed their lamps" (Matt. 25:7): All ten arose, all ten trimmed their lamps, all ten went out to meet the bridegroom as though they were all interested in Him and desired to meet Him. Apparently there was **NO DIFFERENCE** in the ten virgins.

"Our lamps are gone out" (Matt. 25:8): The Revision correctly says, "Our lamps are going out." "When the five foolish virgins lit their lamps they discovered the **LACK OF OIL**. The sputtering, flickering, smoking wicks were a sad revelation" -- just as the Bridegroom arrived! "Too little -- too late" applies to spiritual things, too.

"The wise answered . . . go . . . buy for yourselves" (Matt. 25:9): There will be **NO BORROWED RIGHTEOUSNESS ON THE DAY OF THE LORD'S COMING, FOR NO ONE SHALL HAVE ANY TO SPARE**. The Roman Catholic confidence in saints, and the trust of some Protestants in **PIOUS PARENTS**, are alike unavailing; **EACH SOUL MUST SEE TO ITS OWN LAMP**" (McGarvey). It was a courteous reply, but a decisive rejection of the request.

The oil dealer is a part of "the drapery of the parable." The point is that it **WAS TOO LATE TO GET OIL**. Now, **TODAY** is the time to **OBEY THE GOSPEL** that is God's gift to us. If we reject the Gospel, the time will come when it is too late to accept it (Gen. 6:3; Heb. 3:12-15; II Cor. 6:2; I Thess. 1:1-10).

"While they went to buy . . . the door was shut" (Matt. 25:10): God's day of grace was over. The foolish virgins could so easily have **HAD ENOUGH OIL** for their lamps. It was **TOO LATE NOW**. There is no encouragement to **DEATHBED REPENTANCE** in the Bible! No "religiosity" can open the **DOOR WHEN IT IS SHUT** (Rev. 3:7).

"Lord, open . . . I know you not" (Matt. 25:11, 12): The bridegroom had no favorable knowledge of them (Matt. 7:23). The foolish virgins had forfeited any right to be counted acquaintances or a part of the household. Jesus makes the application, "**WATCH** therefore" (verse 13). Lack of foresight is inexcusable. Ignorance of the **TIME OF THE SECOND COMING** is not an excuse for **NEGLECT**, but a **REASON FOR READINESS!** As a teacher, preacher or earnest soul-winner **YOU** meet this trait of human nature in nearly **EVERY CALL**: "Not today; I intend to do it sometime!"

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Note this application: "The Bridegroom is the son of man; the time of the marriage is the coming to judgment. The TARRYING represents the long and unknown period between his ascension and His return. The VIRGINS represent the WAITING CHURCH; the WISE VIRGINS represent those CHURCH MEMBERS WHO ARE ALWAYS READY and whose lights are shining. The oil in their vessels is the means by which their light is supplied; the FOOLISH virgins are church members who have become COLD and LIFELESS. The midnight cry is the summons of death, or the trump of judgment; the cry for oil is deathbed repentance, or an attempt at preparation in the face of the judgment. The SHUT DOOR is a declaration that such repentance is TOO LATE TO BE OF AVAIL; the great lesson is to BE ALWAYS IN A STATE OF READINESS."

II. The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling . . ." (Matt. 25:14): Read also Mark 13:36; Luke 19:11-27. To interpret this parable rightly, "we must remember it CONCERNS the SERVANTS OF THE KING" (Morgan).

"And unto one he gave five talents . . ." (Matt. 25:15): King Jesus has not committed his goods to rebels, but to His own. Each servant has given to him all he was capable of handling. "The use that one makes of his opportunities is the measure of his capacity for more" (Robertson). Note it was "servant," or slave. The master owned the servants. See I Cor. 6:19, 20; Acts 20:28; I Pet. 1:18, 19. "His goods" (verse 14) are given to his servants. All we have is a TRUST FROM OUR LORD TO BE USED FOR HIS GLORY, whether we have five talents (verse 16), or two (verse 17), or one (verse 18). The virgins represented WATCHFULNESS IN WAITING for the Lord. Here it is shown in WORKING FOR THE LORD.

"The Lord . . . cometh, and reckoneth with them" (Matt. 25:19): While we do not know the exact TIME OF THIS JUDGMENT, it is COMING TO YOU AND ME (Rom. 14:12; II Cor. 5:10). Every mortal, saint and sinner, good and bad, will be called on for a reckoning.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . ." (Matt. 25:21): The servant who had received five talents doubled what he had received (verses 15, 20), as did the two-talent man (verses 22, 23, 17). We do not all have the same talent or ability. ALL OF US CAN BE FAITHFUL (Matt. 28:18-20; I John 3:14, 15; 4:19-21) IN LITTLE, or MUCH.

"I was afraid . . . hid thy talent" (Matt. 25:25): The one-talent man (verses 15, 18) insulted his Lord. He calls him a harsh, stern, rough man, grasping and stingy. The servant was impudent, rebellious, and faultfinding. He "hid thy talent in the earth"; no banks were available then as we now have.

Did you ever notice that those who DO THE LEAST ALWAYS COMPLAIN THE MOST, criticize those who do work, and sometimes plot to hinder the work? They will fail here and hereafter (Rom. 8:31; I Cor. 15:57, 58). "This servant represents those who make the labors and difficulties of the Christian life an excuse for doing nothing" (McGarvey). Read Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:23.

"Thou wicked and slothful servant . . ." (Matt. 25:26): Jesus calls this man, slow, "poky," slothful. The wickedness of the servant is demonstrated by his unfaithfulness, his false and slanderous excuses. He could at least have put his Lord's money "to the exchangers," or brokers, who exchanged money for a fee and who paid interest on money. "Compound interest at SIX PER CENT DOUBLES THE PRINCIPAL EVERY TWENTY YEARS." "In the early Roman Empire legal interest was eight per cent, but in usurious transactions it was lent at twelve, twenty-four, and even forty-eight" (Vincent).

The Mosaic Law did not allow interest in dealings between Hebrews, but only with strangers (Deut. 23:19, 20; Psa. 15:5).

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"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness . . . (Matt. 25:30): "Doing nothing is doing harm." The unprofitable servant neglected his opportunities to serve (verses 28, 29). One who is faithful in a small trust shows himself worthy of greater trusts. When Jesus comes, the slothful and unprofitable will be cast out, not because they did not believe or because they had rebelled, BUT BECAUSE THEY HAD NEGLECTED THE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH HE HAD COMMITTED TO THEM! How solemn is the teaching of this parable for ALL OF US! What am I DOING with MY LORD'S TALENT? Neglect may bring an awful loss to you and me.

III. An Account of the Final Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46)

"When the Son of man shall come in His glory . . ." (Matt. 25:31): Compare I Thess. 4:14-18; Rev. 20:11-15. This is one of the most magnificent passages in the Bible; it is a picture of how COMMON KINDNESS will affect our standing in the eternal world.

"Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory": In that day All THE GLORY of the RISEN, REIGNING CHRIST will be shown to the nations. His mercy, justice and righteousness will be manifested to all -- and unquestioned (verses 32, 33).

"And before him shall be gathered ALL NATIONS . . ." (Matt 25:32): "The judgment is not of the saints, nor is it of the race considered as individuals. It is, as He so very distinctly declared, the judgment of the nations. There are three classes. Those on the right -- sheep; those on the left--goats; and "thee MY BRETHREN." He separates between sheep and goats according as they have treated HIS BRETHREN" (Morgan).

"Sheep on his right hand . . . goats on the left" (Matt. 25:33): The right hand denotes the place of honor. The Jews have a tradition that when the Sanhedrin acquitted a criminal he was placed on the right hand: when condemned, on the left. The goats in Palestine are usually black; the sheep white. The goats will strip a field of herbage. "Indeed they have extirpated many species of trees which once covered the hills" (Tristram, NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE -- pages 89 f). See Heb. 12:2.

"Then shall the KING say . . . right hand . . . come, ye blessed" (Matt. 25:34): The King is Christ. Here He applies the title to Himself. At judgment the entire universe will acknowledge His kingly majesty. His invitation on earth to mortals is to come: "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely-" (Rev. 22:17). To all who have heeded his EARTHLY INVITATION He gives a HEAVENLY INVITATION. "Inherit the kingdom PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD!" The Son of man in verse 31 is the King here seated on the throne of judgment. Those whom the King invites are the rightful heirs of the prepared kingdom (Eph. 1:9-14; John 14:2).

"For I was an hungered . . . ye gave me meat" (Matt. 25:35): The reason why those on the right hand are given the kingdom is now shown in verses 35 and 36. The acts of love are enumerated; money, time, sacrifice, strength and sympathy were shared. "Jesus did not mean to teach that mere works of benevolence are a sufficient ground for salvation. The meaning is that NONE CAN BE SAVED WITHOUT THESE FRUITS OF FAITH AND LOVE" (McGarvey). Of course, today we FIRST OBEY the GOSPEL OF THE RISEN CHRIST and WORK for Him faithfully (II Thess. 1:8, 9; Phil. 2:12; John 15:2-6).

"Inasmuch as ye have done it . . . my brethren . . . unto me" (Matt. 25:41): Anything done for the SAKE OF CHRIST to the NEEDY AND SUFFERING is the same as if it were DONE TO HIM PERSONALLY (Matt. 10:42; Mark 9:41; Acts 9:4). Such conduct is PROOF OF POSSESSION of love for Christ, and likeness to Him!

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"Depart . . . ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:42): Those who refuse to share His kingdom will be SHUT OUT OF IT FOREVER (verse 46). The punishment is everlasting banishment from his presence (II Thess. 1:9). Under the Jewish law, anything condemned and devoted to death was called "accursed" (Deut. 13:17). "The repetition of the negative YOU in verses 42 and 43 is like the falling of clods on the coffin. It is curious the surprise here shown both by the sheep and the goats. Some sheep will think that they are goats and some goats will think that they are sheep" (Robertson).

"These . . . everlasting punishment . . . righteous into life eternal (Matt. 25:46): Leave the difficulties of this passage to the King Himself who is the Judge. These things are certain:

1. A separation between the righteous and the wicked takes place at judgment.
2. The righteous ones inherit the kingdom. The wicked "depart into everlasting fire."
3. The state of the righteous is "life eternal." The state of the wicked is "everlasting punishment."
4. The DURATION of these two states IS THE SAME, exactly the same Greek word being used in each case ("aionios"). The doom of the wicked is as durable as the reward of the righteous. The doom of the wicked is a punishment-misery and suffering purposely inflicted.

Dr. Robertson says "The word "aionios" (from "aion," age) means either without beginning or without end or both. It comes as near to the idea of eternal as the Greek can put it in one word."

"We'll work till Jesus comes . . . And we'll be gathered home"

FOREVER, to be with the Lord (John 14:3): Hallelujah!

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QUESTIONS

1. On what three facts do we base our belief in the coming again of Jesus Christ (John 14:3; Matt. 16:27; 24:30; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 1:7)?
2. Can you name the parables given by our Lord to illustrate how to prepare for His coming (Matt. 24:43,44; 25:1,14)?
3. Can one know whether he is a "faithful" or an "evil servant" (Matt. 24:45,48; John 14:15; I John 5:2,3; Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 8:3-9; 9:6, 7)? Name some characteristics of a "faithful" servant.
4. When will the Kingdom of heaven be likened to "ten virgins" (Matt. 25:1)?
5. What one thing, according to Halley, does this parable mean? Is there any significance attached to the number ten, or the fact they are virgins?
6. What was the folly of the one set and the wisdom of the other (Matt. 25:4)? Did they "all slumber and sleep" (verse 5)?
7. At what hour did the cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh" awaken the virgins (Matt. 25:6)? Will the coming of our Lord be sudden and unexpected (Matt. 24:27)?
8. What awful fact did the foolish virgins discover when they lighted their lamps (Matt. 25:7), what request did they make (verse 8), and what answer did the wise virgins give them (verse 9)? Why will there be no borrowed righteousness when our Lord comes?
9. Is ignorance of the time of the Second Coming an excuse for neglect or a reason for readiness of His coming (Matt. 25:10,12), and with what admonition does King Jesus close this parable (Matt. 25:13)?
10. To what is the kingdom of heaven now likened (Matt. 25:14)? On what rule did 'the master distribute "his goods" (Matt. 25:15)?
11. If the virgins represented watchfulness in waiting for the Lord, what is known by the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:16,17)? What was said to the five and two-talent men (Matt. 25:20-23)?
12. What was wrong in the slothful servant's reasoning (Matt. 25:24-26)?
13. Why did he bury the money (Matt. 25:18)?
14. With what terms does Jesus describe the one-talent man (Matt. 25:26)? How long does it take compound interest at six per cent to double the principal? Did the Mosaic Law allow interest in dealings between Hebrews (Deut. 23:19,20; Psa. 15:5)?
15. Why give the talent to him who had ten (Matt. 25:8)? To what place is the unprofitable servant cast (Matt. 25:30)?
16. Who shall be gathered before the Son of man who sits upon the throne of his glory (Matt. 25:31,32)? What three classes are described (Matt. 25:33,40)?
17. What invitation does the King give those on the right hand (Matt. 25:34)?
18. Why were those on the right hand given the kingdom (Matt. 25:35, 36)? What did they ask (Matt. 25:37-39)?
19. What principle is shown in Matt. 25:40 (see Matt. 10:42; Mark 9:41; Acts 9:4)? On this basis, what awful verdict was passed on those on the left hand (Matt. 25:41-45)?
20. What certain things are pointed up by Matt. 25:48? What does Robertson say about "everlasting" or "aionios?" What ought we to determine to do in the light of His certain coming?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 17

Page 1

Matthew 26

Memory Verses: Matthew 26:26-28

Memory Verse:

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins'" (Matthew 26:26-28).

Public Reading: Matt. 26:36-45.

CHRIST'S LAST HOURS WITH HIS DISCIPLES

Fickle human nature shouted "Hosanna" or "Save, I beseech thee" (Matt. 21:9; Psa. 118:25) on Sunday to our Lord. On Friday that same group hissed: "Let him be crucified" (Matt. 27:22).

Thousands of cheering admirers welcomed Theodore Roosevelt when he returned from Africa with rare specimens for the Smithsonian Institute. That same day Roosevelt said to his sister: "And they will soon be throwing rotten apples at me."

If it is ever fitting that we should put off our shoes because the ground is holy, it is so as we read these last three chapters of Matthew. "Here the Passion of God, and the passions of men came into conflict and communion" (Morgan). The rejected King had shown His authority and power in the realms material, mental, and moral, as the one and ONLY KING!

1. Plots and Preparations for the Death of Jesus (Matt. 26:1-19; Mark 14:116; Luke 22:1-13; John 12:1-8)

A. Fourth prediction of His death (Matt. 26:1, 2).

"And . . . Jesus . . . said . . . after two days . . . the Passover" (Matt. 26:1, 2): "All these sayings" of verse 1 include the discourses in the three preceding chapters.

"This was probably our Tuesday evening (beginning of Jewish Wednesday). The Passover began on our Thursday evening (beginning of Jewish Friday). The new day for the Jews began AFTER SUNSET," For the origin of the Passover, see Exodus 12:1-14.

Jesus sets a definite date for his crucifixion (verse 2) which He had been predicting for six months.

B. A plot of the priests and elders (Matt. 26:3-5).

"Then assembled . . . chief priests . . . scribes . . . elders . . . Caiaphas" (Matt. 26:3): This was a meeting of the Sanhedrin as the two groups indicate (see Matt. 21:23). They came into "the court," the atrium around which the palace buildings were built. Here in the open court this informal meeting was held. The "elders" were the heads of the great families, or princes of Judah.

Caiaphas was high priest A.D. 18-36. His father-in-law Annas had been high priest A.D. 6-15 and was still called high priest by many. This group could try and condemn to death; it could not carry out capital punishment WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE ROMAN AUTHORITIES AT THIS TIME. The group was made up of bitter, bigoted enemies of Jesus. At any cost it was determined to secure His death. Jewish law was constantly violated in the trial of Jesus.

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"THE SANHEDRIN VERDICT" by Irwin H. Linton, distinguished lawyer of Washington, D.C., should be read to get a compelling view of the trial of Jesus. Consider the evidence that this legal expert assembles to see how the Great Sanhedrin came to the wrong decision in the world's most amazing trial!

"And consulted . . . take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him" (Matt. 26:4): Many at the feast were from Galilee. They would fight for Jesus. The Sanhedrin was afraid of the people. The leaders wished to seize Jesus secretly, deliver Him to the Romans and crucify Him before the people knew of their evil purposes (See Luke 21:38). Their puzzled state of mind is shown by their counsel "Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people" (verse 5). Josephus says that in A.D. 65, 3,000,000 Jews were present. They reasoned that the arrest of Jesus would cause a tumult. On such occasions the Romans suppressed the disturbance without mercy.

C. Jesus anointed for His burial (Matt. 26:6-13).

"Now when Jesus was in Bethany . . ." (Matt. 26:6) This story is not in chronological order, but is given 'Go show how Mary anointed Him for His burial, and how Judas determined to betray him. "Mary's love is the brightest gleam, and Judas' treachery the darkest shade." "Jesus appears to have arrived in Bethany Friday afternoon, March 31 A.D. 30" (McGarvey). John 12: 1, 2 shows that the supper was on Saturday before the triumphal entry on Sunday.

"In the house of Simon the leper": Simon was evidently a man who had been healed of his leprosy. He gave the feast in honor of Jesus. Some think he was the husband or father of Martha, or a relative of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. We do not certainly know who he was.

"A woman . . . alabaster box . . . pours ointment" (Matt. 26:7): This "woman" was Mary, the sister of Lazarus (John 12:3). The "alabaster box" was "a carbonate of lime or sulfate of lime, white or yellow stone, named alabaster from the town in Egypt where it was chiefly found. It had a cylindrical form at the top, like a closed rosebud (Pliny). Nard was a present far a king (Bruce). It was a liquid perfume from an odorous plant, mingled with oil. It was worth about \$51.00 in our money, but remember that "the purchasing power of money was then far, far greater than it is now.

"Disciples. . indignation. . . purpose. . . this waste?" (Matt. 26:8): John 12:4 tells us it was Judas who made the point that the rest endorsed. Judas was probably honest when he was called to serve as treasurer of the apostolic group. That same management and spirit of economy that made him fit for the place ruined him when he got it. Our strong points often become our weakest.

As a tither, I am often amused when I see men who "strangle the buffalo" -- haggle around over the Lord's money They give so little. They act as though they had brought it all. What they are managing is mostly what other faithful stewards of the Lord have brought! The loving sacrifice of Mary did not COST THE APOSTLES ONE CENT! They were INDIGNANT BECAUSE OF HER WASTE. I pray to God far more PRODIGAL WASTERS LIKE MARY IN OUR CHURCHES TODAY.

"This ointment . . . sold . . . given to the poor" (Matt. 26:9): This was a pretense on the part of Judas. He wanted to get the money into his bag and steal it. Let those who haggle over the Lord's money which others have brought, dig down into their own pockets and bring the tithe and love offerings as God has prospered them and prove their concern for "the poor!"

"Jesus . . . Why trouble ye the woman?" (Matt. 26:10): Mary was the only one who grasped the meaning of the coming cross. Concerned love can minister to 'the "poor" at any time. What was done for Christ in the flesh MUST BE DONE AT ONCE. Jesus rebuked greedy Judas and the complaining disciples; Mary "did it for my burial." (Verse 12). The apostles were so wrapped up in their own notions of a political kingdom that they failed utterly to sympathize with Jesus as he faced the cross. Mary, with a woman's fine intuitions, began to understand the cross that Jesus faced. This was her way of expressing

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her high emotions and loyalty. What a marvelous "memorial" she has (verse 13).

"It is so easy to raise small objections to what we do not like and do not understand" (Robertson).

D. Judas contracts to betray Jesus (Matt. 26:14-16).

"Judas . . . chief priests . . . WHAT will ye give me . . .?" (Matt. 26:14, 15): "Mary and Judas were extreme opposites: she freely spending in love, he willing to sell his Master for money" (Bruce). Judas openly appeared before the council (verse 14) and bargained with it to "betray" Jesus (verse 16) for "thirty pieces of silver," the price of a slave (see Zech. 11:12; Ex. 21:32). This would be about \$15.00 in our money (McGarvey, "The Fourfold Gospel," page 643). Judas made his bargain on Tuesday night and fulfilled it on Thursday night (verse 16).

E. The Passover is prepared. (Matt. 26:17-19).

"The first day . . . unleavened bread" (Matt. 26:17): John 13:1f, 27; 18:28; 19:14, 31 agree with the synoptic gospels (Matt. 26:17-20; Mark 14:12, 17; Luke 22:7, 14) that Jesus ate the Passover meal at the regular time about 6:00 p.m. beginning of 15th of Nisan. The Passover lamb was slain on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan. The meal was eaten at sunset the beginning of 15th of Nisan.

The Law required that the paschal lamb should be slain "between the evenings." "The Jews reckoned the two evenings as from three o'clock to sunset, and from sunset to nine o'clock which was the end of the first watch. Josephus tells us that the lambs were killed from the ninth to the eleventh hours, or between the hours of three and five. It would take same time to dress the lamb and to roast it, so that it must have been about sundown or shortly afterward when Jesus and his disciples sat down to the feast."

When Matthew, Mark, and Luke speak of the Passover, they refer to the ACTUAL PASCHAL SUPPER. When "John speaks of the FEAST of the PASSOVER, or the Passover, he refers to the SEVEN DAYS FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD THAT FOLLOWED THE ACTUAL PASCHAL FEAST. Jesus was PUT TO DEATH ON THE FIRST DAY OF THIS LATTER FEAST, and therefore John here uses the festival to designate the time of the Lord's suffering and death" (McGarvey).

"They made ready the Passover" (Matt. 26:19): In the house of "Mr. X," a friend of Jesus (verse 18). Jesus may have indicated the man's name. Mark 14:13 and Luke 22:10 describe him as a man bearing a pitcher of water. This home was ready to be placed at the disposal of Jesus. It was a gracious privilege to serve him thus.

II. Incidents at the Paschal Supper and in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:20-57; Mark 14:17-50; Luke 22:14-53)

A. The betrayal predicted (Matt. 26:20-25).

"He sat down with the twelve" (Matt. 26:20): He was reclining, lying back on the left side on the couch with the right hand free. Jesus and the Twelve all reclined. The paschal lamb had to be eaten up entirely (Ex. 12:4, 43). This band that "sat down" has furnished the subject of and of the greatest paintings ever created.

"I say . . . one of you shall betray me" (Matt. 26:21): This was like a bolt from the blue for all the apostles except Judas. Was he startled to know that Jesus understood his treacherous bargain?

"Lord, is it I?" (Matt. 26:22): Each apostle asks the same question. No one accuses his neighbor. The negative expects the answer "No"; it was natural for all save Judas. He had to bluff it out by the same form of question (verse 25). The answer of Jesus, "Thou hast said" means "Yes."

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"He that dippeth his hand with me . . . betray me" (Matt. 26:23): They all dipped their hands; they had no knives, forks, or spoons. The language means that one of those who had eaten bread with him had violated the rights of hospitality by BETRAYING HIM. Among the Arabs, eating one's bread ties your hands and compels friendship. Jesus pronounces terrible doom on Judas (verse 24), who apparently went out at this stage (John 13:30).

B. The Lord's supper instituted (Matt. 26:26-29).

"As they were eating . . ." (Matt. 26:26): Before they had arisen from the paschal feast.

"Jesus took bread, and blessed it": This was special "Grace" in the middle of the Passover meal far the institution of the Supper. Jesus broke one of the Passover wafers or cakes that each might have a piece.

"This is my body": Jesus was still in the body as He spake these words. He did not mean that the bread actually BECAME HIS BODY or is to be worshipped. It is to REMIND US OF HIS DEATH FOR OUR SINS. The bread as a symbol represents the body of Jesus offered for us, "a beautifully simple, pathetic and poetic symbol of his death" (Bruce).

"Cup . . . my blood of the new testament" (Matt. 26:27, 28):

The covenant is an agreement or contract between two. It is also used for a "will" which becomes operative at death (Heb. 9:15-17), hence our New Testament. Robertson reminds us that either covenant or will make sense here (Heb. 7:22; 8:8).

"My body" and "my blood" are to be interpreted as we interpret his other sayings. "The seed is the word." "The field is the world," "The reapers are the angels." "The harvest is the end the world." "I am the door." "I am the vine."

The blood of Jesus seals His covenant with us and He makes the cup the symbol of that blood (Ex. 24:6-8; Heb. 2:9; II Cor. 5:14, 15; Heb. 7:27; John 7:20; Eph. 5:2; I John 2:2; 4:10; Isa. 53:10; Rom. 8:2).

It is important that we commune with Him each first day of the week (Acts 20:7; John 5:53-58; I Cor. 11:20-30). We shall do this until He comes again (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:42, 46).

C. A hymn sung and desertion predicted (Matt. 26:30-35).

"And when they had sung an hymn . . ." (Matt. 26:30): It was customary to conclude the Passover by singing the Psalms 115-118 --- The Hallel, which are psalms of praise. They went to the "Mount of Olives," or the garden of Gethsemane which was an the slope of that mount.

"All ye shall be offended . . . this night. . .": (Matt 26:31): made to stumble (Zech. 13:7). Peter was going to show he was superior to "all" the rest. Peter's boast was doubtless sincere, but mistaken (verses 33-35). Mark 14:30 says Peter will deny Jesus thrice before the cock crows twice. Every man shared Peter's confidence (verse 35). Yet there was not one among them equal to one hour's vigil with Him!

D. The agony in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-46).

"Then cameth Jesus. . . Gethsemane" (Matt. 26:36): "A place of olive presses." It was about one-half mile from the city (Luke 21:37; John 18:2). There are night old olive trees still standing in Gethsemane, which we visited this summer. We cannot say they are the very trees near which Jesus had His agony, but they are very old.

"He took with him Peter . . . two sons of Zebedee" (Matt. 26:37). The eight would serve as a sort of outer guard to watch by the gate of the garden far the coming of Judas; the three of the "Inner Circle" would be able to share the agony of soul already upon Jesus. They could give Jesus some human sympathy that he craved as He sought help from the Father in praying. These three had been with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration, and at one of his greatest miracles (Mark 5:37).

"He . . began to be sorrowful and very heavy": The shadow of the cross was upon him. "Far he hath made him to be sin for us . . ." (II Cor. 5:21). "Tarry . . watch with me" (Matt. 26:38): The hour was late; the strain had been severe. Jesus pleaded for a bit of human sympathy from the apostles as He wrestled with

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His Father. When his sorrow is "even unto death" they should have been alerted, and "stabbed wide awake."

"He went a little farther . . . fell on his face. . . let this cup pass" (Matt. 26:39): Note Jesus was "an his face," not on his knees. "This cup" is a figure that can mean only the approaching death. Jesus had used it of his coming death when James and John came to Him with their ambitious request, "the cup which I am about to drink" (Matt. 20:22). Satan evidently tempted Jesus to draw back from the cross. In PRAYER, JESUS WON THE POWER. TO GO ON TO CALVARY.

"A little farther" is "about a stone's cast" (Luke 22:41). In every phase of life Jesus has gone "a little farther" than His most devoted followers: He has gone "a little farther" in serving, in giving, in forgiving, in sacrifice -- even unto death!

"What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" (Matt. 26:40): Peter, James and John were soldiers placed on duty in an hour of dreadful peril. King Jesus had commanded them to "Tarry . . . watch with me" (verse 38). They were "sleeping for (or from) sorrow" (Luke 22:45). Jesus repeats the command of verse 38 with the addition of "watch and pray" (verse 41) against the perils of temptation. Failure is often due to weakness of the flesh (see Isa. 31:3; Rom. 7:25).

"O my Father, if this cup may not pass. . . thy will be done" (Matt. 26:43): The second prayer accepts the necessity of the cross, as did the third one (verse 44). The second time Jesus prayed more earnestly" (Luke 22:44) which accounts for the bloody sweat. Now Jesus only asks "THY WILL BE DONE."

"Sleep on now, and take your rest . . ." (Matt. 26:45): His apostles were "asleep again" (verse 43). They had failed to comfort Him in His hour of great agony, but God His Father had not failed him (verses 38,

40, 43). "Sleep on" is "mournful irony" (Plummer), or reproachful concession. "Ye may sleep and rest indefinitely so far as I am concerned; I need no longer your watchful interest" (Bruce).

"Take your rest . . . Rise, let us be going" (Matt. 26:45, 46): A break occurs between verses 45 and 46. He watches over them as they sleep. He awakens them as Judas the betrayer approaches.

E. Jesus is arrested (Matt. 26:47-56).

"Judas . . . and . . . a great multitude" (Matt. 26:47). The chief priests and Pharisees had furnished Judas a band of soldiers from the garrison in Antonia (John 18:3). The temple police came (Luke 22:52) with swords or knives and staves or clubs, and a hired rabble who had lanterns (John 18:3) in spite of the full moon. Judas was taking no chances of failure in delivering Jesus unto His enemies. He "gave them a sign," a "kiss" (verse 48), the common mode of greeting.

"Hail, master; and kissed him" (Matt. 26:49): Judas "kissed him fervently," a compound verb "katephilesen," from "kata" intensive, and "phileo" to love "to love dearly," or "kiss heartily!" This traitorous kiss was the depth of depravity, hatred under the guise of friendship. The kiss of Judas has become a proverb in every nation.

"They . . . laid hands on Jesus . . . took him" (Matt. 26:50): "And bound him" (John 18:12).

"They that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52): Peter tried to kill Malchus (John 18:10, 26). The sword was one of the two that the disciples had (Luke 22:38). Peter was dead by the time John wrote his gospel, and in no danger by this disclosure. The sword is not to be used to defend the truth, or advance His kingdom (John 18:36). When men fight with swords, someone is going to get killed. It was God's will for Jesus to suffer. Jesus accepted God's will, although he could have called 72,000 angels to deliver Him (verses 53-55).

"Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled" (Matt. 26:56): The eleven apostles a little while before thought they would NEVER FORSAKE THE LORD. The desertion of Jesus by ALL THE

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APOSTLES followed this rebuke of the effort of Peter. Jesus had surrendered. They "all . . . fled!" See I Cor. 10:12.

III. The Trial and Condemnation of Jesus (Matt. 26:57-75; Mk. 14:53-72; Lk. 22:54-62; John 18:12, 15-27).

A. Jesus is condemned by the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57-68). "And they . . . led him away to Caiaphas" (Matt. 26:57): He was first examined by Annas, the former high priest, and the father-in-law of Caiaphas (John 18:13), probably while the Sanhedrin was assembling. Those favorable to Jesus, as Joseph and Nicodemus, were probably not called. This was not a formal session as of a court, but "it was more in the nature of a caucus, or committee of the whole."

"But Peter followed Him afar off . . ." (Matt. 26:58): Peter rallied from his panic, and "followed him afar off." He was "more courageous than the rest and yet not courageous enough" (Bruce).

"Now the chief priests . . . sought FALSE WITNESSES AGAINST JESUS" (Matt. 26:59): They kept on seeking "false witnesses. Judges have no right to be prosecutors and least of all to seek false witnesses and even offer bribes to get them (verses 60, 61).

"This fellow said . . . destroy the temple of God" (Matt. 26:61). What Jesus really said is in John 2:19-22. He referred to His own resurrection of the dead, of course (Matt. 27:62, 63).

"I adjure thee . . . Jesus said . . . Thou hast said" (Matt. 26:64): Jesus under oath admits He is "the Christ, the Son of God!" If it were not true, naturally Jesus was worthy of death (verse 65; Lev. 24:15, 16). Here Jesus showed He was not thinking of oaths in courts of justice when he prohibited profanity!

"What think ye? . . . He is guilty of death" (Matt. 26:66): The Sanhedrin took the vote though it WAS NIGHT and they NO LONGER HAD THE POWER OF DEATH SINCE THE ROMANS TOOK IT AWAY FROM THEM. Death was the penalty of blasphemy (Lev. 24:15). How these religious rascals enjoyed pronouncing this penalty as their answer to his unanswerable speeches in the temple that dreadful Tuesday a few days before!

"They spit in his face . . . buffeted . . . smote" (Matt. 26:67): They blindfolded Him (Luke 22:62), and gave Jesus the third degree. "With uncontrolled glee and abandon like a lot of hoodlums these DOCTORS OF DIVINITY INSULTED JESUS" (verse 68).

B. Peter's denial (Matt. 26:69-75).

"Now Peter sat without . . . a damsel . . ." (Matt. 26:69): Peter had gone within the palace (Matt. 26:58). This maid stepped up to Peter as he was sitting in the court and pointedly said: "Thou too wast also with Jesus the Galilean." She may have seen him come in with John the Beloved Disciple who went on up into the hall of trial. She could have seen Peter with Jesus on the streets of Jerusalem.

"But he denied before them all . . ." (Matt. 26:70): Peter's pathetic denials began with "I know not what thou sayest," "he denied with an oath, I DO NOT KNOW THE MAN" (verse 72), "Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man" (verse 74).

"And Peter remembered. . ." (Matt. 26:75): He recalled the words of Jesus a few hours before (Matt. 26:34) to which he had responded with the proud boast that "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee" (verse 35). Now the triple denial was a fact! Luke tells us the Lord turned and looked upon Peter (Luke 22:61). That look brought Peter back to his senses, even as "immediately the cock crew" (verse 74). Continued weeping was now Peter's only consolation (Mark 14:72). "The tears were bitter, all the more so by reason of that look of understanding pity that Jesus gave him. One of the tragedies of the cross is the bleeding heart of Peter, Judas was a total wreck and Peter was a near derelict. Satan had sifted them as weak, but Jesus specially prayed for Peter (Luke 22:31f). Will Satan show Peter to be all chaff as Judas was?"

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QUESTIONS

1. What had the Jews shouted on Sunday concerning Jesus, and what was their cry on the following Friday (Matt. 21:9; 27:22)? What did Roosevelt say of his cheering admirers when he returned from Africa?
2. On what day did Jesus make the fourth prediction of his death (Matt. 28:1, 2)?
3. What was the purpose of this meeting of the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:3-5)? Why did the group fear an "uproar"? How many people did Josephus say were in Jerusalem at the Passover in A.D. 65?
4. Who was Caiaphas, and Annas (Matt. 26:3)?
5. Who was Simon the leper (Matt. 26:6)? Why go into a leper's house? When did Jesus arrive in Bethany (John 12:1,2)?
6. What is alabaster (Matt. 26:7)? Of what was the "alabaster box" made? To whom was such a present usually given? What was its value?
7. Who stressed that Mary had "wasted" the ointment on Jesus (Matt. 26:8; John 12:4)? How did Jesus describe the sacrificial gift (Matt. 26:10)? In what sense was it for his burial (Matt. 26:12)? Why should it be so widely published (Matt. 26:13)?
8. What encouraged Judas to go to the priests (Matt. 26:14,35)? Why pay in advance? (Matt. 26:16)
9. Which was the "first day of the feast of unleavened bread" (Matt. 26:17; Ex. 12:1-18)? Why was the place not previously selected? How did Jesus know that the man would consent (Matt. 26:18)? What preparation had to be made (Ex. 12:8)?
10. What dipping of the hand in the dish (Matt. 25:23)? Why good if he had not been born (Matt. 28:24)? Why did Judas ask, "Master, is it I?" (Matt. 26:25)?
11. In what sense was the loaf his body (Matt. 26:26)? What is the meaning of "blood the covenant" (Matt. 26:27, 28)? What is its connection with the remission of sins? How often eat and drink of the loaf and cup (Acts 20:7), and why (John 5:53-58; I Cor. 11:20-30)? And how long should we do this (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:42,46)?
12. How was the Passover concluded (Matt. 26:30)? Identify the Hallel or praise Psalms. Should we sing a hymn at the close of the supper?
13. Where was it written, "I will smite the shepherd" (Matt. 26:31; Zech. 13:7)? Was this prediction uttered after they reached the Mount of Olives (Matt. 26:30,36)?
14. Where was Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36)? Meaning of Gethsemane?
15. Why did Jesus "began to be sorrowful and very heavy" (Matt. 26:37)? Why say to the "inner circle" "watch with me" (Matt. 26:38)? Why was it not "possible" (Matt. 26:39)? Why say at last "sleep on" (Matt. 26:45)? What doubtless occurs between verses 45,46 as Jesus says, "Arise, let us be going?"
16. Why so many? With weapons (Matt. 26:47)? Why should they need "a sign" (Matt. 26:49)? How shall they who take the sword perish by it (Matt. 26:52)? Why his remark about the time and manner of his arrest (Matt. 26:55,56)? How many of the disciples forsook Jesus and fled?
17. Who constituted the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:59,57)? Why did Jesus not answer the witnesses (Matt. 26:63)? Why not condemn Jesus on the testimony of the witnesses (Matt. 26:61)? On what did they condemn Him (Matt. 26:63-66)?
18. Why say, "Prophecy unto us" (Matt. 26:68; Mark 14:65)?
19. How did boastful Peter now follow Jesus (Matt. 26:57,58)? Meaning of "without in the palace" (Matt. 26:69)? Who accused Peter of being "with Jesus of Galilee" (Matt. 26:69)? What is the porch (Matt. 26:71)? How did his speech "betray him" (Matt. 26:73)?
20. Can you trace the stages of the denial of Peter (Matt. 26:70, 72, 74), and what shrill cry stirred Peter's remembrance (Matt. 26:74, 75)? Who looked at Peter (Luke 22:61), and what did Peter do (Mark 14:72; Matt. 26:75)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 18
Matthew 27

Page 1
Memory Verses: Isaiah 53:5, 6

Memory Verse:

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:5, 6).

Public Reading: Matt. 27:33-44.

THE TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST

There were two trials of Jesus: One was before the Jewish Sanhedrin, the second before the Roman governor. There were three stages in each trial, six in all.

1. Before Annas (John 18:12-14). This was about midnight.
2. Before the Sanhedrin, in the house of Caiaphas (Matt. 26:57; Mark 14:53; Luke 22:45; John 18:24). This was between midnight and daybreak. Jesus was condemned on a charge of blasphemy (Mark 14:61-64). By their own law a trial at night was illegal.
3. At daylight the Sanhedrin officially ratifies its midnight decision (Matt. 27:1).
4. Before Pilate (Matt. 27:2). This was shortly after daylight.
5. Before Herod (Luke 23:6-12).
6. Before Pilate again (Matt. 27:15-26).

1. The Trial and Condemnation of Jesus
(Matthew 27:1-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-40; Acts 1:16-19)

A. Another consultation of priests and elders (Matt. 27:1, 2).

"When the morning was come . . ." (Matt. 27:1): The morning saw the plot hatched in the night carried any effect. The trial during the night was illegal (Luke 22:66-71). This was a formal meeting often dawn to ratify the illegal night trial. Luke gives the details of the second ratification consultation.. The Jews could not pass the death sentence.

"They . . . bound him . . . delivered him to Pontius Pilate" (Matt. 27:2): What the Jews had done was all a form and a farce. Pilate one had this power. He was governor of Judea A.D. 26-37. His official residence was Caesarea. He came to Jerusalem during the feasts to keep order. Although cruel and bloodthirsty he did not want to crucify Jesus He mingled the blood of Galileans with their sacrifices (Luke 13:1). Six years later he was summoned to Rome to face charges of unprovoked murder of a group of Samaritans. He is said to have committed suicide.

B. The remorse and death of Judas (Matt. 27:3-10; Acts 1:16-19).

Then Judas . . . hanged himself" (Matt. 27:3): The picture of Judas in his remorse is very terrible. Judas watched the trial of Jesus. He had no reason to fear the Romans. "Repented himself" really means to be sorry afterwards. It is not a change of heart that leads to a CHANGE OF LIFE FOR THE BETTER (Luke

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15:17, 18). Peter repented and was accepted of our Lord. Judas had only remorse that led to suicide. He brought the "thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders."

"I have sinned . . . betrayed" (Matt. 27:4): Here we see TARDY REPENTANCE, a tardy restitution, and an appalling retribution. Note that Judas made a belated confession of his sin in betraying INNOCENT BLOOD to the Sanhedrin, but not to God, or to Jesus. Ignoring the innocent or righteous blood, the Sanhedrin bells Judas to look after his own guilt himself. They ignore also their own guilt in the matter. The sentiment is that of Cain (Grotius, Bruce).

"And he . . . hanged himself" (Matt. 27:5): His act was sudden after he hurled the money into the sanctuary or sacred enclosure where the priests were. Many criminals after the enormity of their crime is plain to them, destroy themselves.

"It is not lawful . . . treasury . . . potter's field" (Matt. 27:6, 7): The price of blood (blood money) was pollution to the treasury (Deut. 23:18f). They were not too scrupulous to condemn the innocent to death; they gagged at putting the blood money into the treasury. The rabbis knew how to split hairs about Korban (Mark 7:1-23; Matt. 15:1-20), but they balk at this blood money.

"The potter's field": Grotius suggests that it was a small field where potter's clay was obtained, like a brickyard (Broadus). It was useless for other purposes. It could be bought cheap. "To bury strangers in" – it is a burial place for the poor. The field was bought with blood -- that of Jesus, and Judas (verse 8).

In Acts 1:18 we have another account of the death of Judas by "bursting asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." He probably hanged himself on a tree overlooking the valley of Hinnom, the rope gave way, and he fell headlong upon the rocks below -- "a distance of forty to sixty feet."

"Then was fulfilled . . . spoken by Jeremy the prophet" (Matt. 27:9): This quotation comes mainly from Zech. 11:13 though not in exact language. Albert Barnes shows that "a change of a single letter in the original would transform Zechariah into Jeremiah, and it is supposed that some early copyist made the mistake. Another explanation is that Jeremiah, in the Jewish arrangement of the prophets, stood first, and that his name was given to the whole book of prophecy."

The copyist could change Zechariah to Jeremy by changing only two letters in the Greek "i" for "z," and "m" for "r."

C. Pilate is persuaded to crucify Jesus (Matt. 27:11-26).

"And Jesus stood before the governor . . ." (Matt. 27:11): Jesus stood face to face with the Roman governor in the judgment hall (John 18:28). Pilate represented Roman law. Matthew does not give the changes made by the Sanhedrin (Luke 23:2), or the private interview with Pilate (John 18:28-32).

"Art thou the King of the Jews?" Pilate could not ignore the accusation that Jesus claimed to be King of the Jews. Jesus confesses that He is. What sort of King is this Jesus?

"And when he was accused of the Chief priests . . ." (Matt. 27:12): "The Jewish rulers first attempt to induce Pilate to accept their verdict and condemn Jesus" upon the charge of blasphemy and "execute him without a trial." Pilate insisted upon trying Jesus. Blasphemy was not a capital offense under the Roman law. Jesus was condemned and executed AS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Only Pilate could give the death penalty. The silent dignity of Jesus amazed Pilate (verses 13, 14).

Jesus had predicted the manner and details of his death (See John 12:33, 34; Matt. 20:18, 19; Mark 10:33, 34). Jesus was a KING in the spiritual realm. He DECLINED A PHYSICAL CROWN (John 6:15).

"Barabbas, or Jesus . . .?" (Matt. 27:17): At the "feast," the Passover (verse 15) it was the custom to release a prisoner. "A notable prisoner" (verse 16) means Barabbas was a leader in an insurrection in which he had committed murder (Mark 15:7). Barabbas means "son of a father." Pilate pitted two prisoners against

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each other who represented the opposing forces of all time. Pilate's question tested the Jews as well as himself. The question still tests all men. Some manuscripts add the name Jesus to Barabbas. That makes it even clearer. Would it be Jesus Barabbas or Jesus Christ?

"For he knew that for envy . . ." (Matt. 27:18): Pilate knew Jesus was innocent. He knew that the Jewish leaders were jealous of the power of Jesus with the people.

"His wife . . ." (Matt. 27:19): The judgment seat was a kind of a lofty official throne, placed on the pavement (John 19:13). He was probably waiting for the people to decide whether to ask for Barabbas or Jesus. On this sad day the voice of a Gentile woman was the only one that interceded for Christ. She spoke of Jesus as "that just (righteous) man." Her physical sufferings increased Pilate's superstitious fears. Tradition names her Procula, and even calls her a Christian. Pilate was unnerved as he sat on the judgment seat.

"But the chief priests . . . persuaded the multitude" (Matt. 27:20): The chief priests (Sadducees and elders (Pharisees) saw the peril in the situation and took no chances. They persuaded the people to choose Barabbas and not Jesus, as Pilate wavered in pressing the question (verse 21). Pilate's expediency had failed. The Jewish notion not only REJECTED JESUS the MESSIAH, they chose Barabbas instead!

"What shall I do then with Jesus . . . Christ?" (Matt. 27:22): "Let him be crucified!" This is the decision of the Jewish people. Jesus shall suffer the fate that was due the crime of Barabbas who had been released in his stead. Some of the very people who shouted "Hosanna" on the Sunday morning of the Triumphal Entry now shout, "Let him be crucified." The tide has now turned against Jesus, the hero Sunday, now the condemned criminal of Friday. Such is popular favor. But all the while Pilate is shirking his own fearful responsibility and trying to hide his own weakness and injustice behind popular clamor and prejudice."

"Pilate . . . washed his hands" (Matt. 27:24): Pilate's "Why, what evil hath he done?" was a feeble protest by a flickering conscience. The multitude "kept crying exceedingly" for the crucifixion of Jesus. It was like a gladiatorial show; all thumbs turned down. Pilate "washed his hands" for himself as a common symbol of cleanness, and added his pious claim with a slap at them. The Jews used this symbol Deut. 21:6; Psa. 26:6; 73:13).

"His blood be on us . . . our children" (Matt. 27:25): The Jewish leaders recognized their guilt. They were proud of it. These Jewish rulers take upon themselves and their children "all the responsibility" for the death of Jesus. How fearfully have the Jews suffered from that day on. It is too late for the Israeli government to stage a RETRIAL and FREE JESUS -- just 2000 years too late!

"Then released he Barabbas . . . scourged Jesus" (Matt. 27:26): Pilate lost all interest in saving Jesus whom he discovered that Jesus had no friends in the crowd. "The scourging before the crucifixion was a brutal Roman custom . . . part of the capital punishment."

Scourging was done with a whip that was made of a number of leather strips weighted with pieces of lead or sharp metal. The victim was stripped to the waist to a post, in a bent-over position, and beaten on the back with the scourge until the flesh was all torn open. Death during scourging was common. The law allowed stripes, consisting of forty blows with a rod (Deut. 25:2f); whence the Jews took care not to exceed thirty-nine (II Cor. 11:24; Josephus, ANTIQUITIES, iv, 8, 21).

John uses the Roman method of counting time; Jesus was condemned at 6:00 A.M. (John 19:14). Pilate is a study of conscience startled, struggling, and compromising -- and finally a conscience DRUGGED and SILENCED!

II. The Crucifixion and Burial (Matthew 27:27-66; Mark 15:16-47; Luke 23:26.56; John 19:16.42)

A. The soldiers mock Jesus (Matt. 27:27-31).

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"Then the soldiers . . . took Jesus . . . stripped him" (Matt. 27:27, 28): This was after the brutal scourging which was inflicted (Mark 15:15, 16). In Rome the praetorium was the camp of the praetorian guard of soldiers (Phil. 1:13), but in the provinces it was the palace in which the governor resided as in Acts 23:35 in Caesarea. So here in Jerusalem Pilate ordered Jesus and the entire band of soldiers to be led into the palace in front of which the judgment seat had been placed. The soldiers were gathered together for the SPORT OF SEEING THE SCOURGING. They were coarse, and rough. It was funny to them! It gave them a chance to show contempt for the Jews by "mocking" their King (verse 29).

"Stripped him . . . scarlet robe" (verse 28): A kind of short cloak worn by soldiers, military officers, magistrates, kings, emperors (Matt. 12:35; Josephus, ANT. V. 1, 10), a soldier's sash or scarf. Carr (Cambridge Greek Testament) suggests that it may have been a worn-out scarf of Pilate's. The scarlet color was a dye derived from the female insect that gathered on the *ilex coccifera* found in Palestine. These dried clusters of insects look like berries and form the famous dye. Mark 15:17 has "purple." There are various shades of purple and scarlet; it is not easy to distinguish these colors and tints. Jesus' clothing, which was stripped off at the scourging, had been replaced. Now it was removed to wrap him in a MOCK ROYAL MANTLE!

"A crown of thorns . . . mocked him" (Matt. 27:29, 31): The soldiers wove a crown out of thorns that would grow even in the palace grounds. Sharp prongs would cause pain and bleeding. It was more like a victor's garland than a royal diadem, but it served the purpose. So with the "reed in his right hand," a stalk of common cane grass which served as scepter. The soldiers kneel before him and deride Jesus. "They spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him in the head" (verse 30).

"Mocked him" (verse 31): The Jews in their trial had mocked Jesus (Luke 22:63-65). The soldiers "mocked" him (Luke 23:11). A little later on the cross, priests, elders and scribes "mocked him" (Matt. 27:39-43). Brutal as these heathen soldiers were, they were no more cruel than the Jewish Sanhedrin had been! Pilate then presented the bleeding prisoner to the people to try to secure their pity. He made one more effort to release him as he said, "Behold the man!" (John 19:5). It was in vain. Then they "led him away to crucify him."

B. He is led to Golgotha and crucified (Matt. 27:32-44).

"They found a man of Cyrene, Simon . . . compelled to bear his cross" (Matt. 27:32): This is one blessed case of conscription! "Compelled" is of Persian origin; it was used in Matt. 5:41. The soldiers treat Simon of Cyrene (a town of Libya) as a Persian courtier, and impress him into service. Jesus was showing signs of physical weakness in bearing his own cross, as the victims had to do. It was not a mere jest on Simon. Simon could be happy all through eternity that he CARRIED THE CROSS OF JESUS!

"His cross": There were various kinds of crosses. We do not know precisely the shape of the cross on which Jesus was crucified. Probably the one usually presented is correct. The victim was nailed -- hands and feet -- to the cross before it was raised; it was not very high. Soldiers did the crucifixion (verse 35).

"Golgotha . . . a place of a skull" (Matt. 27:33): Golgotha is a Hebrew word, meaning a skull. It was a place of a skull-shaped mount, not place of skulls. Latin Vulgate has "Calvariae locus," hence our Calvary. Tyndale misunderstood it as a place of dead men's skulls. Robertson affirms, "Calvary or Golgotha is not the traditional place of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, but a place outside of the city. It is probably what is now called Gordon's Calvary, a hill north of the city wall which from the Mount of Olives looks like a skull, the rock hewn tombs resembling eyes, in and of which Jesus may have been buried." The place of crucifixion was 'nigh to the city' (John 19:20). Jesus "suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

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"They gave him vinegar" . . . mingled with gall" (Matt. 27:34): Mark 15:23 says they "gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh." The myrrh gave the sour wine a bitter flavor, and like the bitter gall had a narcotic and stupefying effect. Compassionate women of Jerusalem provided the drink to deaden the sense of pain. The soldiers doubtless added the gall to make it disagreeable. When Jesus had tasted thereof, he would not drink." He desired to drink the FULL CUP FROM HIS FATHER'S HAND (John 18:11).

"They parted my garments . . . cast lots" (Matt. 27:35): From John 9:23 we learn that there were four soldiers at the cross. Roman law gave soldiers the garments of the condemned. They did not want to tear the costly, seamless robe of Jesus. So they gambled for the garments of the Son of God. Gamblers at Golgotha! Thus prophecy was fulfilled Psalm 22:18). The soldiers "watched him there" (verse 36) to prevent the possibility of rescue or removal of the body.

"And . . . over his head his accusation" (Matt. 27:37): The title (John 19:19) or placard of the crime was carried before the victim or hung around his neck as he walked to the execution. It was now placed above the head of Jesus on the projecting piece of the cross. The inscription gave the name and home: "Jesus of Nazareth." The charge on which He was convicted: "The King of the Jews," and the identification: "This is."

The inscription in full was: "This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." John 19:20 alone mentions the three languages: Latin for law, Hebrew (Aramaic) for the Jews, Greek for everybody.

"Two thieves crucified with Him . . . right hand . . . left" (Matt. 27:38) Were they partners of Barabbas in crime? They were "robbers," not "thieves" ("kleptai") as in the Authorized Version (King James).

"And they that passed by reviled . . ." (Matt. 27:39): They "wagged their heads" probably in mock commiseration. "Jews again appear on the scene with a malice like that shown in the trial before the Sanhedrin." (McNeile)

"To us it may seem incredible that even his worst enemies could be guilty of anything so brutal as to hurl taunts at one suffering the agonies of crucifixion" (Bruce). They jeer Jesus as one now down and out, the fallen foe.

"IF THOU BE THE SON OF GOD, COME DOWN FROM THE CROSS" (Matt. 27:40): "If thou art the Son of God" is the very language of the devil to Jesus (Matt. 4:3). Jesus could not save Himself, and SAVE US (Heb. 9:22; John 1:29; I Pet. 1:18, 19). God's love GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON to make salvation possible for you and me (John 3:16; Rom. 5:5-8). "We will believe" (verses 41, 42) is a spiteful assertion, plainly untrue! WHAT IF JESUS HAD COME DOWN FROM THE CROSS? These "pious scoffers" (Bruce) are like many today who make "factitious and arbitrary demands of Christ." They would have shifted their ground and invented some other excuse! Our Lord will not give new proofs to the BLIND IN HEART (verses 43, 44).

C". The darkness and the end (Matt. 27:45-56).

"Now from the sixth hour . . . darkness" (Matt. 27:45): Robertson says, "Clearly John uses Roman time, writing at the close of the century when Jewish time was no longer in vogue. It was six o'clock in the morning Roman time when the trial occurred before Pilate. The crucifixion began at the third hour (Mark 15:25) Jewish time or nine A.M. The darkness began at noon, the sixth hour Jewish time and lasted till 3 P.M. Roman time, the ninth hour Jewish time (Mark 15:33; Matt. 27:45; Luke 23:44). The dense darkness for three hours could not be an eclipse of the sun and Luke (23:45) does not so say, only the sun's light falling."

"My God . . . why . . . forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46): This is the only one of the seven sayings of Christ on the cross given by Mark 15:34 and Matthew 27:46. The other six occurs in Luke and John. Here Jesus bore our sins alone (II Cor. 5:21)!

"The Way of the Cross" is expressed in seven sayings or words: "The Way of Forgiveness" (Luke

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23:34); "The Way of Salvation" (Luke 23:42, 43); "The Way of Love" (John 19:25, 26, 27); "The Way of Sacrifice" (Matt. 27:46); "The Way of Agony" (John 19:28); "The Way of Redemption" (John 19:30); "The Way of Commitment" (Luke 23:46).

"Same . . . said, This man calleth for Elias" (Matt. 27:47): The resemblance between the word "Eli" and the name Elijah is very close in the original. A kindly man in the group ran (verse 48) and gave Jesus a drink of "vinegar" or sour wine used by the soldiers; it was not mixed with myrrh (John 19:30, 28).

"Jesus . . . yielded up the ghost" (Matt. 27:50): Jesus "gave up his life because he willed it, when he willed it and as he willed it" (Augustine). He dismissed His Spirit into His Father's hands (John 19:30) WITH A LOUD CRY. He did not die of exhaustion. Dr. Stroud in his "PHYSICAL CAUSE OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST" considers the loud cry one of the proofs that Jesus DIED OF A RUPTURED HEART AS A RESULT OF BEARING THE SIN OF THE WORLD!

"Veil . . . rent . . . top . . . bottom" (Matt. 27:51): Jesus in His death opened the way to God. The rent veil between the HOLY OF HOLIES and the Holy Place was Tent. "The rending of the veil signified the removal of the separation between God and the people" (Gould). It took place about the time of the evening sacrifice and showed try symbol that the RFAI. ATONEMENT, of which the yearly atonement was only a type, had been offered and that the TRUE HIGH PRIEST HAD ENTERED INTO THE TRUE HOLY OF HOLIES FOR US (Heb. 9:24,28).

"The earth did quake . . . The earthquake, "the rocks rent . . . and the graves were opened . . after his resurrection" (verses 51b-53) were God's salute to the Conquering Savior. The rending of the temple veil (verse 51a) was God's own proclamation that in the death of Christ the BARRIER BETWEEN GOD AND MAN DISAPPEARED (Heb. 9:8). The RISEN SAINTS WERE God's evidence and guarantee that the POWER OF DEATH HAD BEEN BROKEN -- for ALL OBEDIENT BELIEVERS OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST (verse 53).

"The centurion . . . Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54): Even the centurion, ruler of a hundred, was convinced that Jesus was indeed the Son of God by what he had seen and heard! Petronius is the name given this centurion by tradition.

"Many women." (Matt. 27:55, 56): Many women were the last at the Cross. Luke 23:49 says "all his acquaintance" stood at a distance and saw the end. Mary the mother of Jesus had been taken away from the side of the cross by the Beloved Disciple to his own home (John 19:27). Matthew names three of the group by name. Mary Magdalene is mentioned as a well-known person; Matthew had not previous named her in his gospel. These is another Mary, the mother of James and Joseph not otherwise known 'to us. The mother of James and John, Zebedee's sons, usually identified with Salome (Mark 15:40). Luke 23:48 says these noble women "returned smiting their breasts." Matthew drops the curtain on this sad tragedy as the loyal band stood and looked at the DEAD CHRIST ON GOLGOTHA. What hope did life now hold for them?

D. The burial (Matt. 27:57-61).

"A rich man . . . Joseph" (Matt. 27:57): On the burial compare Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42. Joseph is of Arimathea. Its location is unknown. Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin. He had not consented to the murder of Jesus (Luke 23:50, 51; Mark 15:43). He was "Jesus' disciple," but "secretly for fear of the Jews" (John 19:38). Christ's death made him braver. The Jews were anxious that the body be taken down before the Sabbath began at 6 P.M. Joseph's request was a relief to Pilate and to the Jews also (verse 58). It meant the Jews would be ceremonially clean for "high" day of Passover Feast.

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"Joseph . . . laid it in his own new tomb" (Matt. 27:59, 60): Joseph carefully took the body of Jesus from the cross. He "wrapped it in a clean linen cloth," a winding sheet. Nicodemus, another member of the Sanhedrin, helped Joseph (John 19:39). They enclosed spices in the winding sheet. The body was then laid in a rock-hewn sepulchre, cut horizontally into the cliff. Some identify his tomb with one of the rock tombs now visible under Gordon's Calvary. "A great stone" was rolled to the door of the sepulchre, and Joseph departed. Thus Christ "was buried, according to the Scriptures," in a rich man's tomb. He was "with the rich in his death" (Isa. 53:9). Two women had watched the sad and lonely ceremony, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (Matter of James and Joseph). They were sitting opposite and looked on in silence. They would return there after the Sabbath with spices.

E. The sepulchre put under guard (Matt. 27:62-66).

"Sir, we remember . . ." (Matt. 27:63): This was the next day on our Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, the day After the Preparation (Matt. 27:62). These Jewish dignitaries had not forgotten 'the PREDICTIONS OF CHRIST THAT HE WOULD RISE ON THE THIRD DAY, even if HIS own disciples had! Jesus had made such a prediction to them (Matt. 12:40). They called Him "a vagabond wanderer" with a slur in the use of "that." This shows their intense hatred and fear of Jesus. They said the "last error shall be worse than the first" (verse 64), The first fraud the Jews said, was BELIEF in the MESSIAHSHIP of JESUS the second BELIEF IN HIS RESURRECTION.

"Pilate . . . make It as sure as ye can" (Matt. 27:65): "Make it as secure for yourselves as you know how," Pilate told them. "Ye have a watch," a guard of Roman soldiers, not mere temple police.

"Sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Matt. 27:66): The "sealing" was probably done by a cord stretched across the stone and sealed at each end as in Dan. 6:17. It was done in the presence of the Roman guard who were left in charge to protect this stamp of Roman authority and power. Bruce says they did their best to prevent theft and resurrection. Plummet points out that they overreached themselves and PROVIDED ADDITIONAL WITNESS TO THE FACT OF THE EMPTY TOMB AND THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

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QUESTIONS

1. How many trials did Jesus undergo? Before whom? Name the trials, and before whom each was held.
2. What plan did the Sanhedrin agree on (Matt. 27:2)? Who was Pilate? What do we know about him? What very cruel thing had he done (Luke 13:1)?
3. What is the meaning of "repented himself" (Matt. 27:3)? Can you show the difference between remorse and repentance? Illustrate. To whom did Judas make his confession (Matt. 27:4)? What is the force of this testimony for Jesus?
4. How did Judas end his life (Matt. 27:5)? What of the scruples about the money (Matt. 27:6,7; 23:24)? Why the potter's field, and why bury strangers there (Matt. 27:7)? Why the modern use of it?"
5. Whence the prediction (Matt. 27:9, 10; Zech. 11:12, 13)? Why say Jeremiah? How does Albert Barnes explain this problem?
6. Why did Jesus make no answer to the charges (Matt. 27:12-14)? Why did Pilate marvel? Why the custom of releasing a prisoner? Why confine the choice to Barabbas and Jesus (Matt. 27:17,18)? What was Pilate's wife's opinion of Jesus (Matt. 27:19)? How was the multitude persuaded (Matt. 27:20)? Why did Pilate yield (verse 24), and why did he scourge Jesus (verse 25)?
7. What question that Pilate asked as still irrelevant (Matt. 27:22)?
8. What awful thing did the Jewish leaders take upon themselves and their children (Matt. 27:25)?
9. How did the soldiers treat Jesus (Matt. 27:27-31)? For whom were they showing contempt?
10. Why make Simon bear the cross (Matt. 27:32)?
11. Where is Golgotha? Why is it so called (Matt. 27:33; Heb. 13:12; John 19:20; see LANDS OF THE BIBLE, McGarvey, page 175)?
12. Why would Jesus not drink the wine (Matt. 27:34)? Why remove his garments (verse 35)? Why the inscription (verse 37)? Why were robbers crucified with him (verse 38)? What arguments are implied in the taunts (Matt. 27:40-43)?
13. How long was darkness over all the land (Matt. 27:45)?
14. What is the meaning of Matt. 27:48? Why were the words misunderstood by some? Which word of the seven sayings on the cross is this? Where are the other sayings found? Give them in order.
15. Why give Jesus vinegar (Matt. 27:48)? What is the meaning of "yielded up the ghost" (Matt. 27:50)?
16. What is the significance of rending the veil (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 9:7, 8; Heb. 9:24-28)? What became of the bodies of the saints (Matt. 27:52, 53)? What convinced the centurion (Matt. 27:54)? Why were the women there (Matt. 27:55, 56)?
17. What was the motive of Joseph (Matt. 27:57)? What do we know about him? Who assisted, him (John 19:39)?
18. Where was Jesus buried (Matt. 27:60)? Why the stone? What shape (See LANDS OF THE BIBLE, McGarvey, page 129)? Why the two women sitting there (Matt. 27:61)? Can you describe a Jewish sepulchre (McGarvey, LANDS OF THE BIBLE, pages 127-129)?
19. At what time on "the next day" (Matt. 27:62)? Why only "until the third day" (Matt. 27:63,64)?
20. Why seal the stone, and how (Matt. 27:66)? Why would they do all this on the Sabbath? Why would Pilate grant them a guard (Matt. 27:65)? What do Bruce and Plummer say regarding the Jew's action?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 19
Matthew 28

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Memory Verses: Matthew 28:6, 19, 20

Memory Verse:

"He is not here: for He is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; 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" (Matthew 28:6, 19, 20).

Public Reading: Matthew 28:1-7, 16-20.

THE RESURRECTION AND THE COMMISSION

Man's last, worst and best had been done. The King was dead. "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (Matt. 27:50). Loving hands took Him down from the cross and "laid Him in His own new tomb" (Matt. 27:57-60). From the moment of His dying, none but tender hands touched Him. From the time of His burial none but loving eyes saw Him!

The King's Appearances

On the day of His resurrection the King appeared to:

1. Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; John 20:118).
2. The other women (Matt. 28:9).
3. The two on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31).
4. Peter (Luke 24:34; I Cor. 15:5).
5. Ten apostles, Thomas being absent (John 20:19-25).

Eight days afterward to:

6. The eleven -- Thomas being present (John 20:26-31).

In Galilee to:

7. The seven by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25).
8. The eleven apostles and 500 brethren on a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20; I Cor. 15:6).

Of Jerusalem and Bethany again to:

9. James (I Cor. 15:7).
10. The eleven (Acts 1:3-8).
11. Paul, first near Damascus (Acts 9:36; I Cor. 15:8); also in the temple (Acts 22:17-21; 23:11).
12. Stephen - outside Jerusalem (Acts 7:55).
13. To John on Patmos (Rev. 1:10-19).

Is It Head Trouble?

Horace Bushnell's book "Nature and the Supernatural" has a chapter on the RESURRECTION, a conclusive piece of evidence. A learned but unbelieving lawyer promised to weigh the evidence for a fortnight. He returned the book saying the evidence was overwhelming and that he had no doubt that Jesus

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Christ had really died and risen again, and that the claims of Christianity were true. He admitted that he was not a Christian, and THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO BE AND THAT THE TROUBLE WAS NOT IN HIS HEAD BUT IN HIS HEART!

I. The King Resting (Matthew 27:57-66; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:31-42)

"The body of Jesus . . . new tomb" (Matt. 27:57, 60): For a little while the King is out of our sight. Joseph and the Marys represent His lovers -- the highest, a member of the Sanhedrin, and the simple and lowly (Matt. 27:61; Luke 23:51). The women watched the tomb even after Joseph had gone to his lodging. "Oh that men in all time would learn the lesson of the Marys, and when they can do none other for the Christ, WATCH" (Augustine).

"That deceiver . . . after three days I will rise again" (Matt. 27:63): The religious leaders first admired Jesus, then became angered and jealous of His power. They accomplished His death by devilish methods. When men set themselves against the truth, at last they are persuaded that their antagonism is the truth, and the TRUTH ITSELF A LIE. In their extreme hate for Jesus, Pilate gave them permission to make "the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Matt. 27:66).

II. The King Risen (Matthew 28:1-15; Mark 16:114; Luke 24:1-45; John 20:1-25)

A. Visit of the women to the sepulchre (Matt. 28:1-8).

"In the end of the Sabbath . . ." (Matt. 28:1): "This careful chronological statement according to Jewish days clearly means that before the Sabbath was over, that is before 6:00 P.M. (Saturday), this visit of the women was made "to see the sepulchre" (Robertson). "Dawning" here is dawning of the twenty-four hour day at sunset, not dawning of the twelve-hour day at sunrise," Robertson affirms. Mark speaks of "When the Sabbath was past . . . And very early in the morning the first day of the week" (Mark 16:1, 2). Matthew speaks of sunset. Why allow only ONE VISIT FOR THE ANXIOUS WOMEN to the tomb?

"Came Mary Magdalene . . . other Mary": Mary, the mother of James and John. Also Salome (Mark 16:1). Late on Friday evening they had watched the sepulchre (Matt. 27:56). Now, after the Sabbath, they BRING spices "that they might come and anoint him" (Mark 16:1). These disciples would not break the Sabbath even to preserve the body of their beloved Lord. The Sabbath ended at sunset. Jesus had been dead and buried Friday night, Saturday and Sunday morning, beginning at the previous sunset, THREE DAYS ACCORDING TO JEWISH RECKONING (see I Sam. 30:12, 13; II Chron. 10:5, 12).

"There was a great earthquake" (Matt. 28:2): Cornelius dares to say: "The earth, which troubled with sorrow at the Death of Christ as it were leaped for Joy at His Resurrection." The word translated "earthquake" is rendered "tempest" in Matt. 8:24. The precise time of this earthquake is not given. It was before sunrise on the first day of the week when the women made the next visit. Matt. 27:51; Ex. 19:16, 18.

"The angel of the Lord . . . rolled back the door": McNeale says the stone was rolled away NOT TO LET THE LORD OUT, BUT TO LET THE WOMEN IN TO PROVE THE FACT OF THE EMPTY TOMB. Angels with have charge of the resurrection (Matt. 24:31). They were in human form. Mark 16:5 speaks on one angel as "a young man." "His countenance was like lightning . . . raiment white as snow" (verse 3): He was bright like lightning. Compare Ex. 34:29; Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:14-16. White is the emblem of purity.

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"The keepers did shake . . . as dead men" (Matt. 28:4): The Roman soldiers placed to guard the tomb with Pilate's consent. They became as dead men and fled before the women came.

"The angel . . . Fear not ye" (Matt. 28:5): Mary Magdalene had left the tomb to go and tell Peter and John of the supposed grave robbery (John 20:1f). The other women remained and had the interview with the angel ("Two men," Luke 24:4) about the empty tomb and the Risen Christ. "Ye seek Jesus, which was crucified." The angel does not forget that Jesus is the crucified one, nor do the redeemed in heaven (Rev. 5:6; 7:9).

"He is not here . . . risen . . . go . . . tell" (Matt. 28:6, 7): "He is RISEN"! This is the heart of the testimony of the angel to the women. They had not seen Him rise and had to be informed. So they came to the sepulchre after the resurrection. Christ had risen "AS HE SAID" (Matt. 16:21; 17:23; Luke 24:6). It is what Paul wishes Timothy never to forget (II Tim. 2:8). The angel showed them the EMPTY TOMB.

"And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen" (verse 7): Jesus did appear to the disciples in Galilee on two notable occasions the beloved Galilee (John 21), and on the mountain (Matt. 28:16-20). Jesus appeared to various disciples in Jerusalem on this first Sunday. See introduction to this lesson for "The King's Appearances."

"They departed quickly . . . Jesus met them" (Matt. 28:8, 9): The excited women ran quickly "to bring his disciples word!" What a message they had to deliver! Mark calls it fear and ecstasy at first they told no one anything "for they were afraid" (Mark 16:7, 8).

"Jesus met them" (verse 9): Jesus suddenly came face to face with them as they brooded over the message of the angel, and the fact of the EMPTY TOMB. His greeting was the ordinary "Hail" (chairete). They fell at his feet "and held him by the feet, and worshipped Him." Jesus allowed this act of worship though he forbade eager handling of his body by Mary Magdalene (John 20:17). What a moment of FAITH AND CHEER!

"Be not afraid: go tell . . ." (Matt. 28:10): The women were still afraid for joy and embarrassment. Jesus calms their excitement. He repeats the charge of the angel for the disciples to meet him in Galilee. This is the first time he had called the disciples "my brethren." Here there is no special mention of Peter as in Mark 16:7, but I am sure the message "and" Peter was delivered.

"Jesus' first two appearances were to women. "Through woman came sin, and through woman, with the aid of man, came the Savior, and to women the victorious Redeemer first appeared after his victory over sin" (Halley).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the best attested fact of history: WITNESSES, honest witnesses who heard Him speak, watched Him eat -- ALL AGREE IN THEIR TESTIMONY that HE AROSE. It was CENTRAL IN THE APOSTLES' PREACHING, as the book of Acts shows (Acts 2:32; 3:15; 4:2). Let us preach and teach this glorious gospel of the resurrection!

B. Conduct of the soldiers and priests (Matt. 28:11-15).

"Some of the watch came . . . unto the chief priests" (Matt. 28:11): These men went to the chief priests, while the women were on their way to tell the disciples "He is risen." "Some of the watch" went only to the priests. The watch had been set by the Priests themselves (Matt. 27:65, 66); it made its report to them instead of to Pilate.

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"Say ye, His disciples . . . by night . . . stole him away while ye slept" (Matt. 28:13): The soldiers apparently told a truthful account, as they understood it. The pious Sanhedrin knew that "money talks." They made a contract with the Roman soldiers to TELL A LIE ABOUT THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, JUST AS THEY PAID JUDAS MONEY TO BETRAY HIM.

"Governor . . . we will persuade him" (Matt. 28:14): These religious chiselers told the soldiers they would "persuade" or bribe Pilate to protect or save them from death. "They lived up to their bargain and this lie lives on through the ages. It was spread about diligently by the Jews to excuse their disbelief in the Messiahship of Jesus." The soldier stooges took the bribe (verse 15), and the BIG LIE is still being circulated

However, the empty grave has but one explanation --HE AROSE. Jesus said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am ALIVE FOR EVERMORE, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death" (Rev, 1:18).

III. The King Reigning (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:46-53; Acts 1:3-12)

"The eleven disciples went into Galilee . . . where Jesus had appointed them" (Matt. 28:16): The time they went to Galilee is not stated. We learn from John 20:26 that they remained in Judea for over a week after the resurrection. The eleven went "into Galilee" because Jesus commanded them to do so. Jesus always keeps His appointments. It is a good habit for us disciples to imitate.

"Saw him . . . worshipped . . . some doubted" (Matt. 28:17): It is also stated of the women that they worshipped Him, or kneeled at His feet (verse 9). "Some doubted": The reference is not to the eleven, but to the others present. Paul states that over 500 were present (I Cor. 15:6), most of whom were alive when he wrote. It is natural that some should hesitate to believe so great a thing at the first appearance of Jesus to them. Robertson says "Their very doubt makes it easier for us to believe."

Note the "ALLS" of the GREAT COMMISSION" (Matt. 28:18-20).

1. "All power" (verse 18): This is the ASTOUNDING CLAIM Jesus made as He came close to His apostles, and the 500 brethren (I Cor. 15:6). A commission had been given to the twelve apostles (Matt. 10:1-15), and also to the seventy (Luke 10:1-12). That commission confined the preaching to the Jews, and announced the kingdom of heaven as yet in the future.

Jesus spoke as one already in heaven with a worldwide outlook, and with all the resources of heaven at His command. His authority or power in His earthly life had been great (Matt. 7:29; 11:27; 21:23f). His authority is BOUNDLESS -- it includes "heaven and in earth."

Robertson says "It is the sublimest of all spectacles to see the Risen Christ WITHOUT MONEY or ARMY or STATE charging this band of five hundred men and women with world conquest and bringing them to believe it possible and to undertake it with serious passion and power. Pentecost is still to come, but DYNAMIC FAITH RULES ON THIS MOUNTAIN IN GALILEE." Jesus is King and Judge of the nations.

2. "Go . . . ALL NATIONS" (verse 19): This is His COMMAND. "Go!" This implies aggressive warfare. The Lord seeks universal empire; He sends His army forth to CONQUER THE WORLD. We are to go to "EVERY CREATURE" (Mark 16:15, 16). "We have no right to WAIT FOR THE SINNER to come and hear the gospel, we MUST CARRY IT TO THEM." The command calls for the Christianizing of ALL NOTIONS. The "teaching all nations" includes making disciples or learners. This means evangelism in the fullest sense and not merely revival meetings. This will make "babes in Christ Jesus" as they enter the school of Christ.

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"All nations" will include Gentile, as well as the Jew. Our Lord came to be the Saviour of the world. His is a universal, or catholic, religion.

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father . . . Son . . . Holy Ghost": States how disciples are to be made. Those who are taught and who believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God (Matt. 16:16; Acts 16:31) are to be baptized in water, not in the Spirit as some mistakenly claim (Acts 8:36-39). In Baptism the Father receives the believer as a child, the Son welcomes him as a brother and covers him with the mantle of His own purity, and the Holy Ghost endows him with that spirit by which the believer can say, "Abba, Father." "In the name of" is equivalent to "into the presence of," or "into the Father, and into the Son and into the Holy Spirit."

"Triune immersion is not taught as the Greek Church holds and practices, baptism in the name of the Father, then of the Son, then of the Holy Spirit" (Robertson).

3. "Teaching them to observe ALL THINGS . . ." (verse 20a): The first part of this commission tells HOW DISCIPLES ARE TO BE MADE. The second part PROVIDES FOR THE INSTRUCTION of the disciples in righteousness. This must be done by "teaching them to observe ALL THINGS whatsoever I have commanded you." We are to teach "ALL THINGS" he has commanded. Some of these things we have recorded in the gospels; others we have in the Acts and in the Epistles. "All things" embrace the various duties of the Christian life. "The work of teaching belongs to the home, to the church (sermon, Sunday school, prayer-meeting, study classes, mission classes), to the good books which should be in every home, reading of the Bible itself, teaching is part, a weighty part, of the work of Christians."

4. "And, lo, I am with you ALWAYS . . ." (verse 20b): This is our Lord's final DECLARATION. It is an amazing and blessed promise. He will be with us ALL THE TIME. He promises us HIS PRESENCE. He is alive NOW and WITH US. What an incentive to worship him, to work for and with Him --faithfully, to the end, until He comes in glory for us!

So Matthew's Gospel closes in a blaze of glory.

The last note of the book is not that of man's rejection of the King, but of God's exaltation. We gather around the RISEN ONE, and cry, "LONG LIVE THE KING!"

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QUESTIONS

1. Was Jesus really dead on the cross (Matt. 27:50)? Who took Him down from the cross and laid Him in his "own new tomb" (Matt. 27:57-60)?
2. Can you name the King's appearances on the day of his resurrection? Eight days afterward? Those in Galilee? Those at Jerusalem and elsewhere?
3. What is the meaning of "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn. . ." (Matt. 28:1)? When did the Sabbath end? Of what does Mark 16:1, 2 speak?
4. Who is the other Mary (Matt. 28:1; 27:61, 56)?
5. What happened before the resurrection (Matt. 28:2)?
6. What did the angel do, and why (Matt. 28:2)? Where did he sit? What did he look like (verse 3)?
7. What happened to "the keepers," and what did the angel say to the women? (Matt. 28:4, 5)?
8. When had Jesus risen (Matt. 28:6)?
9. Why did not the women see Him rise?
10. What message was entrusted to the women (Matt. 28:7), and why were they filled with both fear and joy (Matt. 28:7, 8)?
11. Could the women have been mistaken in their identity (Matt. 28:9)?
12. Why did Jesus say that his disciples were to "go into Galilee" when He would meet them sooner (Matt. 28:10, see verse 16)?
13. Did the soldiers SEE Jesus rise (Matt. 28:11, 13)? Why did they report "all the things that were done" to the chief priests?
14. What did the chief priests bribe the soldiers to say (Matt. 28:12, 13)? Why "persuade" Pilate, and how (Matt. 28:14)? Did the soldiers take the bribe (Matt. 28:15)? And why was the BIG LIE spread? What did Jesus say of Himself (Rev. 1:18)?
15. When was the place appointed (Matt. 26:32; 28:7, 10)? How long did the apostles remain in Jerusalem after the resurrection (John 20:26)?
16. When Jesus kept His appointment with the twelve and the 500 brethren, what reaction is recorded in Matt. 28:17 (I Cor. 15:6)? Who doubted? Why?
17. How many "alls" are in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20)?
18. How inclusive is the "All power" claim of Jesus (Matt. 28:18; 7:29; 11:27; 21:23f)?
19. How many notions are to be evangelized (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15, 16)? Who is to be baptized? Meaning of "into the name?" Difference between the work before baptism and after it (Matt. 28:16, 20)?
20. Force of "Lo, I am with you always" (Matt. 28:20)? How would He be with them "unto the end of the world?"

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 20

Page 1

John 1

Memory Verses: John 1:1, 2, 14

Memory Verses:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 2, 14.)

Public Reading: John 1:1-14.

THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

The special emphasis of the Gospel of John is the Deity, or divine nature, of Jesus. The author identified himself in John 21:20, 24 as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" -- John the Apostle. "The evidence in the Gospel points directly to the Apostle John as the author," affirms Dr. A. T. Robertson.

Zebedee was the writer's father (Matt. 4:21). He was a businessman of some means. He had "hired servants" (Mark 1:16, 20), a house in Jerusalem (John 19:27), and was an acquaintance of the high priest (John 18:15, 16).

John was first a disciple of John the Baptist (John 1:34, 40). He became a disciple of Jesus (John 1:35-51). Jesus nicknamed him "Son of Thunder" (Mark 3:17), a man of violent temper (Mark 9:38; Luke 9:54). He BECAME THE APOSTLE OF LOVE (I John 2:10).

The Inner Circle

John the apostle belonged to the inner circle of three disciples; Peter, James and John. See Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33.

Five times John is spoken of as the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). He and Peter became leaders among the Twelve, and were generally together (John 20:2; Acts 3:1, 11; 4:13; 8:14). He lived to a great age at Ephesus where he wrote his Gospel and his three Epistles. John wrote Revelation while exiled on the isle of Patmos.

Philip Schaff, eminent church historian, calls the Gospel of John the "MOST IMPORTANT LITERARY PRODUCTION EVER COMPOSED."

I. The Eternal Preexistence of Christ, the Word (John 1:1-18)

1. His eternal preexistence (John 1:1-14).

"In the beginning . . ." (John 1:1): Of creation, of time. The Gospel of John brings us into the profoundest facts concerning the Person of Jesus. The earth is old, but the "Word was BEFORE ALL THINGS. He was "In the beginning." He existed from ETERNITY (John 17:5). John 1:1 reminds of Genesis 1:1.

"The Word . . ." Is Jesus Christ, so called because He is the spoken revelation of God (Heb. 1:1-3). As the "Word," Jesus is God's medium of manifestation, or means of communication and method of

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revelation. "The main declaration of the book is found by bringing together verses 1, 14 and 18. In these the ETERNAL is linked to the TEMPORAL, and the temporal is REVEALED as the INTERPRETATION OF THE ETERNAL (Morgan).

"The Word" (ho logos), as Robertson explains, "is from lego, old word in Homer to lay by, to collect, to put wards side by side to speak, to express an opinion. Logos is common for reason as well as speech ... The term Logos is applied to Christ only in John 1:1, 14 and Rev. 19:13 and I John 1:1 'concerning the Word of Life'. . . The personal preexistence of Christ is taught by Paul (II Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6f; Col. 1:17 and in Heb. 1:2f and in John 17:5."

"The Word was with God": Jesus was face to face in perfect fellowship with God BEFORE he came into this world. There is plurality of Persons in the Godhead, but there is "ONE GOD!" "In the Trinity we see personal fellowship on an EQUALITY" (Robertson). Before time began the "Word" was "WITH GOD"; He was not just an idea or ideal IN the mind of God from all eternity. "And the Word was God": Not more, not less!

"The same . . ." (John 1:2): "This one," the Logos of verse 1, repeated now for clarity, "was in the beginning with God." "In the beginning he was WITH GOD . . . afterwards in time He came to be WITH MAN" (Marcus Dods).

"All things were made by him . . ." (John 1:3): The New Testament often speaks of the Creator (John 1:10; I Cor. 8:6 Col. 1:13, 17). "God . . . Hath . . . spoken unto us by his Son. . . BY WHOM ALSO HE MADE THE WORLDS" Heb. 1:1, 2).

"In him was life . . . light of men" (John 1:4): Fourteen titles are given to our Lord in this chapter. The Word is the power that CREATES and SUSTAINS life in the universe (Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:3). He KEEPS US ALIVE. He will reanimate our dead bodies (John 11:25). He is the LIGHT of the world (John 8:12; Rom. 1:18-21; Acts 14:16, 17). Jesus as the LIGHT OF THE WORLD is the ONE who makes clear the MEANING AND DESTINY of HUMAN EXISTENCE. The ignorant world did not receive or admit Jesus when He came (verse 5).

"John . . . came . . . to bear witness of the Light" (John 1:6,7): To tell men that Jesus was the Messiah was the MISSION of John the Baptist (verse 8). Christ the LIGHT was shining and men with blinded eyes WERE NOT SEEING THE LIGHT (John 1:26). They were BLINDED by the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). John the Baptist had his own eyes opened so that he saw and told what he saw. Let us each pray that God will OPEN OUR EYES Go the LIGHT; then let us tell others about THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!

"That was the true Light. . ." (John 1:9): Jesus, "The TRUE LIGHT, that illumines every person, was coming into the world" (Berkeley). The Quakers appealed to this phrase for their belief that to every man there is given an INNER LIGHT that is a sufficient guide. This is called the Quaker's text. "But it may only mean that all the real light that men receive comes from Christ, not necessarily that EACH ONE RECEIVES A SPECIAL REVELATION."

"The world knew him not . . . his own received Him not" (John 1:10, 11): Verse ten declares (1) That Jesus the Word WAS in the world, (2) The world was made by Him. (3) It did not recognize Him. Verse 11 states the Word CAME PERSONALLY TO HIS OWN. Our Lord took a fleshly form and came to his own people, the Jews (Matt. 15:24; John 13:1).

Conder's "THE HEBREW TRAGEDY emphasizes the pathos of the situation that the house of Israel refusal to welcome the Messiah when he did come, like a larger and sadder Enoch Arden experience." Israel slew the Heir (Heb. 1:2) when He came, like the wicked husbandmen (Luke 20:14).

"But as many as received him . . . power . . . sons of God (John 1:12): While the nation rejected Jesus, some received him. Jew or Gentile may receive him. We are his children because we hear, believe and

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obey the Word of God (Gal. 3:26, 27). We are begotten spiritually by the Word (James 1:17; I Pet. 1:23) and BORN OUT of the water (John 3:5).

The Jews prided themselves on being Abraham's children; they trusted in their blood salvation. Only those SPIRITUALLY "BORN AGAIN" through the Gospel "became the sons of God" by the WILL OF GOD (verse 13), as Jesus makes plain in John 3:1-8.

"And the Word was made flesh . . ." (John 1:14): By being born at Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary. This is the INCARNATION. The INFINITE became the FINITE. The Eternal took on Mortality. Jesus "dwelt among us": He pitched his tent or tabernacle. He became a real man a sinless, perfect man (Heb. 4:15). "We beheld his glory": In His miracles (Jn 2:11). In his transfiguration (II Pet. 1:16-18; Matt. 17:1-5).

B. A part of John's testimony and comment by the writer (John 1:15-18).

"John bare witness . . . he was before me" (John 1:15): John was the forerunner of Jesus (Matt. 3:3). "Though born into the world six months later than John, Jesus, as the Word, had existed from eternity (McGarvey).

"Of his fullness . . . grace for grace" (John 1:16): Jesus has all the attributes of God (Cal. 1:18; 2:9). By union with him we receive a grace kindred to or like those in Christ. Daily He adds to the grace he bestows on us.

"Law . . . by Moses . . . grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17): The law was not a system of grace, unmerited favor, nor could it make men perfect. Angels at Mt. Sinai gave the law (Heb. 2:2), and it BROUGHT CONDEMNATION (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:21; Heb. 10:1f). Jesus Christ gave the system of GRACE AND TRUTH. Only He could bring justification and life (Rom. 3:21-26; John 1:14).

"No man hath seen God . . ." (John 1:18): With the human physical eye. God is invisible to our human eyes (See Ex. 33:20; Deut. 4:12; I John 4:12, 20; I Tim. 6:16). The Son has shown men who God is and what he is.

II. John's First Testimony to Jesus (John 1:19-34)

A. Another part of John's testimony (John 1:19-28).

"Who art thou? . . . I am not the Christ" (John 1:19, 20): John the Baptist had been sent to announce the Christ (John 5:33). He contrasts himself with Christ. He came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17; Matt. 9:14; 17:12), but he was not the Elijah who had been translated 900 years before. The committee from the Jewish Sanhedrin, the court of seventy members and a chairman who ruled Israel, sent from Jerusalem to question John and have him define sharply his claims concerning the Messiah. John confessed, "I am not the Messiah," the ANOINTED ONE. See Luke 3:15. He was not the prophet of Deut. 18:15-18.

"I am the voice . . . Make straight the way" (John 1:23): When the Jews insisted that he should declare who he was, John quoted Isaiah 40:3 and said he was the "voice" or forerunner of the Messiah. He was to prepare the people for the Messiah (verses 21:23). He was sent of God to preach and baptize (John 1:6).

"Bethabara beyond Jordan . . ." (John 1:28): The Revision says Bethany, a village on the east bank of the Jordan, about twenty-two miles from Cana. See McGarvey's "The Fourfold Gospel," page 105.

B. Jesus declared the Lamb of God and the Son of God (John 1:29-34).

"John seeth Jesus . . . Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29): Here Jesus first appears in person in John's account. All the details given by Matthew and Luke of Jesus' early life are omitted. Jesus was now

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"about thirty years of age" (Luke 3:23) and had come from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John. This interview WAS AFTER THE BAPTISM (verse 33). During the forty days of Jesus' temptation John had moved UP THE JORDAN to Bethabara. As John saw Jesus coming unto him, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God . . .": Lambs were used for sin offerings (Lev. 4:32). "A lamb was also the victim of the morning (9 A. M.) and evening (3 P. M.) sacrifice (Lev. 19:38) the hours when Jesus was nailed to the cross and when he expired." Isaiah shows Christ as a lamb (Isa. 53:1f). God gave Jesus as the lamb of sacrifice, our only true sin offering (Heb. 10:4-14; I Pet. 1:19). Christ has taken away the past sin of the Christian (I Pet. 2:24). He will forgive our present sins (I John 1:9).

"And I saw . . . bare record. . . Son of God" (John 1:34): John saw the dove-like appearance of the Spirit upon Jesus (verses 34-33); he heard the Father verbally confirm His Son. God gave John a personal revelation of the Messiahship of Jesus. There was NO GUESSWORK. See Matt. 3:15-17. It was the anointing of the Spirit that made Jesus THE ANOINTED, the Christ.

III. Jesus Makes His First Disciples (John 1:35-51)

A. The last testimony repeated (John 1:35-42).

"Again the next day . . . John stood . . . two of his disciples" (John 1:35): The visit of the priests and Levites is given in verses 19-28. "The next day" after this, John sees Jesus and points him out as the Lamb of God," as explained in verses 29-34. On the "next day" after this, the third day after the committee of the Sanhedrin, and the second after the return of Jesus from the wilderness, John stood with two of his disciples.

"Behold the Lamb of God!" (John 1:36): John repeats his testimony he had publicly given of Jesus as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." Now John personally points the disciple to Jesus.

"The two disciples . . . followed Jesus" (John 1:37): One of the two was Andrew (verse 40); the second was probably John the apostle who from now on speaks as an eyewitness. He gives no other account of his call to discipleship. On seven occasions he withholds his name (John 13:26; 19:26, 35; 21:7, 20, 24; 20:2).

"What seek ye?" (John 1:38): The first words of Jesus preserved in this Gospel. "Rabbi" is a term meaning preacher, or master. "Where dwellest thou?" These disciples had followed Jesus at the bidding of John. They wished to have a quiet talk with Jesus.

"Come and see" (John 1:39): This is the fitting invitation of him who says, "Seek, and ye shall find" (Matt. 7:7). If Jewish method of counting time was used, it would be 4:00 P.M. John was writing in Ephesus at the close of the century and naturally uses Roman time, so it was 10:00 A. M. John never forgot the HOUR HE FIRST MET JESUS! Do you remember the day and hour when YOU CONFESSED Jesus as your Lord, and obeyed Him in Baptism?

"Andrew . . . first findeth his own brother. . . brought him to Jesus" (John 1:40-42): Andrew, "manly," afterwards became an apostle. He has the honor of being one of the first two disciples of Jesus. Andrew sought his own brother Simon before he did anything else. He testified, "We have found the Messiah . . . the Christ." "Messiah" is Hebrew "Christ" is Greek; "Anointed" is English. Jesus is the Anointed of God. In finding Jesus, Andrew had made the greatest discovery at is possible for a man to make.

Simon being a business partner of John may already have known Jesus personally. He did not know that he was the Messiah until brother Andrew testified "I've have found the Messiah." The fact that Jesus gave Simon a new name when Andrew brought Peter to Jesus for their first recorded meeting may indicate that Jesus already had Peter in mind for the apostleship. "A stone," or "petros," masculine, a detached fragment from the ledge or mountain. In the ancient Greek "petra," feminine was used for the massive ledge

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Rock like Stone Mountain, near Atlanta.

B. Other disciples gained at the Jordan (John 1:43-51).

"Jesus . . . findeth Philip . . . Follow me" (John 1:43): This is the first recorded instance of the Savior calling a disciple to follow him. This is Philip "lover of horses," one of the twelve apostles, not Philip the Deacon (Acts 6:5). He was a citizen of Bethsaida, of the same town as Andrew and Peter (verse 44). It was a wicked place (Matt. 11:21). Peter afterward moved to Capernaum (Mark 1:29).

"Philip findeth Nathanael . . ." (John 1:45): Philip carries on the work. He was WON TO WIN. One wins one. Nathanael us a Hebrew word meaning, "God has given." He was from Cana in Galilee (John 21:2), not far from Bethsaida and so he was known to Philip. Nathanael is commonly identified with Bartholomew. Matthew and Nathanael both mean the same. He was converted by the majesty of Jesus' person. There is a tinge of scorn in the question of verse 46, as though Nazareth had a bad name. The best thing in the entire world came out of Nazareth! "Come and see" is the best answer to the skeptic. "The strongest proof that Jesus is the Christ is Jesus Himself!"

"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God . . ." (John 1:49): Jesus saw Nathanael's heart as well as his mere presence "under the fig tree" (verse 48). Philip had said, "Jesus, the son of Joseph." Nathanael was convinced and declared Jesus to be the Son of God. This is the first confession of the divinity of Jesus.

"Heaven opens . . . angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John 1:51): At Bethel, Jacob (Israel) saw the ladder that reached to heaven with the angels upon it (Gen. 28:12). Christ is THAT LADDER. Christ Himself is the BOND OF FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH between God and man. Jesus is both "the Son of God" as Nathanael said, and "the Son of Man" as Jesus here calls himself. Jesus will say, "I am the way" (John 14:6).

Quickly John's Gospel has brought out in the witness of the Baptist, the faith of the first disciples, the claims of Jesus Christ, the fully developed picture of the Logos who is both God and man, moving among men and winning them to his service.

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QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote this Gospel (John 21:20-24)? Why (John 20:31)?
2. To what special group did John belong (Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33)?
3. How many times is John spoken of as he disciple "whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20)? With whom was he usually found (John 20:2; Acts 3:1,11; 4:13; 8:14)?
4. In what "beginning" (John 1:1-3; see Gen. 1:1)? Did John originate the title, "the Word?" Was the "Word" created (John 1:3)?
5. Can you give the fourteen titles of our Lord in this chapter (John 1:1, 9, 17, 18, 23, 29, 34, 37, 38, 41, 45, 49, 51)?
6. What things are stated of Christ in this chapter which COULD NOT BE TRUE of any mere man (John 1:1, 3, 4, 9, 12, 14, 16-18, 29, 33, 34, 49,51)?
7. By whom and for what purpose was John the Baptist sent (John 1:6-8)?
8. Did the Apostle John introduce Christ as the Jews' Messiah or the world's Saviour (John 1:9-12; 3:16)?
9. How does Jesus "light every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9)? Why do some call this the Quaker's text?
10. What three things does verse ten declare? What is the meaning of "came unto his own" (John 1:11; Matt. 15:24; John 13:1)? How was he received?
11. In what sense does the new birth depend upon both God and man (John 1:12,13; James 1:17; I Pet. 1:23; John 3:3,5)?
12. What foundational doctrine is stated in John 1:14? What was the nature of the birth of Jesus (Matt. 1:18-25)? Where did John behold his glory (II Pet. 1:16-18; Matt. 17:1-5)?
13. When had John said this (John 1:15; Matt. 3:11,14f)?
14. What two methods of dealing with men came through Moses and Christ, respectively (John 1:17; Rom. 6:14; 8:3; Gal. 3:13, 19-25; 4:4,5)?
15. Why did the Sanhedrin send priests and Levites (John 1:19) from Jerusalem to question John the Baptist? Why did he say he was not Elijah (John 1:21; Matt. 11:14)? What prophet (John 1:21; Deut. 18:15-19)? How did the reference to Isaiah identify Him (John 1:23; Isa. 40:1-11)? Was John now at his first place of baptizing (John 1:28; Matt. 3:1)?
16. Had the Jews been prepared to understand Christ as the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29; Ex. 12:1-14,2; Lev. 16:2, 3, 34; Num. 28:2; Isa. 53:7)?
17. How did God witness to the deity of Christ (John 1:32-34)? When was this testimony given (John 1:32,29; Matt. 4:1,23:7)? What then was the first movement of Jesus after his temptation?
18. How long did the two stay with Jesus (John 1:39)? Who was Andrew's companion (John 1:40)? Since Andrew was one of the two first disciples of Jesus, what other important first thing did he do (John 1:41, 42)? Why the new name given to Simon (John 1:42)?
19. What convinced Philip (John 1:44,45,29)? Why Nathanael so easily convinced (John 1:50)? What was the reputation of Nazareth (John 1:46; Matt. 11:21)?
20. What is the meaning of the prediction in John 1:51?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 21

Page 1

John 2

Memory Verses: John 2:5

Memory Verses:

"His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5).

Public Reading: John 2:1-12.

THE FIRST MIRACLE

From where John was baptizing beyond Jordan, Jesus with his first disciples went to Cana of Galilee, the home of Nathanael, when he attended the wedding feast and performed his first miracle which "manifested forth his glory."

From Cana he made a short but significant visit to Capernaum where later he was to live and labor.

Thence he went to the Passover in Jerusalem, featured by his first cleansing of the Temple which attracted wide attention so that "many believed in his name" (John 2:23). Yet the cleansing caused bitter opposition starting the breach that led finally to the cross.

The preparatory work of Jesus in Galilee and Judea is found in John 2:1-3:36. Only in John's Gospel do we learn the length of our Lord's ministry. Today we see Jesus making

I. A Brief Visit to Galilee and the First Miracle (John 2:1-12)

This is **AUTHORITY** in **SOCIAL LIFE**.

"And the third day . . ." (John 2:1): From the calling of Philip (John 1:43). It was two days' journey from the Jordan to Cana. It was seven days since John 1:19. It was sixty miles from "Bethabara beyond Jordan" (John 1:28).

"There was a Marriage in Cana": Cana was about four miles northeast of Nazareth. It was the home of Nathanael (John 21:2). The marriage was doubtless in the home of some friend or relative of Jesus or Nathanael, since the "mother of Jesus was there." Joseph, Mary's husband, is never mentioned as living after Jesus entered upon his ministry; he is supposed to have died before this time. The Palestine marriage ceremony usually began at twilight. The feast after the ceremony was at the bridegroom's. It lasted several days (Gen. 29:27; Judges 14:12).

"And both Jesus was called . . . disciples" (John 2:2): He was invited, as well as his mother, and possibly because of her suggestion. Jesus now had disciples.

"The mother of Jesus . . . They have no wine" (John 2:3): The Revision says, "When the wine failed." It was an embarrassing circumstance. It caused **ANXIETY**. Lavish hospitality was dispensed during the six or seven days. The failure of supplies would have brought "bitter and indelible disgrace to the wedded pair" (Farrar).

Can you think how embarrassing it would be to run out of food or drink at a wedding today? Mary's "They have no wine" was a hint, and a request. She had treasured the wonders of Jesus' birth in her heart (Luke 2:19, 51). The ministry of John the Baptist stirred her hopes afresh. The group of disciples with Jesus meant to her that Jesus had begun his messianic work. She **DARES PROPOSE A MIRACLE TO HIM**. "His

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disciples were Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael and probably John and James" (McGarvey). Mary ignored His Deity; she sought to EXERT HER PARENTAL AUTHORITY.

"Jesus. . . Woman" (John 2:4): Jesus did not call Mary "Mother." "Woman" is a title of respect. It was a courteous address of his mother, with no idea of censure. See John 19:26. Our Lord makes plain Mary can no longer exercise maternal authority and not at all in His Messianic work. It is a hard lesson for parents to learn when to "let go" of their children. Our duty to God is above that to our parents (Matt. 10:37). Relationship to Christ is spiritual, not fleshly (Matt. 12:46-50; II Cor. 5:16, 17). "It corrects two errors taught by the Catholic Church: 1. Catholicism says that our Lord's mother was immaculate, but if this were true she could NOT HAVE INCURRED OUR LORD'S REBUKE. 2. Catholicism teaches that Mary's INTERCESSION IS RECOGNIZED by Christ. But this is the ONLY INSTANCE ON RECORD OF SUCH INTERCESSION, and though it was addressed to Christ while in the flesh and was concerning a purely temporal matter, it was promptly rebuked" (McGarvey).

"Mine hour" apparently means the hour for public manifestation of the Messiahship, though a narrower sense would be for Christ's intervention about the failure of the wine. W. M. Ramsey says the Fourth Gospel is written on the plane of eternity, and that standpoint exists here in this first sign of the Messiah. The Passion of Jesus was the supreme manifestation (John 2:18, 19; 8:28; Matt. 12:38-40). To Jesus His death was His "HOUR" (John 12:23, 27; 17:1; 7:30; 8:20; 16:32; 2:4). He makes seven references to it in this Gospel.

"His Mother . . . whatsoever he saith . . . do it" (John 2:5): Mary accepted the Lord's will. She left the matter entirely in His hands. "Her intervention is nil" (Faivre). "To do all that Christ said and nothing else, is the leading principle of the true Christian" (John 14:6, 13). Go directly to God through Jesus Christ is the ONLY MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN (I Tim. 2:5). To go to Mary shows a lack of understanding and FAITH IN HIS WORD! Mary commands "UNLIMITED OBEDIENCE" to JESUS ONLY. This mother knew her son!

"And there were . . . six waterpots of stone" (John 2:6): The Jews felt they must wash their hands before eating, or be ceremonially unclean (Matt. 15:2; Mark 7:3, 4). A "firkin" was about 8.5 English gallons. The six waterpots EACH held "two or three firkins"-- a capacity of eighteen (18) to twenty-seven (27) gallons apiece. Jesus commanded the servants "Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them to the brim" (verse 7). This is ABUNDANCE.

"And he said . . . Draw out now" (John 2:8): McGarvey thinks the word "NOW" indicates the turning point when the water became wine. "The governor" or "ruler of the feast" was one of the guests chosen to preside over such festivities. "Our modern toastmaster is probably a relic of this ancient custom."

"The ruler tasted . . . kept the good wine until now" (John 2:9, 10): The ruler of the feast upon tasting the wine jocularly remarked to the groom that, contrary to custom, he had reserved the good wine until now! He knew not, as the servants did, whence the wine came. Hence his comment confirms in the miracle.

"When men have well drunk" does not mean that these guests are now drunk, but the common custom was to put "the worse" or inferior wine last. "Good" refers to flavor, not to alcoholic strength. The groom was filled with GRATIFICATION at the gift of Jesus.

"The liquors of this land and the strength of their intoxicating properties differ so widely from the light wines of Palestine that even the most moderate use of them seems immoderate in comparison. In creating the wine Jesus did no more than AS CREATOR AND RENEWER OF THE EARTH HE HAD ALWAYS DONE" (McGarvey). This does not mean Jesus would approve the modern liquor trade with its damnable influences. Love teaches Christians to GIVE UP what they see causes so many to STUMBLE INTO SIN (I Cor. 8:9, 13; 10:31-33; Rom. 14:20, 21).

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"This beginning of miracles . . . his disciples believed on him" (John 2:11): This was the FIRST SUPERNATURAL MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE POWER OF JESUS. John's gospel "BRANDS AS FALSE ALL THE CATHOLIC TRADITIONS WHICH TELL OF MIRACLES PERFORMED BY CHRIST IN HIS CHILDHOOD" (McGarvey). Note that this "miracle" or "sign" was selected to prove the deity of Christ (John 20:30). John selects EIGHT such "signs" or miracles, of which this was the FIRST. This is for His GLORY.

The six disciples or learners had already believed in Jesus as the Messiah (John 1:35-51). Now their FAITH WAS GREATLY STRENGTHENED, or made FIRMER. This is EDIFICATION.

"After this he went down to Capernaum . . . mother . . . his brethren" (John 2:12): From the hilly region of Cana, Jesus came to the important city of Tell Hum or Capernaum on the north shore of Galilee. His mother, brothers and disciples were with him.

"His brethren" are mentioned nine times in the New Testament. See John 7:3, 5, 10; 2:12; I Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19; Matt. 12:48; 13:58; Mark 3:32; 6:3; Luke 8:19, 20. Jesus was the FIRST-BORN of Mary. Mary had at LEAST FOUR OTHER SONS and at least TWO DAUGHTERS by Joseph her husband "AFTER she had brought forth her firstborn son" (Matt. 1:25). "Mary did not retain her virginity" (Faivre), as the Catholics teach. About a year later Capernaum became the main residence of Jesus.

II. Christ Cleansing the Temple (John 2:13-25)

A. The time of the cleansing (John 2:13).

"And the Jews' Passover was at hand . . ." (John 2:13): The early Judean ministry is told only in, John's Gospel. John is writing after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by Titus the Roman Emperor in 70 A.D., and for Gentile readers. John mentions the Passovers in Christ's ministry outside of the one when was crucified.

Our Lord's ministry in Judea lasted eight (8) months, beginning at Passover time as this text shows in April and ending "4 months before harvest (John 4:3, 35), or December.

John groups his narrative around SIX JEWISH FESTIVALS:

1. The first Passover mentioned in John which our Lord attended (John 2:13).
2. "A feast of the Jews" (John 5:1) which I believe was a Passover.
3. "And the Passover . . . was night" (John 6:4).
4. "Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand" (John 7:2; Lev. 23:3; Neh. 8:14, 18).
5. "The feast of the dedication ... it was winter" (John 10:22) in December.
6. "And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand" (John 11:55).

McGarvey concludes, "This gives LENGTH OF OUR LORD'S MINISTRY AS THREE YEARS AND A FRACTION" (The Four-fold Gospel, page 121).

B. The need of the cleansing (John 2:14).

Jesus "found in the temple those that sold oxen . . . changers of money" (John 2:14): They were in the Court of 'the Gentiles within the temple precinct, not in the "naos" of temple proper, which contained the Holy place, and the Holy of Holies.

Jesus approached Temple where in infancy he had been dedicated by Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:21-24), and where at age twelve he dedicated himself 'to "my Father's business" (Luke 2:49). As he entered the sacred courts, he must have pondered the sanctuary sentiments of the psalmists and prophets of old.

"The oxen and sheep and doves" were for the sacrifices. The great crowds who came to Jerusalem, at

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this time could not bring their sacrifices with them. The traffic in oxen, sheep, kids, and doves became enormous. It would have been proper enough IF IT HAD BEEN DONE IN STOCKYARDS, but the priests made a MONOPOLY OF IT and INSTALLED IT RIGHT IN THE TEMPLE. The Court of the Gentiles, "a house of prayer for all nations" (Mark 11:15-19) was filled with cattle, dung, and the din of traffic.

"The changers of money . . .": Every Jew paid a half shekel annually to support the temple (Ex. 30:13), about 32 cents. Gentile money was the coin in usual circulation. This was refused in the temple. So these "changers of money" cut into small pieces or changed the Gentile coins into Jewish coins--at a heavy charge. Eidersheim says this traffic alone cleared the priests the equivalent of about \$300,000.00 per year.

Probably their very presence in His Father's house angered Jesus. The Synoptics (Matt. 21:12f; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 10:45f) record a similar incident the DAY AFTER THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY. Evidently there were TWO CLEANSINGS, three years apart. The first one was at the BEGINNING OF HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY. In this, Jesus drove out the cattle. In the second, he drove out the traders. In the first, he called the Temple "an house of merchandise"; in the second, "a den of thieves."

C. The method of cleansing (John 2:15, 16).

"A scourge of cords." (John 2:15): It is not said that Jesus smote the sheep and oxen, for a flourish of the scourge would answer. The moneychangers fled before his majestic assumption of AUTHORITY. This is the FIRST OUTWARD SIGN OF HIS OFFICIAL POSITION. Perhaps Jesus took up the boxes and emptied the money. The bits of cord, the sword of his mouth, and the lash of their conscience were sufficient.

"Take these things hence . . ." (John 2:16): At HIS COMMAND the greedy gangs hasten forth, horror-struck at his word. Probably the doves were in baskets or cages and so had to be taken out by the traders. They had made "my Father's house an house of merchandise," a marketplace. Note the clear-cut Messianic claim here, "my Father" as in Luke 2:49. Jerome says: "A certain fiery and starry light shone from his eyes and the majesty of Godhead gleamed in His face."

D. The cause of the cleansing (John 2:17).

"The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (John 2:17): Quoted from Psalm 69:9. Wescott notes the double effect of this act as is true of Christ's WORDS AND DEEDS all through John's Gospel. The disciples are helped; the traders are angered.

E. The Jews' demand for a sign; Christ's reply (John 2:18-22).

"What sign shewest thou unto us." (John 2:18): They rallied a bit on the outside of the temple area and demanded proof for His Messianic assumption of authority over the temple worship. These traders had paid the Sadducees and Pharisees in the Sanhedrin for the concession as traffickers that they enjoyed. They were within their technical rights in this question.

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19): Jesus meant his own body. The sign he would give the Jewish nation was HIS RESURRECTION. The Jews did not understand this, nor did his disciples UNTIL AFTER HE AROSE FROM THE DEAD.

"Forty and six years . . ." (John 2:20): Herod had begun this reconstruction of the temple forty-six years before; it was not yet entirely completed.

The first temple on Mt. Moriah was built by Solomon the work was started in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, and finished in the eleventh year of his reign (349 BC). Nebuchadnezzar destroyed this temple.

The second temple was built by Zerubbabel after return from Babylonian captivity (520-516 BC).

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Herod's temple, the third on Mt. Mariah, was magnificent beyond imagination. It was of marble and gold. He tore down Zerubbabel's temple and rebuilt it in such a way as not to interfere with the worship. "Surrounded by four courts, on lower successive levels: for priests, Israel, women, Gentiles. Bordered by covered colonnades, with pillars of whitest marble, each 40 feet high and made of a single stone. That on the east was called Solomon's Porch, where the traders were. The whole area surrounded by a massive wall, 1000 feet on each side, about the size of four average city blocks."

Titus and the Romans destroyed Herod's temple in 70 A.D.

"The disciples remembered . . . believed the scripture" (John 2:22): When Jesus said, "Destroy this temple" "he spoke of the temple of his body" (verse 21). It was three years before the disciples understood this saying. The language of Jesus is recalled and perverted at his trial as "I will destroy" (Mark 14:58), "I can destroy" (Matt. 26:61), NEITHER OF WHICH HE SAID!

F. His miracles in Jerusalem (John 2:23, 24).

"Many believed . . . when they saw the miracle" (John 2:23): What miracles they saw at this time are not recorded. Jesus did his first miracle or sign in Cana; but now he is doing many in Jerusalem. "These believed on him as a man sent from God, but did not trust in him as the Christ. The nature of their belief is stated in John 3:2."

"But Jesus did not commit himself unto them . . . knew all men" (John 2:24): "But Jesus himself kept on refusing to trust himself to them." The word translated "trust" is 'the same as that translated "believe" in verse 23. "They trusted him, but he did not trust them, for he knew them. He did not tell them anything of his plans and purposes, and the conversation with Nicodemus which follows is a sample of this reticence."

G. Christ's knowledge of the human heart (John 2:25).

"He knew what was in man" (John 2:25): This supernatural knowledge of man is a mark of deity that Jesus possessed. See John 1:42, 47, 48; 3:3; 4:29; 6:61, 64; 11:4, 14; 13:11; 21:17. There were none to which Jesus could trust himself.

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QUESTIONS

1. Third day after what (John 2:1)?
2. Can you describe Cana (LANDS OF THE BIBLE, McGarvey, page 317)? Which of Jesus' disciples lived there (John 21:2)? How far was Cana from Nazareth?
3. How far was it from "Bethabara beyond Jordan" to Cana (John 1:28)?
4. Whose marriage was this? When and by whom was Jesus invited (John 2:2)? Who was with him?
5. Since Mary was at the wedding feast, why do you suppose Joseph was not there (John 2:1)?
6. Why did Mary expect a miracle (John 2:3-5; Luke 2:19-51)? What did Mary ignore as she sought to exert her parental authority?
7. Did Jesus ever call Mary "Mother?" Does "woman" show disrespect (see John 19:26)? What does Jesus here make plain? What two errors of the Catholic Church does this scripture correct?
8. What is the meaning of "mine hour" (John 2:4, 18, 19; 8:28; Matt. 12:38-40; John 12:23, 27; 17:1; 7:30; 8:20; 16:32)? How many times did Jesus refer to his death as his "hour" in this gospel?
9. What sound advice did Mary give the servants (John 2:5); See John 14:6, 13)?
10. What purifying is meant (John 2:6; Mark 7:1-4; Matt. 15:2)? How much is a "firkin," and hence how many gallons would the waterpots hold?
11. What did Jesus command the servants to do (John 2:7-8)? What was the quality of the wine (John 2:9, 10)? Does Christ always save the best for the last (John 2:10; Luke 16:23; Rev. 7:16, 17)?
12. For what purpose was the miracle wrought (John 2:11; 1:14; Acts 2:22)? How many miracles had Jesus wrought before this? Was it right to make wine?
13. What does the attendance of our Lord at this feast indicate regarding his attitude toward marriage (John 2:2; Gen. 2:23, 24; Mark 10:6, 9; Eph. 5:31)?
14. Did His presence lessen the joy of the occasion (John 2:3, 7, 8, 10; Psa. 16:11)? When only does the presence of Jesus restrain and embarrass Christians at joyous social gatherings (I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17; I John 3:20, 21)?
15. Where did Jesus, his Mother, his brethren and his disciples go (John 2:12)? How many times are "his brethren" mentioned in the New Testament (John 7:3, 5, 10; 2:12; I Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19; Matt. 12:46; 13:55; Mark 3:32; 6:3; Luke 8:19, 20)? How many sons and daughters did Mary bear to Joseph after Jesus was born (Matt. 1:25)?
16. What Jewish festival was "at hand" (John 2:13)? Which Gospel alone tells of the Judean ministry, and how long did that ministry last? Can you name the six Jewish festivals around which John groups his narrative? What was the length of our Lord's ministry?
17. What did Jesus find "in the temple" (John 2:14)? In what part of the temple were these things found? Why were they there? Where would these things have properly been found?
18. Were there two cleansings (John 2:15) and when did they occur (Matt. 21:12f)? Did Jesus smite the sheep and cattle with the scourge?
19. How did zeal eat Jesus up (John 2:17)? Why did the Jews demand a sign (John 2:18)? How did they count forty-six years (John 2:20)?
20. What sign did Jesus give these men (John 2:19)? What temple was he speaking of (John 2:21)? How was his language recalled and perverted at his trial (Mark 14:58; Matt. 26:61)? Where did Jesus work his first group of miracles (John 2:23, 4)? Force of the remark about not trusting himself to men in Jerusalem (John 2:24, 25)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 22

Page 1

John 3

Memory Verses: John 3:5

Memory Verse:

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

Public Reading: John 3:1-16.

THE NEW BIRTH

The first cleansing of the temple (John 2:14,25) and "the miracles which" Jesus did at the Passover feast made a deep impression on Jerusalem. His "signs" produced a belief in Him; but it was shallow, based on wonder. "Belief that is based upon the spectacular is always shallow and evanescent." Jesus cannot commit Himself to that kind of faith (John 2:24, 25).

While Jesus could not trust Himself to some men, there was a man whom He could trust, to whom He did commit Himself in whom He did believe!

I. Jesus Talks with Nicodemus (John 3:121)

A. Face to face with Jesus (John 3:1-3).

"There was a man . . . named Nicodemus" (John 3:1): Nicodemus is a Greek name and occurs in Josephus (Ant. XIV.iii.2) as the name of an ambassador from Aristobulus to Pompey. He was a Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin, and wealthy. His name is found only in John 3:1; 7:50; 79:39. There is "no evidence that he was the young ruler of Luke 18:18." He was "a master of Israel" (verse 10), is a rabbi. He would seem to be one of the finest products of Judaism, and he was thoroughly sincere.

"The same came to Jesus by night . . ." (John 3:2): He was determined to investigate for himself the claims of Jesus. He came to Jesus by night, not because he was cowardly, but because he sought a private and personal interview. That Nicodemus came at all is remarkable because of his prominence. It is hard for rich, educated, prod men to humble themselves before Jesus (Matt. 19:23). His courage puts us all to shame.

"Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God": "Rabbi" is a title of respect, but not the highest. Rab, Rabbi, and Rabban – such were the degrees of the title. Nicodemus knew Jesus was not a product of the rabbinical schools. Jesus' miracles proved He was a prophet, and from God (Acts 10:38). This is the explanation of Nicodemus for coming to Jesus. The scorn of Jesus by the rulers held many back to the end (John 12:42), but Nicodemus dares to feel this way.

"Jesus answered . . . EXCEPT a man be born anew" (John 3:3): Jesus answered the thoughts, not the words, of Nicodemus. He had come to learn something about the kingdom of God. He understood "anew" as "AGAIN," a SECOND BIRTH FROM THE WOMB! "It is a second birth, to be sure, REGENERATION, but a BIRTH FROM ABOVE BY THE SPIRIT" (Robertson). "Verily, verily, I say unto you" was often upon the lips of Jesus to give emphasis to an unusually solemn and weighty declaration.

"See the kingdom of God": Means to possess or enjoy it (John 8:51; Luke 2:26).

"Nicodemus like all Jews supposed that all who were born as children of Abraham would, as Abraham's seed be citizens of the kingdom, but Jesus shows him that NO ONE CAN BE A NEW

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CREATURE IN CHRIST JESUS UNLESS HE IS BORN ANEW. We are born naturally into the kingdom of nature, to live the natural life IF we enter the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of grace, it MUST BE BY A NEW BIRTH. The doctrine that a man can bury his old sinful life, and BEGIN A NEW ONE with the freshness of youthful hope, is foreshadowed in the Old Testament (Isa. 1:18; Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 11:19 36:26), and TAUGHT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (Rom. 6:8; 8:3; 12:2; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15, 16). "

B. Mind to mind with Jesus (John 3:4-81).

"Nicodemus . . . How can a man . . . second time . . . be born?" (John 3:4): Nicodemus was not contradicting Christ. He saw in a flash what a glorious, thing it would be IF A MAN COULD BEGIN ALL OVER AGAIN. But HOW? Physically it was impossible! McGarvey points out that "So far as he did grasp the meaning of Jesus, Nicodemus saw himself barred forever from the kingdom by an impossible requirement. Many, like him, need to learn that God asks of us nothing, that is impossible; that, on the contrary, the yoke is easy and the burden is light."

"Jesus . . . EXCEPT a man be born of water and of the spirit" (John 3:5): Nicodemus had been attending the ministry of John the Baptist who baptized one in the Spirit. Jesus told Nicodemus that EXCEPT he was BORN of ALL that WATER BAPTISM SIGNIFIED (repentance or death to sin, burial in water, resurrection out of waters to a new life) AND that which the Spirit accomplishes REGENERATION OR BIRTH FROM ABOVE, he could not enter the Kingdom of God!

"WATER": Water here refers to baptism. Dr. Wall, in his history of INFANT BAPTISM says: "There is not one Christian writer of any antiquity, in any language, but who understands the NEW BIRTH OF WATER AS REFERRING TO BAPTISM" (Vol. 1, page 110).

Dr. Wescott: "All interpretations which treat the term water as simply figurative and descriptive of the cleansing power of the Spirit are essentially defective, as they are also opposed to all ancient tradition" (COMMENTARY on John). He further adds, "There can be NO DOUBT, on any honest interpretation of the words, that to be BORN OF WATER REFERS TO THE TOKEN OR OUTWARD SIGN OF BAPTISM -- to be born of the Spirit, to the thing signified, or inward grace of the Holy Spirit."

This verse excludes the "pious unimmersed from the Kingdom of Christ," as Dr. Z. T. Sweeney affirms. Water and Spirit are joined at Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38; 19:1-7; Titus 3:5. Let us not separate them! The SPIRIT BEGETS the new life in us (John 1:13; James 1:18; I Pet. 1:23) by the WORD OF GOD (Luke 8:11). YOU are BORN OUT OF the WATER a "new creature" (II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:24).

"Flesh . . . Spirit" (John 3:6): The laws of birth physically have not changed since the birth of Cain to Adam and Eve. The laws of SPIRITUAL BIRTH have not changed since the Apostle Peter gave them on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:27-41). Jesus said the new birth was a "MUST" (verse 7).

"The necessity is implied in the word KINGDOM. No one born a citizen of England can become a citizen of the United States without COMPLYING WITH OUR NATURALIZATION LAWS. The kingdom of God has its naturalization laws, and there is NO OTHER WAY OF ENTRANCE THAN to BE BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT. We may not understand all the mysteries of the new birth, any more than we do those of the natural birth, BUT WE CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS TO BE DONE AND WHAT IS NECESSARY. Two things are needful: the spirit must be RENEWED; we MUST BE BAPTIZED."

"The wind bloweth where it listeth . . ." (John 3:8): In this sentence we have the word PNEUMA translated by the TWO WORDS "wind" and "spirit." McGarvey says "There can be no justification in rendering pneuma 'wind,' when in the last clause of the same sentence, and three times in the immediate context, it is rendered 'spirit.' There can be no doubt that it means the same in both clauses of this verse, and

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if we render it wind in the first clause, we must say 'born of the wind' in the last clause. Whatever is the meaning of this verse, it must be extracted from the rendering which the Revisers have strangely placed in the margin, vis.: 'That Spirit breathes where it wills and thou hearest' etc. It teaches that a man is born of the Spirit by HEARING THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT, breathing as he wills through inspired men. It is equivalent to Paul's maxim that "faith comes by hearing the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

C. Heart to heart with Jesus (John 3:9-21).

"Nicodemus . . . HOW can these things be?" (John 3:9)?" Nicodemus falls back into his "stupid misunderstanding." There are none so dull as those who will not see. Nicodemus was a popular teacher in Israel. The spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God was outside his groove: "Rote, rut, rot, the three terrible R's of mere traditionalism" (Robertson). If he wouldn't grasp the things of earth, HOW COULD HE BELIEVE the witness of Christ to heavenly things as the necessity of His death to accomplish the remission of sins for all who would believe in Him" (verses 10-13)?

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent . . . even so must the SON." (John 3:14): Read Numbers 21:9. Those who were bitten by fiery serpents could LOOK AT THE SERPENT OF BRASS AND LIVE.

Sinners can LOOK IN FAITH UPON CHRIST who was made to resemble sin and HANGED UPON THE CROSS and FIND LIFE THROUGH HIM (Rom. 8:3; II Cor. 5:21; Isa. 45:22; I John 5:11-13; John 3:15).

"For God . . . gave . . . Son" (John 3:16): The twenty-five (25) words of this verse Luther called "the Bible in miniature." This "Little Gospel," "this comfortable word" is a just and marvelous interpretation of the mission and message of our Lord! The GOSPEL is in this verse: "God . . . Only . . . Son . . . not Perish . . . Everlasting Life!"

Set your mind on the . .

SWEET P'S OF GOD'S LOVE

The Person of Love - "God."

The Prodigality of Love - "so loved."

The Proof of His Love - "that he gave."

The Provision of Love - "His only begotten Son."

The Participation of Love - "Whosoever believeth."

The Principle of Love - "believeth."

The Purpose of Love - "Should not perish but have everlasting life."

"For God sent not His Son to condemn . . . but . . . SAVED" (John 3:17): The first coming of our Lord is primarily to SAVE ALL WHO BELIEVE IN AND OBEY HIM, rather than far judgment. His Second Coming will be far judgment (II Thess. 1:7-10). If we trust in Him we shall not come into judgment (verse 18); for he takes our place and PAYS THE PENALTY FOR SIN (Rom. 8:32f). The man who refuses to accept Christ already has judgment passed on him (John 5:40). If a man loves darkness rather than light, God will allow that man to WALK IN DARKNESS (verses 19, 20). Those who love and choose good WANT THE LIGHT (verse 21).

II. Jesus' Ministry in the Lower Jordan (John 3:22-36)

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A. Jesus at the Jordan, John at Aenon (John 3:22-30).

"Jesus . . . into the land of Judea . . . tarried. . . baptized" (John 3:22): Jesus left Jerusalem and went into the country districts. It was possibly the same region where John had baptized him. Jesus "tarried" from Passover in April to December which was "yet four months" before the harvest (John 4:35). Jesus and John preached the same thing: **THE LONG-FORETOLD KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND!**

"And baptized": This baptism was not into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Spirit) as the apostles were afterward directed to preach (Matt. 28:18-20). "It was a continuation of John's baptism, preparatory to the organization of the church -- a preparation for the kingdom" (McGarvey).

"And John was baptizing in Aenon near to Salem . . . much water there" (John 3:23): Eusebius locates Aenon near to Salem in the Jordan valley south of Beisan west of the Jordan River. "Many springs, fountains, etc." Many came to be immersed. "Even an summer baptism by immersion could be continued" (Marcus Dods). "For John was not yet cast into prison" (verse 23).

"Then there arose a question . . . about purifying" (John 3:25): The Revision says "a Jew," probably a Pharisee who associated baptism with ceremonial purification. Because the disciples of John mention Jesus, this is proof that his name came up in the discussion.

The Sanhedrin through its committee challenged John's right to baptize (John 1:25). The Jews had various kinds of baptisms or dippings (Heb. 6:2). The disciples of John came to him with a dispute and a complaint. This was the **FIRST KNOWN BAPTISMAL CONTROVERSY** on the **MEANING OF BAPTISM** (verse 26).

"He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30): This heaven-sent man (verse 27) reminded them of his witness that he was "**NOT THE CHRIST, but that I am sent before him**" (verse 28). This is John's Recessional leading to Christ's Processional. This is **TRUE HUMILITY**. The friend of the bridegroom (verse 29) merely introduces him to the bride. John had done his work well. He had finished the task God had given him (John 1:6-8, 29, 36). In eight months he was imprisoned (Matt. 4:12). These are the last words we have from John until the despondent message from the dungeon in Machaerus whether Jesus is after all the Messiah (Matt. 11:2; Luke 7:19). John went on to imprisonment, suspense, martyrdom, while Jesus grew in popular favor till he had his *via dolorosa*. Wescott says, "These last words of John are the fullness of religious sacrifice and fitly close his work."

B. Superiority of the Son, and the blessing of faith (John 3:31-36).

"He that cometh from above is **ABOVE ALL . . .**" (John 3:31): Christ is **FROM ABOVE**, therefore he is **ABOVE AND OVER JOHN**. The true testimony was being given, and "no man receiveth his testimony" (verse 32). There were crowds coming to Jesus, but they do not really accept him as Saviour and Lord (John 1:11; 2:24). "No man" means "few" or as nothing in contrast with those not accepting his testimony. But "God is true" (verse 33).

"God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (John 3:34): God has given the Holy Spirit in his fullness to Christ, and to no one else in that sense. "Giveth" points to a continuous communication of the Spirit. See Col. 1:19. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (verse 35).

"He that believeth on the Son **HATH** everlasting life . . ." (John 3:36): Jesus the "only begotten" Son of God fully revealed His Father's will. All who accept Christ by **FAITH POSSESS HERE AND NOW EVERLASTING LIFE**. McGarvey points out that "The New Testament represents everlasting life as a present possession obtained by belief."

"Believeth not the Son . . . wrath": **BELIEF** that does not **OBEY** is a "**DEAD FAITH**" (James 2:20; Rom. 1:5). To refuse to obey is to abide under the "wrath of God" here and hereafter.

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QUESTIONS

1. What was the religious standing of Nicodemus (John 3:1)?
2. Why did he name to Jesus by night (John 3:2; 12:42, 43; 2:24)?
3. Was Nicodemus right in concluding that Christ's miracles proved Him to be a "teacher come from God" (John 3:2; 5:36; 9:30-33; 14:10, 11; Acts 2:22)?
4. Why did Jesus change the topic (John 3:3)? Force of "Verily, verily?" Was it necessary for the salvation of this devout religious leader?
5. How does one "see the kingdom of God" (verse 3; John 8:51; Luke 2:26)?
6. What the thought was in Nicodemus' reply (John 3:4)?
7. How did verse 5 answer Nicodemus' question (John 3:5)?
8. To what does "water" refer (John 3:5)? What does Dr. Wall in his history of INFANT BAPTISM say of this verse?
9. In what certain way does Dr. Wescott comment on John 3:5? Does this verse exclude the "pious unimmersed" from the Kingdom of God (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38; 19:1-7; Titus 3:5)?
10. Can you explain "HOW TO BE BORN AGAIN" (John 3:1-7)?
11. Why is the new birth necessary (John 3:6, 7; 1:13)?
12. Can you explain John 3:8? Why should Nicodemus have understood (verses 9, 10)? What are the earthly things and heavenly (verses 11, 12)?
13. What are the points in the comparison of the Son to the Serpent (John 3:14, 15; Numbers 21:5-9; Rom. 8:3; II Cor. 5:21; Isa. 45:22; I John 5:11-13)? Will YOU LOOK at CHRIST and LIVE?
14. In what sense did God give His Son (John 3:16)? What did Luther call this verse? Did God send his Son the first time to condemn or save the world (Johns 3:17)?
15. When is the unbeliever condemned, and why (John 3:18; 16:9)? Why do evil men have the light (John 3:19-21; Heb. 4:13)?
16. What baptism was Jesus administering (John 3:21)? Force of the reason for baptizing in Aenon (John 3:23)? See McGarvey's LANDS OF THE BIBLE, Pages 292, 294. What the question about purifying (John 3:25)?
17. Over what privilege did John say, "my joy therefore is fulfilled" (John 3:29; I John 1:3, 4)?
18. How was John 3:30 literally fulfilled (Luke 9:9)?
19. Name four things stated regarding our Lord in John 3:31-34? What two things are stated of the Father (John 3:35)?
20. Do you now possess "everlasting life" or does the "wrath of God" abide on you (John 3:36)?

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Lesson 23

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John 4

Memory Verses: John 4:25

Memory Verse:

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things" (John 4:25).

Public Reading: John 4:6-30, 40-42.

A WOMAN WITH FIVE HUSBANDS

Why did Jesus, in leaving Judea, return to Galilee through Samaria, instead of the more common route up the Jordan valley? Samaria was outside Herod's jurisdiction. Herod, you remember, had just imprisoned John the Baptist.

The chief interest of the story is Samaria and the conversation of Jesus with the much-married woman which resulted in her conversion (John 4:5-42), along with many of the Samaritans who "believed because of his own word" (verse 41).

I. Reasons for Returning to Galilee (John 4:1-4; Mark 4:12; 1:14; Luke 3:19, 20)

"When therefore the Lord knew . . ." (John 4:1): A reference to John 3:22f shows the work of John the Baptist, and the jealousy of his disciples. Jesus knew of the attitude of the Pharisees (John 2:24). John's ministry had been tremendous (Mark 1:5; Matt. 3:5; Luke 3:7, 15). Jesus had now forged ahead of John in popular favor.

The Pharisees had turned violently against down who had called them broods of vipers. Probably they drew John out about the marriage of Herod Antipas and got him involved directly with the tetrarch so as to have John east into prison (Luke 3:19f). This had been done but recently (John 3:24), before Jesus left for Galilee. The Pharisees, with John out of the way, turn to Jesus with envy and hate.

"Though Jesus himself baptized not . . ." (John 4:2): "Jesus, as divine lawgiver, instituted baptism, and his disciples administered it. We nowhere hear of the disciples of John administering baptism. In fact, the Baptist, Like the disciples of Jesus, baptized under a divine commission, and could not delegate the power to others. It was the office of Jesus to COMMISSION OTHERS to this work, not to PERFORM IT HIMSELF" (McGarvey).

Paul, like Jesus, did not baptize many people. His helpers did the baptizing (I Cor. 1:14, 15). Otherwise many people would foolishly claim some peculiar honor by reason thereof.

"He left Judea . . . Galilee" (John 4:3): He abandoned Judea. He went back to Judea, but not often. This shows a break with the city that treated Him with growing hostility. The imprisonment of John the Baptist called for the presence of Jesus in Galilee. Go take up the work laid down by John. Also the Pharisees were becoming jealous of the increasing influence of Jesus, and the time had come for an open break.

"And he MUST needs go through Samaria" (John 4:4): The words, "He must needs go through Samaria" are arresting. The final explanation must be found in His dealing with the woman of Samaria.

Samaria was a province that took its name from the city of Samaria. It lay between Judea on the south and Galilee on the north. The Samaritans were colonists of an alien race who had been planted there by

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the Assyrians 700 years before (II Kings 17:6, 24, 26, 29; Ezra 4:1, 9, 10). They had accepted the Pentateuch and much of the Jewish religion. They were expecting the Messiah to make Samaria, not Jerusalem, the seat of His government. Most Jews hated the half-breed Samaritans and would not even go through the land. They would cross the Jordan, and make a seven-day journey to avoid passing through the land on what was ordinarily a three-day trip from Jerusalem to Galilee! Jesus "MUST" go through Samaria to PROTEST AGAINST this WAY OF LIVING. Too, it was protest against the PREJUDICE and PRIDE of His PEOPLE, and an indication of the inclusiveness of His Messiahship. See Luke 9:51-56.

II. The Conversion of the Samaritans (John 4:5-42)

A. Jesus converses with a Samaritan woman (John 4:5-26).

1. The weary Jesus (John 4:5, 6).

"Then cometh he to a city of Samaria . . . Sychar" (John 4:5): Theme is a dispute whether this is just a variation of Shechem as meaning "drunken-town" (Isa. 28:1) or "lying town" (Hab. 2:18) or as a separate village near Shechem (Neapolis, Nablous) as the Talmud and Eusebius indicate. The present village Askar corresponds well with the site.

At Sychar Jacob built his first altar (Gen. 33:18f). Here Joseph was buried in the Lord given to him by his father (Josh. 24:32). "Sychar" may mean "town of the sepulchre" because of Joseph's tomb.

"Now Jacob's well was there . . ." (John 4:6): This historic well lies northwest of the plain which separates the mountains of Samaria, EBAL and GERIZIM. It is about forty miles from Jerusalem. It is the only well in the neighborhood. It is in the midst of a district well watered by springs and running streams. Some extraordinary circumstance must have caused it to be dug. Jacob purchased the land to be independent of his neighbors. To avoid depending on their springs, he dug a well on his own premises. In 1861, Major Anderson found the well to be 75 feet deep. McGarvey tapped it at 66 feet. The Greek Convent Press article on "Jacob's well" states that it is 125 feet deep by 7.5 feet in diameter. I can testify that the water is very good, as I have drunk from it many times.

"Jesus . . . wearied . . . sat thus on the well": Wells were usually curbed around with stone and covered. Jesus "was sitting," "thus wearied" with a long day of travel. "Sixth hour" is 6:00 P.M., Roman time.

This well lying on the southern side of the Valley of Shechem "is one of the few Biblical sites about which there is NO DISPUTE, and probably the only place on earth where one can draw a circle of a few feet and say confidently that the feet of Christ have stood within the circumference" (McGarvey).

2. The Samaritan woman (John 4:7-9).

"There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water . . ." (John 4:7): From the country, not the city, which was two hours away.

"Jesus . . . give me to drink": This was a polite request. Jesus asked a woman to do Him a favor! This was an unheard of thing in His day. Although the Jews hated the Samaritans and had no social intercourse with them, they would buy and sell among them (verses 8, 9). When the Jewish captives returned from Babylon and started to build the temple, the Samaritans asked permission to build with them. This was refused. The enmity between the two people never died out. (Ezra 4:1-4; Neh. 2:10, 19; 4:1-3)

3. The point of contact (John 4:10-13).

"If thou knewest . . ." (John 4:10): The woman was ignorant of the one to whom she was talking, and she was ignorant of the "living water. It is here used in a spiritual sense of his grace and truth (John 1:14; 3:16; II Cor 9:15) which grants to the believer a CONTINUAL REFRESHING (Rev. 7:17; John 7:39-39). It

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is the task of EACH Christian to teach every creature of the Christ, the source of living water (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 8:4)

"Sir. ." (John 4:11: A term of respect. The manner and words of Jesus deeply impressed the woman. She fails to rise above the material meaning of the words. She is still thinking only of literal water (verse 12. Jesus reminds her that "whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again" (verse 13).

4. The subject changed (John 4:14-15).

"But whosoever drinketh . . . Shall never thirst" (John 4:14): Jesus affirms that he is superior to Jacob. The water he lives is a "spring (or fountain) of water leaping (bubbling up) unto life eternal." The woman's curiosity is keenly excited about this new kind of water (verse 15).

5. Identity disclosed (John 4:16-26).

"Go call thy husband . . ." (John 4:16): The woman had asked for this new water of Jesus. Before she can receive it she must be fully conscious of her sinfulness. Jesus makes a demand that will RECALL HER PAST LIFE. He must reveal her life, and waken her to repentance.

"I have no husband . . ." (John 4:17): She had her "man," but he was not a legal "husband." She gives an evasive reply. Jesus saw through the double sense of her language and read her heart as only he can do (see John 1:48; 2:24f; 5:20). Jesus tells her she had "had five husbands" (verse 18) and she was now living in open adultery.

"Sir . . . thou art a prophet" (John 4:19): "I am beginning to perceive" from what you say, your knowledge of my private life (verse 29) that "you are a prophet." She then tried to evade the issue by raising a theological discussion about the right place to worship (verse 20).

"God is a Spirit . . . worship . . . spirit. . . truth" (John 4:24): Jesus affirms that there is no value in Mt. Gerazim or in Jerusalem, APART FROM REALITY AND SPIRITUAL INTENTION. The PLACE OF WORSHIP is NOT IMPORTANT. The PERSON or BEING WORSHIPED IS ALL-IMPORTANT. God as a Spirit is FREE FROM ALL LIMITATIONS of TIME and SPACE (Acts 7:48). God is NOT MATERIAL, as idolaters believe. He is NOT AN ABSTRACT FORCE, but GOD is BEING. He is above all need of temples and sacrifices that are a benefit to man hut not to God (Acts 17:25).

"Messiah . . . Jesus . . . I . . . am he" (John 4:26): This is the first recorded declaration of his Messiahship. Peter did not make this confession until the last year of Jesus' ministry. Jesus made this same declaration to the blind man (John 9:37).

B. Remarks to the disciples (John 4:27-38).

"And upon this came his disciples, and marveled" (John 4:27): His disciples wondered that he should TALK WITH A WOMAN. A rabbinical precept stated, "Let NO ONE TALK WITH a woman in the street, no, not with his own wife" (Lightfoot, Hor, Hebr. iii, 287). The disciples held Jesus to be a rabbi; they felt he was acting beneath his dignity.

"The woman . . . Come, see a man . . . the Christ?" (John 4:28, 9): In her newfound, joy she left the waterpot (verse 28). The first impulse of a believer in Christ is to tell someone else about Jesus. Note the change of her mind regarding Jesus: Jew (verse 9); "Sir" (verses 11, 15); prophet (verse 19); now, "THE CHRIST" (verse 29).

"My meat . . . will of him that sent me" (John 4:34): Man cannot lie by bread alone, but by doing God's will. The concern for the comfort of Jesus overcame their surprise about the woman. The Savior declares that to DO THE WILL OF GOD IS FOOD TO HIM! On the cross Jesus will cry, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He will carry through the Father's plan and work (John 3:16). That is his "food." He had been doing God's will in WINNING THIS SINFUL WOMAN to God.

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"Lift up your eyes . . . look . . . fields . . . while already to harvest" (John 4:35): The approaching Samaritans were the field "white already to harvest" (verse 39). Let us sow the word today faithfully and reap every soul for Christ we can (Heb. 3:15; John 4:36-38; I Thess. 2:19). Jesus laid the foundation for a great harvest years later (Acts 8:4-8).

C. Followers won (John 4:39-42).

1. By the woman's testimony (John 4:39).
2. By His own word (John 4:40-41).
2. By personal faith (John 4:42).

III. The Second Miracle (John 4:43-54)

- A. Again in Cana (John 4:43-45).
- B. A nobleman's request (John 4:46-52).
- B. The ward believed (John 4:53-54).

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jesus leave Judea and depart for Galilee (John 4:1-3)?
2. Did Jesus or his disciples do the baptizing (John 4:2)?
3. What is the meaning of "must needs go through Samaria" (John 4:4)?
4. What piece of ground (John 4:5; Gen. 33:19; Joshua 24:32)? Describe the well.
5. At what place and people did the incidents of this story transpire (John 4:5, 6, 40)? Meaning of Sychar?
6. Why was the woman surprised that Jesus should make a request of her (John 4:9; Acts 10:28)?
7. Of what two all-important facts was the woman ignorant (John 4:10)?
8. How did Christ say the water from Jacob's well differed from water that He would give (John 4:13, 14)?
9. What was the "well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14; Isa. 44:3, 4; John 7:37-39)?
10. How did Christ probe her guilty conscience (John 4:16-18, 29; Heb. 4:13; Prov. 17:3)? How did she try to evade the issue (John 4:20)?
11. How is salvation from the Jews (John 4:22)? What is it to worship in spirit and truth (John 4:23, 24)? What was the purpose of the whole conversation (John 4:25, 26)?
12. Why did the disciples marvel that Jesus spoke with a woman (John 4:27)?
13. Why did she leave her waterpot (John 4:28)? Why did she exaggerate (John 4:29)?
14. What took the appetite of Jesus (John 4:32, 35)? How did Jesus teach the disciples the urgency for immediate ministry?
15. What was the result of her faithful testimony (John 4:30, 39, 41)?
16. What is promised to faithful laborers (John 4:36)?
17. How did the Samaritans' attitude toward Jesus differ from that of the Jews in Jerusalem (John 4:40; 5:16-18)? Why so hospitable to Jews (John 4:40, 9)? What is better than believing another's testimony concerning Christ (John 4:42; 18:34)?
18. Effect of the miracles at Jerusalem (John 4:45)?
19. Who was the nobleman (John 4:46; Luke 8:3)? Why did he believe (John 4:50)?
20. Many describe the healing of the nobleman's son, and is the father's faith recorded in John 4:50 the same as that in John 4:53?

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Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 24
John 5

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Memory Verses: John 5:11, 39

Memory Verses:

"He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk . . . Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:11,39).

Public Reading: John 5:1-9.

A POOR SINNER AND A POWERFUL SAVIOUR

Our lesson today deals with a miracle and a disputation in Jerusalem (John 5:1-47). It occurred during a feast; (verse 1), which probably was a Passover. Some manuscripts have the definite article "the feast" which would naturally mean the Passover.

Jewish Feasts of Jesus' Day

1. Passover: On the 14th of Nisan, our April, this is the first in point of time of all the annual feasts. It celebrated the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt. The Feast of the Unleavened Bread began on the day after the Passover and lasted seven days (Lev. 25:5-8).

2. Pentecost: It was celebrated on the sixth day of the month of Sivan, our June, seven weeks after the offering of the wave sheaf after the Passover. The name "Pentecost" meaning "50th," originated from the fact that there was an interval of 50 days between Passover' and Pentecost. The feast lasted a single day (Deut., 16:9-12). Celebrated giving of the law on Mt. Sinai.

3. Tabernacles: In October. Celebrated in gathering of the harvests. Male Jews had to attend these first three annual feasts.

4. Dedication: Observed eight days beginning on the 25th day of Kislev, our December. Judas Maccabeus instituted it in 164 BC when the temple that had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes kin, of Syria, was cleansed and rededicated to the service of Jehovah.

5. Purim: Kept on the 14th and 15th days of Adar, our March, the last month of the Jewish religious year. No mention is made of this feast in the Gospels. It was instituted to commemorate the failure of Haman's plots against the Jews (Esther 9:26-28). The word Purim means "lots." On the evening of the 13th the whole book of Esther was read publicly in the synagogue. It was a joyous occasion.

Jesus Returns to Jerusalem

Jesus had returned to Galilee in December, about the time of the Feast of Dedication (John 3:22-36). A year before he had cleansed the temple (John 2:13), a grand sign that He was the Messiah. Now He returns to Jerusalem to give another sign of His Messiahship.

I. An Impotent Man Made Whole (John 5:1-9)

"After this there was a feast of the Jews . . ." (John 5:1): "I believe it was the Passover" (G. Campbell Morgan). Other Passovers mentioned in John are 2:13, 23; 6:4; 12:1. Note that "Jesus went up to Jerusalem": It was UP towards Jerusalem from every direction except Hebron. It was 3000 feet above sea level, Jerusalem being only 2550 feet above sea level.

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"A pool . . . Bethesda" (John 5:2: A diving or swimming. pool. Bethesda means, "house of grace." It was a spring-fed pool at Jerusalem. It had five porches for the protection of the sick laid there. It was the Virgin's well or Pool, called the Gusher, because it periodically bubbles over from a natural spring, a kind of natural siphon. It was south of the temple in the Valley of Kedron. Many sick folk were laid there (verse 3) because of a superstition which arose about the "moving of the water." All that follows the word "withered" in verse 3 is a marginal explanatory gloss by same transcriber.

"A certain man was there . . . infirmity thirty and eight year's" (John 5:5): He like many other infirm people thought the water had a healing power, as the superstition of verse 4 points out. "Wilt thou be made whole?" (John 5:6): Whether by observation, or overhearing people's comments, or by supernatural knowledge (John 2:24f), Jesus saw, Jesus knew and Jesus acted to help this unfortunate paralytic. Jesus' question was pertinent and sympathetic. Jesus spoke three times to the man (verses 6, 8, and 14) to a man who had LOST HOPE!

"I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool" (John 5:7): The popular belief was that, at each outflow of this intermittent spring, there was healing power in the water FOR THE FIRST ONE GETTING IN. "No doubt many were healed, even without a miracle. In nervous diseases, FAITH IS THE GREAT HEALING POWER." IF MANY PEOPLE WANT to BE WELL, THEY MAY BE!

"Jesus said . . . Rise, take up thy bed, and walk" (John 5:8): Jesus spoke to the man in a sort of exclamation, "GET UP!" Jesus spoke with an authority that compelled obedience!

"The man was made whole . . . the same day was the Sabbath" (John 5:9): "Jesus healed because it was the Sabbath . . . that he might assert divine relations to the Sabbath. . . and to the Father" (McGarvey). This is the FIRST of the violations of the Sabbath rules of the Jews by Jesus in Jerusalem that led to so much bitterness (Read John 9:14, 16) which spread to Galilee (Mark 2:23-36; Matt. 12:1-12; Luke 6:1-11).

Seven Sabbath Healings

There are seven recorded Sabbath healings in the gospel:

1. A demoniac, in Capernaum (Mark 1:21-27).
2. Peter's Mother-in-law, in Capernaum (Mark 1:29-31).
3. An impotent man in Jerusalem (John 5:1-9).
4. Man with a withered hand (Mark 3:1-6).
5. Woman bowed together (Luke 13:10-17).
6. Man with dropsy (Luke 14:1-6).
7. Man born blind (John 9:1-14).

II. Jesus Accused of Sabbath-Breaking (John 5:10-18)

"The Jews . . . It is the Sabbath . . . not lawful . . . to carry thy bed" (John 5:10): The Jewish rulers officially stopped the healed man and questioned him. They would have cited Exodus 31:13; Num. 15:32-36; Jer. 17:19-23; Neh. 13:15-22. They were more concerned about the law than they were about MERCY TO A MAN! Stoning was the rabbinical punishment. The healed man did not know who Jesus was, not even his name (verse 13). He quotes the words of Jesus (verse 11). "What man is that" (verse 12) is a contemptuous expression, "Who is the fellow?" They ask about the COMMAND TO VIOLATE THE SABBATH, not about the healing.

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"Jesus found him . . . SIN NO MORE" (John 5:14): "No longer go on sinning" Jesus told the man. He spoke the same words to a woman taken in adultery (John 8:11). All sickness is NOT DUE TO PERSONAL SIN (John 9:3). But much sickness is. Nature is a hard taskmaster. To be sick thirty-eight years is bad; to sin against knowledge of Christ will bring a worse thing than that upon himself (James 4:17; II Pet. 2:19-22).

"The man . . . told the Jews it was Jesus" (John 5:15): The man was ungrateful and betrayed Jesus to curry favor with the Jews, or he was incompetent, and did that know he was bringing trouble upon his benefactor. Those who carry tales, or hear them, are not to be admired (Prov. 6:16, 19; 26:20-22; 18:8; Lev. 19:16).

"And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus . . . sought to slay him" (John 5:16): Can you picture anyone wanting to KILL JESUS? Literally these men, "pursued Jesus." They hunted him and attacked him. They disliked Jesus at first (John 2:18), were suspicious of his popularity (John 4:1), and now have cause for an open breach. The Pharisees will watch his conduct on the Sabbath henceforth (Mark 2:23; 3:2).

When you STRIKE or HURT a Christian it is the same as though YOU STRUCK JESUS (Matt. 25:40, 45; Acts 9:4). This fact ought to stop a lot of senseless chatter of church members. You will someday give openly an account of that behind-the-back slander (Rom. 14:12; II Cor. 5:10).

"My Father worketh . . . I work" (John 5:17): They recognized that Jesus claimed equality with God. Had they misunderstood Jesus, He quickly would have corrected them for he could not have been less righteous than Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:11-15). God made the Sabbath for man's blessing, but cannot observe it himself. God "keeps on working until now without a break on the Sabbath. Philo points out this fact of the continuous activity of God, as do Justin Martyr, Origen and others. In the presence of sin and misery God had no Sabbath.

Jesus puts Himself on a par with God's activity and justifies His healing on the Sabbath. The Jews wanted to kill Jesus (verse 18) because (1) He broke the Sabbath and (2) made Himself equal with God! They "sought . . . to kill him" occurs in John 7:1, 19, 25; 8:37, 40. These same Jews would circumcise a man on the Sabbath (Mark 3:6), but object to Jesus healing on the Sabbath. The only recorded instance of Jesus' "anger" is at their objecting to his healing on the Sabbath, except that it recorded that he was "moved with indignation" or "much displeased" (Mark 10:14) at the disciples trying to keep children from coming to him!

III. Jesus Asserts His Powers (John 5:19-29)

"Verily, verily, the Son . . . the Father" (John 5:19): Jesus repeats His claim that He was working in cooperation with God; that His activity was the result of God sending Him to this world. Jesus is the supreme example of a son copying the SPIRIT and WORK of the FATHER. Jesus claims that in healing this poor man He was doing what the Father wishes Him to do (verses 20-22).

"That all men should honor the Son . . . Father" (John 5:23): Note the three "for's" which occur in verses 20, 21, 22 --all stating the exaltation given to the Son. Jesus claims here the SAME RIGHT TO WORSHIP FROM MEN that the Father has. DISHONORING JESUS IS DISHONORING THE FATHER WHO SENT HIM (John 8:49; 12:26; 15:23; I John 2:23; see Like 10:16.) A noted New Testament scholar says: "There is small comfort here for those who praise Jesus as teacher and yet deny His claims to worship."

"Verily, verily . . . He that believeth . . . hath everlasting life" (John 5:24): "Eternal life is a present gift just as condemnation is a present condition" (John 3:18). Those who hear and obey the Gospel of Jesus have already escaped or passed out of judgment (Rom. 8:1).

"Verily, verily. . . DEAD. . . LIVE" (John 5:25): Jesus speaks first of a spiritual resurrection or regeneration. "Christianity, or the dispensation of regeneration was to begin formally at Pentecost, but it

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was already present in a preliminary form in the teaching of Jesus, for those who hearkened to it were counted as already redeemed" (McGarvey). Then Jesus speaks of an actual physical resurrection (verses 28,29). There is to be a resurrection of the righteous dead in Christ (Rev. 20:5, 6, 12, 13). The unrighteous dead will be raised, too. Daniel 12:2, 3 spoke of these two resurrections, one to life, one to judgment.

IV. The Witness for Jesus (John 5:30-40)

"If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true" (John 5:31): In Roman, Greek or Jewish law the testimony of a witness is not received in his own case. (See Deut. 19:15 and the allusion to it by Jesus in Matt. 18:16 (see also II Cor. 13:1; I Tim. 5:19). Yet in John 8:12-19 Jesus claims His witness concerning Himself IS TRUE; the Father CONFIRMS THE WITNESS OF THE SON (John 8:17). The verse is a seeming contradiction, yet it is true. Here Jesus yields to the rabbinical demand for proof outside of Himself.

"There is another that beareth witness of me . ." (John 5:32): Jesus has four witnesses:

1. John the Baptist (John 5:33-35; 1:19-38).
2. His works (John 5:36; 17:4; 19:30; 3:16).
3. The Father (John 5:37, 38; Matt. 3:17; Mark 9:7; John 12:28; John 5:9, 10).
4. The Scriptures (John 5:39; Luke 44-46).

"Search the scriptures . . . testify of me" (John 5:39): The form here can be either present active indicative second person plural, or the present active indicative second person plural. Only the context can decide. "Because ye think" supports the indicative 'rather than the imperative. Jesus is arguing on the basis of their use of "the Scriptures."

"There is NO LIFE in the Scriptures themselves, BUT IF WE FOLLOW WHERE THEY LEAD, they will bring us to Him, and so we find life, not in the Scriptures, but in Him THROUGH THEM (Morgan).

The true value of the Scriptures is in their witness to Christ. Luke 24:27, 45 gives this same claim of Jesus, and yet some scholars fail to FIND THE MESSIAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. Remember JESUS DID! So do I, and so do YOU if you will study the Scriptures!

And ye will not come to me . . . life" (John 5:40): "This is the tragedy of the rejection of Messiah by the Messianic race" (Bernard). Men loved darkness rather than light (John 3:19). This life is to be found only in Jesus Christ (John 20:31; 3:16, 36).

V. Causes of Jewish Unbelief (John 5:41-47)

"But I know you . . . ye have not the love of God" (John 5:42): Jesus read their hearts. These rabbis did not love God; hence they did not love Christ. He sought not their praise, but the approval of God the Father (verse 41).

"I am come in my Father's name . . . ye receive me not" (John 5:43): Seven times in John our Lord speaks of the "Name" of the Father (John 5:43; 10:25; 12:28; 17:6, 11, 12, 26). John may be called "The Gospel of the Rejection" (John 1:11; 3:11, 32; 12:37). The Jews would welcome messianic upstarts who come "in their own name" and always find a following.

"How can ye believe . ." (John 5:44): They were not true Jews (Rom. 2:29; Esther 9:28) who cared for the glory of God; they preferred the praise of men (Matt. 6:1f; 23:5) like the Pharisees who feared to confess Christ (John 12:43).

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"For had ye believed Moses . . . he wrote of me" (John 5:46): Jesus cut them deeply here, proving that they did not really believe Moses. Since they rejected Moses, they rejected Jesus of whom Moses wrote (Deut. 18:18, 19; Acts 3:22; 7:37; John 3:14; 8:56). Note that Peter quotes Deut. 18:18f in Acts 3:22 as a prophecy of Christ and also by Stephen in Acts 7:37. Read also John 3:14 about the brazen serpent and John 8:56 about Abraham foreseeing Christ's day.

"But if ye believe not his (Moses') writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:47). There was NO ANSWER FROM THE RABBIS TO THIS CONCLUSION OF CHRIST!

QUESTIONS

1. Why was Christ in Jerusalem at this time (John 5:1)? In what sense did He go "up" to Jerusalem?
2. What feast of the Jews was this (John 5:1)? How many Jewish feasts were there in Jesus' day, and what did each commemorate, and when was it begun?
3. If it was the Passover, how long since the first visit to Jerusalem (John 2:13)? How long since going to Galilee (John 4:35)?
4. Why were many sick people placed at the pool of Bethesda, or the Virgin's Well (John 5:2, 3)?
5. How long had "a certain man" an infirmity who was placed daily at Bethesda (John 5:5)?
6. Why did Jesus ask "Wilt thou be made whole?" (John 5:6)?
7. What was the man's idea about the pool (John 5:7)? What troubled the water?
8. What did Jesus command the man to do (John 5:8)? How many healings on the Sabbath are recorded in the Gospels? List them.
9. What did the Jewish rulers do to the man whom Jesus had healed (John 5:10)? What scriptures might they have cited to prove their point (Exodus 31:13; Num. 15:32-36; Jer. 17:19-23; Neh. 13:15-22)?
10. Did the healed man know Jesus' name (John 5:11,13)?
11. Meaning of the warning of Jesus to the man (John 5:14)? Why tell the Jews it was Jesus who had healed him (John 5:18,15)?
12. What did the Jews seek to do to Jesus (John 5:16)?
13. To what working is reference made (John 5:17)? How did his remark make Him equal with God (John 5:18)?
14. What powers did Jesus claim (John 5:21, 22, 25, 27)? Why "because he is the Son of Man" (verse 27)? Whence these powers (John 5:19)? Can a deist honor God (John 5:21; I John 5:9)?
15. If you were to DIE RIGHT NOW, would you have part in the resurrection of life, or the resurrection of damnation (John 5:29)? Will the two resurrections occur at the same time (Rev. 20:5, 6, 12, 13)?
16. To what did Jesus accommodate himself in John 5:31(Deut.19:15; Matt.18:16; II Cor.13:1; I Tim.5:19; John 8:12-19).
17. How many witnesses for Jesus are named in this chapter (John 5:33-39)? Name them.
18. What is the true value of the Scriptures, and can we find the Messiah in the Old Testament (John 5:39; Luke 24:27,45)?
19. How was there desire for earthly glory a cause of their unbelief in Jesus (John 5:44,41)? How is the absence of love to God a cause of their unbelief (John 5:42,43)?
20. Meaning of one coming in his own name (John 5:43)? How did Moses accuse them (John 5:45)? In what sense did they not believe Moses (John 5:46, 47)? Is it certain that Moses wrote of Jesus?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

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Lesson 25

Page 1

John 6

Memory Verses: John 6:35

Memory Verse:

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

Public Reading: John 6:1-11, 48-58.

THE BREAD OF LIFE

The feeding of the 5,000 is the only one of Jesus' miracles told in all four gospels – except the resurrection.(Matt. 14:13-33; Mark 6:32-52; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:14). This makes it vitally important.

This miracle is a "sign" chosen by John (20:30, 31) to prove "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." John gives eight such signs in his Gospel, two of them in this lesson, feeding the 5,000, and stilling the tempest (John 2:1-12; 3:1-21; 4:43-54; 5:1-8; 6:1-14, 121).

The Time

The time of this miracle was "The Passover" (John 6:4). Jesus did not go to this Passover, probably the only one He missed since He was boy because on His previous visit the Jews formed a plot to kill him (John 5:1-18; 7:1).

Feeding the Five Thousand (John 6:1-14)

"After these things. ." (John 6:1): A common, but indefinite, note of time in John (3:22; 5:1; 6:1; 7:1). A whole year may intervene between the events of chapter 5 in Jerusalem and those in John 6 in Galilee. The disciples had returned from their first tour of Galilee. John the Baptist had been beheaded (Matt. 14:1-21)

"Jesus went over the sea of Galilee . . . Tiberias" It is called the sea of Galilee from its washing the east side of Galilee. It is know also as the sea of Tiberias to honor the emperor. Herod Antipas built Tiberias to the west of the Sea of Galilee A.D. 22. He made it his capital. It is also called "the Sea of Gennesaret" (Luke 5:1) since the fertile plain of Gennesaret lies on northwest (Matt. 14:34). The Old Testament calls it "the Sea of Chinnereth (Heb. "harp-shaped," the shape of the sea, Num. 34:11; Deut. 3:17; Josh. 13:27) or "Chinneroth" (Josh. 12:3; I Kings 15:20), from the, town so named on its shore (Josh. 19:35), of which Gennesaret is probably the corruption.

Luke 9:10 explains it was the eastern Bethsaida (Julias) to which Jesus took the disciples, not the western Bethsaida of Mark 6:45 in Galilee.

"And a great multitude followed Him .. saw His miracles" (John 6:2) Great crowds followed Jesus continually because of the constant miracles He performed. The people could travel faster, by running around the northern shore, than the boat could sail (Mark 6:32f). The people were eager to hear Jesus again (Luke 9:11) and to get the benefit of his healing power "on them that were sick."

"And Jesus . . . sat" (John 6:3): This is a picture of repose. Jesus taught them (Matt. 5:1, 2; 24:3, 4; Mark 4:34). He had come to "rest a while" (Mark 6:3,1). "And the Passover . . . was nigh" (John 6:4): This is likely the third Passover in His ministry (John 2:13; the unmentioned one of John 5:1). Jesus did not go to this Passover due to the hostility in Jerusalem (John 7:1; 5:1, 18).

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"Jesus . . . Whence shall we buy bread . . . eat?" (John 5:5): Jesus "knew what he would do" (verse 6) but he wanted to TEST or PROVE Philip. "This is the only occasion on record when Jesus is said to have asked anyone for any kind of advice." Philip brought only if the MONEY COST (verse 7). "Two hundred pennyworth of bread": The denarius was the usual pay for a day's labor (Matt. 20:2, 9, 13), a Roman coin worth about 17 cents. Philip FORGOT HIS MASTER'S POWER. How often we all make this mistake. We get to talking about a living-link missionary, a bus, a new building, or paying the tuition of a young preacher in one of our Bible colleges. "How much does it cost? Where's the money coming from?" are the questions FIRST RAISED. "Is it right, it is God's WILL?" seem to come last, or not at all. If it is God's will, the money will come to meet the need (Rom. 8:31; Phil. 4:19).

"Andrew . . . a lad here" (John 6:8, 9): Andrew made a manly venture of faith, and then half laughed at his suggestion. "The lad and the Lord. As to the lad, the supply was absolutely inadequate; but as to the Lord, the lad's inadequacy is sufficiency, plus." He will take our five loaves, and two little fishes, and make them suffice!

Every time we meet Andrew in John's gospel he is doing something "manly," the meaning of his name. He brought Simon Peter to Jesus (John 1:40-2); here he found "a lad" and he introduced some Greeks to Jesus (John 12:20-22).

"And Jesus said, 'Make the men sit down'" (John 6:10): Note Jesus' love of order. They sat in groups of 50's and 100's; an easy count could be made (Mark 6:39, 40).

"And Jesus took the loaves . . . thanks . . . distributed" (John 6:11): Jesus blessed the loaves and fishes by returning thanks for them. He set the example for a giving thanks, "saying grace," "asking the blessing" when we eat. DO YOU FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE (I Pet. 2:21)? Andrew thought 200 pennyworth of bread would give the multitude "a little," a taste. But when Jesus got "down to the business, it is not a snack that tantalizes, but a meal that satisfies." "It's JUST LIKE HIS GREAT LOVE!"

"Gather up the fragments . . . nothing be lost" (John 6:12): The unused portions were gathered had been satisfied. The "fragments" were not crumbs or scraps on the ground, but pieces broken by Jesus (Mark 6:41). "There was to be no wastefulness in Christ's munificence. The Jews had a custom of leaving something for those that served." "Twelve baskets" or "kophinous" meant stout wicker baskets. "Coffins" as Wycliffe has it, in distinction from the soft and frail sphurides used at the feeding of the four thousand (Mark 8; Matt. 15:37). All the Gospels use "kophinoi" for the five thousand.

"Then those men . . . this . . . THAT PROPHET" (John 6:14) Enamored by His ability, the multitude attempted to take Him by force and MAKE HIM KING (verse 15). There was a popular expectation about the prophet of Deut. 18:15 as being the Messiah (John 1:21; 11:27). "The people are on the tiptoe of expectation and believe that Jesus is the political Messiah of Pharisaic hope. "

II. Jesus and His Disciples Re-cross the Sea (John 6:15-21)

"He departed . . . alone" (John 6:15). Jesus sent the disciples across the sea (Matt. 14:22) and dismissed the crowd. He withdrew to pray. The news of John the Baptist's death deeply distressed Jesus. The people wanted to force Him to be King. He could fill their bellies without their working. "I sometimes think that the biggest mistakes in the world are made when men and women get filled with food" (Morgan). The people wanted to start a movement against Rome by proclaiming Jesus as King, and driving away Pilate.

"And when even was come . . . ship . . . Capernaum . . . now dark" (John 6:16, 17). It was late evening,

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not the early evening in mid-afternoon (Matt. 14:15). The disciples were in no hurry to start back to Bethsaida in Galilee (Mark 6:56) – Capernaum in John 6:17. Darkness had come, but Jesus had not come while they were going over the sea.

"They see Jesus walking on the sea . ." (John 6:19). It was in the "fourth watch" (Mark 6:48), after 3 a.m. They were afraid – they thought they saw a ghost. John does not tell about Peter walking on the water (Matt. 14:28-31). We talk about Peter's lack of faith, BUT HE HAD ENOUGH FAITH TO TRY to get to Jesus! "It is I; be not afraid" is a message the disciples need then. We need it now.

III. Discourse on the Bread of Life (John 6:22-71)

A. The multitude overtake Jesus (John 6:22-27)

"Whence camest thou thither?" (John 6:25) The people saw the disciples leave with Jesus. Boats brought some of the people across the sea to Capernaum. They wanted to know HOW JESUS GOT ACROSS THE SEA (verses 22-24) They sought him anxiously on the other side of the lake.

"Ye seek me . . did eat of the loaves . . filled" (John 6:26) Jesus ignored their curiosity. He revealed their motive for following Him. "Not because He taught them, but because He fed them; not for love BUT FOR LOAVES. " People, then and now, clamor for earthly bread, but they are not so anxious for the spiritual bread. They were more concerned with hungry stomachs than with hungry souls.

"Labor not for the meat which perisheth" (John 6:27) Do not make the material first in your life! (Matt. 6:33) The man who does is a "Fool" (Luke 12:18-20). The food of the soul is the BREAD OF LIFE.

B. Remarks about the Bread of Life and Coming to Jesus (John 6:28-40)

"The works of God . . believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John 6:28, 29) These seekers of Christ are eager for more information. Jesus had bidden them work for the food of eternal life. What WORKS SHALL THEY DO that they may please God and receive the divine gift? The first requirement is FAITH IN CHRIST. This is "The WORK OF God" that pleases Him. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6). "It is not works, but ONE WORK, that is required, A FAITH THAT WOULD ENABLE THEM TO LAY HOLD UPON HIM WHO IS THE BREAD OF LIFE FROM SUCH FAITH WOULD SPRING A CHRIST-LIKE LIFE." BELIEF in Christ is the MOTIVE out of which comes repentance, confession, baptism into Christ, and a faithful life of serving Christ.

"Sign. . . our father. . . manna. . true bread" (John 6:30-32) The rabbis quoted Psa. 72:16 to prove that the Messiah, when he comes, will OUTDO MOSES with manna from heaven. They quote to Jesus Ex. 16:15 (see Numb. 11:7; 21:5; Deut. 8:3). Their plea is that Moses gave us bread "from heaven." Can Jesus equal that deed of Moses? The people had been the miracle of feeding the 5,000. They did not see the significance of it. BUT they wanted the bread IF CHRIST COULD KEEP ON GIVING IT.

"True bread." There are two kinds of bread contrasted in Christ's discourse. God had given, through Moses, the manna for forty years. People ATE IT and died. The "bread of God . . from heaven" (verse 33) comes from heaven, bestows life upon the soul and sustains it, and it is for the world -- not a single race. "Evermore give us this bread" (verse 34). They wanted a perpetual supply.

"Jesus . . I am the bread of life" (John 6:35): This is the FIRST of the EIGHT great "I AM's" of Jesus as given by John. He took a simple term and gave it divine significance. The people wanted a Messiah who could fill their bellies (Phil. 3:19), NOT THE ONE who MADE THE SPIRITUAL FIRST. The Prodigal Son

FOUND REAL LIFE, not in the far country, but in his FATHER'S HOUSE (Luke 15:15-32). Only in Christ is our every physical and spiritual need met (John 6:35-40; Phil. 4:19).

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"Him that cometh to me I will I in no wise case out" (John 6:37). Jesus definitely promises to welcome the ONE WHO GOMES TO HIM. You may came to HIM NOW (verse 34; Heb. 3:15). It is the Father's will (verses 38-40; II Pet. 3:9).

C. The people murmur and Jesus reiterates (John 6:41-51).

"No man can came to me, except the Father . . draw him" (John 6:44): Their unbelief and stubbornness called this out of Jesus (verses 41, 42). Two things are needful in coming to Christ, the HUMAN WILL, TO COME, and the divine drawing (see John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rev. 22:17). God "draws" by his gospel. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16).

If we will consent, we will YIELD TO THE DRAWING, and we will COME TO CHRIST. God "draws" only those who have HEARD and learned, and come to Christ (verse 45). HEARING draws them not seeing (verse 46). With the eyes no one has seen God (John 1:18) save the Son who is "from God" in origin (John 1:1, 14; 7:29; 16:27; 17:8). The only way for others to SEE GOD is to SEE CHRIST (verse 46 and "believe an me" (verse 47; John 14:9).

"I am the bread of life . ." (John 6:48): Jesus repeats the astounding words of verse 35 offer fuller explanation. The believer in Christ HAS ETERNAL LIFE BECAUSE HE GIVES HIMSELF TO HIM. Those who ate "manna in the wilderness. . . are dead" (verse 49). Manna did not prevent death. BUT THIS NEW MANNA WILL PREVENT SPIRITUAL DEATH (verses 50, 51). Jesus calls himself the LIVING ONE (Rev. 1:17). Jesus has presented to this Galilean multitude the central fact of His atoning death for the spiritual life of the world.

D. More murmuring and another reiteration (John 6:52-59).

"Eat the flesh . . drink his blood" (John 6:53): Our Lord used material things to illustrate the eternal and the spiritual. The Lord's Supper is the place where we remember His suffering and death and partake of the body and blood of the Lord (Matt. 26:26-28; I Cor. 11:23-28). Not to came to the Lord's Supper is to DIE SPIRITUALLY. We are COMMANDED TO COME "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK" (Acts 20:7). Verse 63 SHOWS THAT HIS WORDS must be TAKEN IN A SPIRITUAL rather than in a LITERAL SENSE.

E. Murmuring by the disciples (John 6:60-65).

"This is a hard saying; ho can bear it?" (John 6:60): They felt that Jesus saying he was the bread of life come down from heaven and that they were to EAT HIM was incomprehensible! Jesus points to greater marvels, the ASCENSION OF THE SON OF MAN (verses 61-63). To paraphrase this verse: "I shall ascend to heaven so that my body cannot he literally eaten; the flesh literally profits nothing. It is the spirit that makes alive. My words are spirit and life. He who feeds upon them will be made alive."

F. Jesus deserted by all but the twelve (John 6:66-71).

"From that time many . . went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:66): Jesus drew the cleavage between the true and the false believers. "These half-hearted seekers after the loaves and fishes and political power turned abruptly from Jesus, walked out of the synagogue with a deal of bluster and were walking with Jesus no more. Jesus had completely disillusioned these hungry camp-followers who did not care for spiritual manna that consisted in intimate appropriation of the life of Jesus as God's Son."

"Jesus . . Will ye also go away?" (John 6:67): Judas may have shown some sympathy with the disappointed and disappearing crowds. He kept still, however.

"Peter . . Lord, to whom shall we go?" (John 6:68): Peter is the spokesman as usual. His words mean that if such a thought as desertion crossed their minds when the crowd left, they dismissed it instantly. THEY

HAD MADE THEIR CHOICE. Peter's confession here is of the same purport as that at Caesarea Philippi (69).

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"One of you is a devil" (John 6:70): A demon diabolical, or under the influence of the evil one. Jesus does not say that Judas was such when he chose him, but he is a demon now! In John 13:2 and 27, the apostle speaks of the devil entering Judas. How soon the plan to betray Jesus first entered the heart of Judas we do not know (John 12:4). One wonders if the words did not cut Judas to the quick (verse 71).

QUESTIONS

1. Why did the multitude follow Jesus (John 6:2, 26)? At what time of the year (John 6:4)?
2. In how many gospels is the feeding of the 5,000 recorded (John 6:14)?
3. In what activities was Christ most likely engaged while on the mountain (John 6:3; Matt. 5:1, ; 24:3, 4; Mark 4:34)?
4. What was the attitude of Christ toward the needy multitude (John 6:5)? Was He uncertain as to what He should do with these hungry people (John 6:5, 6; Isa. 46:9, 10; Acts 15:18)?
5. Why did Philip, and so many today, attempt to measure all things by the financial yardstick (John 6:7; II Cor. 10:4)? What difficulty did Andrew suggest (John 6:8, 9)? What great fact did each of these two disciples overlook (Jer. 32:17; Rom. 8:31; Phil. 4:13)?
6. What is always characteristic of our Lord's provision (John 6:11-12; II Chron. 31:10; Psa. 81:10; 132:15)? How did the multitude show faith in Christ (John 6:10)? By what four steps did Christ's provision reach the multitude (John 6:11)? Were the disciples responsible for providing the food, or merely distributing it?
7. Of what truth were the men convinced who saw the miracles (John 6:12-14; Deut. 18:15, 18; John 7:40)?
8. What may we learn from Christ's example (John 6:12, 13)? Why did Jesus depart from the multitude (John 6:15)?
9. Should the presence of a storm or the absence of Christ have given the disciples more concern (John 6:15-21)? At what hour did Jesus "walk on the sea" (John 6:19; Matt. 14:28-31)?
10. When, and where, was the discourse on the bread of life delivered (John 6:225, 59)?
11. What two kinds of bread are contrasted in this discourse (John 6:31-33)? By whom were these two kinds of bread given (John 6:32)?
12. Who is the bread from heaven (John 6:33, 41, 48)? What terms are used to describe the bread from heaven (John 6:32, 33, 35, 41, 51)?
13. What are the father's two gifts described in this lesson (John 6:32, 37, 39; 3:16; 17:6-11)?
14. How do men receive the true bread from heaven (John 6:35)? What are the results of eating this true heavenly bread (John 6:35, 50, 51, 54, 56, 57; Isa. 55:2)?
15. What is the "work" (John 6:29) and the "will" of God (John 6:40)? What two objections did the Jews raise to the claims of Christ (John 6:41, 52)? What result of eating this living bread is emphasized in this lesson (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54)?
16. Will anyone who comes to our Lord be freely and fully received (John 6:37)? Why will Christ refuse to cast out any one who comes (John 6:38, 39)? Will you study carefully the four steps in John 6:45)?
17. Why did Christ point the unbelieving Jews to His ascension into heaven (John 6:62, 3133, 38, 41, 42, 50, 51, 58)?
18. Why do many turn back after professing to be Christ's disciple (John 6:60, 64); I John 2:19)?
19. What was Peter's confession of Christ in John 6:68? What had the disciples done before they were sure that Jesus was "Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:69)?
20. Why did Jesus refer to Judas as a devil (John 6:70, 71; 13:27)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year IV

Second Quarter

Lesson 26
John 7

Page 1
Memory Verses: John 7:37

Memory Verse:

"In that last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink' (John 7:37).

Public Reading: John 7:1-10.

CHRIST, THE WATER OF LIFE

Jesus is called "The Son of God" in all four Gospels (Matt. 3:17; 8:29; 14:33; 16:16; 17:5; 26:63; 27:54; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35; John 1:34, 49; 3:16).

Our Lord called Himself "the Son of God" (John 5:25), "making himself equal with God" (John 5:18). Three times Jesus emphatically said: "I AM THE SON OF GOD." (Mark 14:61, 62; John 9:35-37; 10:36).

Jesus in John's gospel repeatedly, made claims about himself that can be applied any to deity, such as:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9).

"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger . ." (John 6:35).

See also John 11:25; 8:58; 17:5; 14:9, 10; 10:30; 6:37).

Today's Lesson

In our lesson today, Jesus goes to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of Tabernacles. A year and a half had passed since He had been to Jerusalem. It was now about six months before His death. The entire section during this stay at Jerusalem in John 7:1-10-21

I. After a Delay Jesus Goes to the Feast (John 7:1-13)

"After these things . ." (John 7:1): This is John's favorite general note of the order of events. John 6:4 tells us a Passover "was nigh." Jesus had been avoiding Galilee as well as Judea for six months. "The Jews sought to kill Him." (John 7:1; 5:18): They had been seeking to do so for eighteen months.

"The Jews feast of tabernacles was at hand" (John 7:2): This is the only New Testament example of this word. See Deut. 16:13; Lev. 22:34, 43. The feast began on the 15th of the month Tisri (end of our September), and lasted seven days, and finally eight days in post-exilic times (Neh. 8:18). It was one of the chief feasts of the Jews. It was six months after and six months before the Passover. It was a joyous feast. The people dwelt in booths to commemorate the time when Israel dwelt in tents. It also celebrated the harvest home. Hence it was thanksgiving for a home and the harvest.

"His brethren . . . Show thyself" (John 7:3, 4): His four half brothers (Matt. 12:46-50; 13:55-58) charge Him with secrecy as they recall how Jesus had withdrawn into the regions of Tyre, Sidon, Decapolis, and Caesarea Philippi. This was foolish to them. Thousands of his disciples had not seen a miracle for six months. They urged him to "go into Judea that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest" (verse 3). They want him to advertise himself. "Do something that leaves no room for doubt," they urged. He

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already had done this but men had been seeking to kill him for eighteen months (John 5:18; 7:1).

"For neither did his brethren believe in Him" (John 7:5): This is sad picture of the stubborn refusal of his four half-brothers to believe in His Messianic claims. Jesus was Mary's firstborn. She had other children after Jesus was born (Matt. 1:25). "This verse explodes the idea that the parties known in the New Testament as our Lord's brothers were sons of Alpheus and cousins to Jesus. The Sons of Alpheus had long since been numbered among the apostles, while our Lord's brothers were still unbelievers. (McGarvey,)

These sarcastic brothers remember the rejections in Nazareth Luke 4:16-31; Mark 6:1-6; Matt. 13:54-58), and also the blasphemous accusation of being in league with Beelzebub when the mother and brothers came to take Jesus home (Mark 3:31-35).

"My time is not yet come . ." (John 7:6): The appointed hour His Gethsemane experience, the cross, and the resurrection could not properly take place before the Passover, which was still about six months away. His brothers, having no message and no manifestation, could themselves at Jerusalem at any time.

"The world . . . me it hateth" (John 7:7) The brothers of Jesus in mind and heart were a part of the world. Jesus rebuked the sins of he world and for so doing the world hated him. The unbelieving world is unable to love Jesus (John 15:18, 23, 24); unbelief always resents exposure (John 3:19; 18:37). So, Jesus bids them take their own advice (verses 8, 3). When His time is fully come, He will manifest Himself. "He abode still in Galilee (verse 9).

"Then went He up also . . . not openly but as it were in secret" John 7:10) Jesus did not go up to the fast to do something spectacular in order to produce conviction. He did not travel with the caravans. Possibly he went through Samaria (Luke 9:59-62). The triumphal entry would come six months later. He went into a curious and hostile atmosphere (verses 11-13). "The Jews" (verse 11) were the hostile leaders in Jerusalem, not the Galilean crowds (John 7:12). These leaders wished to attack Jesus: "Where is that one?"

II. Jesus Teaches in the Temple and Refers to His Previous Visit (John 7:14-24)

"Now, about the midst of the feast Jesus . . . temple . . . taught" (John 7:14): As the feast lasted eight days, the middle of it would be from the third to the fifth day. Though Jesus had come up quietly to prevent public demonstration in His favor, He now taught boldly and openly in the temple. The leaders had asked, "Where is He?" (verse 11) There he was now before their very eyes. His sudden appearance suggests the fulfillment of Mal. 3:1.

"Jew marveled . . . How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15) Jesus had not attended the great theological schools at Jerusalem where the law and the traditions were taught. Yet He knew the law, and tradition better than the teachers themselves. His came from God who sent Him (verse 16). He was God's mouthpiece. While Jesus was not a rabbi in the technical sense, yet he surpassed the professional rabbis in the use of their own methods of debate. Unschooled men in various walks of life forge ahead of men of lesser gifts with school training. Do you remember how Peter and John puzzled the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:13)? A noted scholar says, "This is not an argument against education, but it takes more than education to make a real man." "Christ was in the eyes of the Jews a merely self-taught enthusiast" (Westcott).

"If any man will do his will, he shall know" (John 7:17): This is a spirit of willing obedience to DO HIS WILL. All such will find out that Christ's teaching is divine, and IT IS FROM GOD!

It is wrong to say that "IF we will do God's will, we will know what God's will is." Rather, if we WILL TO DO GOD'S WILL, His revealed Word, we shall know whether our Lord's teaching is God's or not. There must be moral harmony between man's purpose and God's will. "If there be no sympathy there

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can be no understanding. (Wescott) Atheists of all types have NO POINT OF CONTACT for approach to the knowledge of Christ. This fact does not prove the non-existence of God, but simply their own isolation. They are OUT OF TUNE WITH THE INFINITE. Those who bear God's message, seek God's glory (v 18).

"Why go e about to kill me?" (John 7:19) The Jewish leaders marveled at Christ's "ignorance" and boasted of their knowledge of the Law of Moses. Jesus asks a sudden and startling question as an illustration of their failure to keep the Law of Moses. It was proof that they did not keep Moses' law (Ex. 20:13; Matt. 5:39; 45-47; John 5:18)

"People . . Thou has a devil" (John 7:20) Not "the Jews" but the masses. Outside of Jerusalem, the common people did not know of the effort of the rulers to kill Jesus (John 5:18; 7:11f). It is important in this chapter to distinguish clearly the several groups, for example.

1. The Jewish leaders (John 7:13, 15, 25, 26, 30, 32).
2. The multitude from Galilee and elsewhere (John 7:10-13, 20, 32, 40, 49).
3. The common people from Jerusalem (John 7:25).
4. The Roman soldiers (John 7:45f).

"Thou hast a devil" or "demon," as always in the Gospels. These pilgrims make the same charge against Jesus made long ago by the Pharisees in Jerusalem in explanation of the difference between John and Jesus (Matt. 11:18; Luke 7:33) "He is a monomaniac laboring under a hallucination that the people wish to kill him. (Dods)

"Jesus answered . . have done one work . . marvel" (John 7:21) Jesus alludes to the helpless man of John 5:8-18. He had made a man whole. Even the Las of Moses allowed the circumcising of a boy on the eighth day even if it fell on the Sabbath (verses 22-24). The Jews are punctilious about their Sabbath rules and about circumcision on the eighth day. When they clash, they DROP THE Sabbath RULE AND CIRCUMCISE!

The law of love and mercy is OLDER THAN MOSES. The law of circumcision was given to Abraham, and hence is older than the Sabbath law; this law must be kept IF THE SABBATH HAD TO BE BROKEN. Jesus urges them to "judge righteous judgment" (verse 24).

III. A Division among the People (John 7:25-36)

"Some . . of Jerusalem. . . Is not this He. . . the very Christ?" (John 7:25, 26): These were Jerusalem citizens who understood the purposes of the rulers, of which the visitors from Galilee were ignorant. They knew of the threats to kill Jesus (John 5:18). They wondered why the rulers did not seize Jesus, since Jesus "speaketh boldly" in the temple. They began to think the rulers were changing their attitude toward Jesus. They were wrong.

"We know this man . . but when Christ cometh . . ." (John 7:27) The Galilean Jews knew of the family of Jesus (John 6:42), but they knew Jesus only as from Nazareth, not as born in Bethlehem (verse 42). "But when Christ cometh" is a piece of popular theology. "Three things come wholly unexpected – Messiah, a godsend, and a s scorpion" (Sanhedrin 97a). The rulers knew the birthplace to be Bethlehem John 7:42; Matt 2:5f). Some even expected a sudden emergence of the Messiah from concealment with an anointing by Elijah

"Jesus . . temple . . I am from Him" (John 7:28-29) Jesus came "from Him . . He hath sent me . ." They could have known He was God's messiah had they not been prejudiced. Our Lord "CRIED." This was not said quietly, but under the stress of great emotion. "I am from HIM . .!" Jesus is the Interpreter of God to men (John 1:18). He is the Father's Apostle to men.

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"They sought to take Him . . ." (John 7:30) Because He claimed to be sent of God, "making himself equal with God" (John 5:18). "The hour" of His cross had not yet come. "Many of the people believed on Him" (verse 31). The Pharisees could not stand that (verse 32-36) and they sent "officers to take Him" (verse 32). It was "a little while, " about six months to the last Passover of Christ's ministry (verse 33). He knew the end was near. He foretells His death and return to heaven (verses 34-36). The Jews did not comprehend His words, plain as they are to us.

IV. Speech on the Last Day of the Feast, and Its Effect (John 7:37-44)

"In the last day . . . great day of the feast" (John 7:37) The eight day which was "an holy convocation" was kept as a Sabbath (Lev. 33:36). It was observed apparently as a memorial of the entrance into Canaan, hence "the great day of the feast."

"Jesus stood and cried . . . If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." Picture Jesus standing and suddenly crying out this message.

"If we may trust the later Jewish accounts, it was the custom during the first seven days of the priests and people in joyful procession to go to the pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher and bring water thence to pour out before the altar, in commemoration of the water which Moses brought from the rock and which typified the Christ (I Cor. 10:40. If this is so, it is likely that the words of Jesus have reference to this libation, and are designed to draw a contrast between the earthly water which ceases and the SPIRITUAL WATER WHICH ABIDES, similar to the contrast which He presented to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well."

(McGarvey)

The Spirit of God is given to the believer WHEN HE IS OBEDIENT TO THE GOSPEL (Acts 2:38; 5:32; John 7:38, 39; 4:10; 14; I Cor. 10:4) "The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the well-spring of wisdom as a flowing brook" (Prov. 18:4). When Jesus spoke, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (verse 39). That would come on Pentecost (Acts 2:15f).

"Others said . . . This is the Christ" (John 7:41) Many of the people said, "Of a truth this is the Prophet" (verse 40; Deut. 18:15). Others asserted that he was the Christ. The opponents of Jesus denied this; they based their opposition, not upon His character, or his teaching, but upon the fact that he came from Galilee. They did not know that he was born at Bethlehem, according to the prophecies (Micah 5:10; John 7:42; Matt. 2:6).

"There was a division among the people because of him" (John 7:43) A clear split. See John 9:16; 10:19. They were "wishing to seize him" (verse 44), but were restrained (see John 7:30).

V. Confusion among Chief Priests and Pharisees (John 7:45-53)

"Then came the officers . . . Why have ye not brought Him?" (John 7:45): An indignant outburst of the Sanhedrin, both Sadducees and Pharisees, at the failure of the temple police to arrest Jesus. "Apparently they were sitting in expectation of immediately questioning him" (Dods). They were stunned at this outcome.

"The officers . . . Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46) Police officers are not usually carried away by public speeches. The words of Jesus gripped these temple police, not his works (John 7:15, 24). They had fallen under the power of Jesus "as the Galilean peasants had been impressed" (Bernard) in verses 28ff. This was like a fragmentation bomb among the Jewish leaders.

"Pharisees . . . Are you also deceived?" (John 7:47): The Pharisees took the lead in this scornful sneer at the officers. "Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed on Him?" (Verse 48). "What right have

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subordinates to have a mind of their own." (Dods) The temple authorities (rulers) employed these police. "Power was slipping through their fingers" (Dods), and that was the secret of their hostility to Jesus. "This people" (verse 49) or "people of the earth" is akin to our "clod-hoppers." It was a sneer at the ignorant people who BELIEVED upon Jesus. "They are utterly ignorant of the law, and are accursed," these leaders rant. Hence they are easily led astray.

"Nicodemus. . . Doth our law judge any man BEFORE it hear him" (John 7:50, 51): Nicodemus has not been heard from since John 3 when he came to Jesus by night. Now he boldly protests against the injustice of condemning Jesus unheard. He appears once more and only in this gospel (John 19:39) with Joseph of Arimathea as a secret disciple of Jesus. He is a Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin, his present act is courageous.

These exponents of the law (verse 49) were really violating the law of criminal procedure (Ex. 23:1; Deut. 1:16). Nicodemus knew his protest was useless. At least he could show his colors and score the point of justice in Christ's behalf!

"Search. . . out of Galilee ariseth no prophet (John 7:52). "These aristocrats of Jerusalem had a scornful contempt for the rural Galileans." (Bernard) As a matter of fact Jonah, Hosea, Nahum, possibly also Elijah, and Amos were from Galilee. Confused by the question of Nicodemus, the assembly broke up "and every man went unto his own house" (verse 53).

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jesus remain in Galilee (John 7:1,9; 5:18)?
2. How much time was covered by John 7:1 (John 7:2; 6:4)?
3. Describe the feast of the Tabernacles (Ex. 23:16, 17; Lev. 23:33-42; Num. 29:12-38; Deut. 16:13-16)?
4. Why did Christ's brethren urge Him to attend the feast of the tabernacles (John 7:2-5)? Why charge him with acting in secret (verse 4)?
5. Why did Jesus refuse to go immediately to Jerusalem (John 7:6-9)? Why does the world hate Christ (John 7:7)? How only can Christians hold the favor of this world (Rom. 12:2; I John 2:11)?
6. Point out ten different opinions of Christ expressed by the people in this lesson (John 7:12, 15, 20, 25-27, 31, 44, 46)?
7. Did Jesus go up to Jerusalem "openly" with the caravan, or did he travel incognito (John 7:10)?
8. Why did no one dare to defend Christ publicly (John 7:13; 9:22; 12:42)?
9. Why did the Jew marvel at Christ's teaching (John 7:14, 15)? Meaning of "having never learned" (vs. 15)?
10. How would willingness to obey enable one to know the teaching (John 7:17)?
11. Why deny they were seeking to kill him (John 7:20, 18)?
12. Why was the Law of Moses prominent at the feast of tabernacles (John 7:19-22; Deut. 31:10, 11)?
13. What new defense against the charge of Sabbath-breaking (John 7:23)?
14. Point in the first question (John 7:25)? In what sense did they know whence he was (John 7:26, 28)?
15. Why did the Pharisees send officers to take Christ (John 7:31, 32)? What was Christ's message to the officers who came to arrest Him (John 7:33, 34)?
16. How did Christ's teaching affect these officers (John 7:45, 46)?
17. Why did our Lord most likely choose the last day of the feast for His prophecy of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37; Lev. 23:36)? Who may drink of the living water (John 7:37)?
18. What are the two results of drinking the living water that are emphasized (John 7:38; 4:14)?
19. Who did Christ say would receive the Holy Spirit, and when was He to be given (John 7:39)?
20. What attempt did Nicodemus make to save Christ (John 7:50, 51); what was the result (verse 52)?