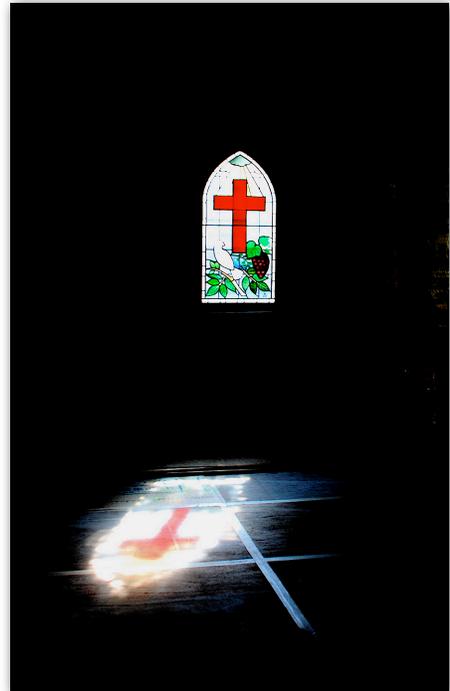


(Note: The following e-mail study-commentary by C J McKnight on the subject titled **JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS** covers the time it was begun on September 3, 2007 to December 8, 2007.)

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 1

The physical cross is meaningless. Many criminals have been crucified on crosses exactly like that upon which the Lord Jesus was crucified. It is not the wood of the cross which is of great value but the person who was crucified is of immeasurable value. Again, it was not the cross but the blood of the cross, the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ which is still efficacious to cleanse the guilty from all sin. His offering on the tree was a peace offering. It produces peace between a righteous God and the unrighteous sinner. It is also the only source for a work of reconciliation between the Lord and mankind. Col. 1:20



Six days before Passover the Lord Jesus entered Bethany. The shadow of the cross was already falling upon Him. He knew the events that were scheduled for Him during that week as He approached Jerusalem. His stop that night was in the house of His friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus whom He had raised for the dead. John 12:1-2 In the process of that evening, Mary brought out some extremely expensive perfume which she was to use in anointing the feet of the Lord Jesus. Its fragrance filled the whole house where they were gathered. Whatever her thoughts and purpose may have been she was motivated by the Spirit of the Lord to perform this gracious and beautiful act.

That it was an act inspired by the Lord is made very obvious by the objections of that one among them who was to betray Him. Judas Iscariot, who was already displaying a spirit of opposition and division. He is a very strong type of that one, who in the end of the age will separate himself from the body of Christ and become the antichrist. The source of the antichrist is

from the midst of the most spiritual body in existence at the approach of the tribulation period. Judas had no use for the poor. He did not care one iota for them. He saw only the monetary value of the perfume, which was a mans wage for a whole year. Judas was a thief. He was the treasurer and periodically helped himself to the common funds of the group of disciples. His sin was compounded by the fact that the funds were the Lord's money. John 12:4-6

Anointed for death. The shadow of the cross was upon Him. His thoughts would have been on that event. He knew the extreme suffering that He would experience as He became sin, that He might rescue every individual, who would trust in His blood, from their sin. John 12:7

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 2

Four days later Jesus is in the house of Simon the leper, still in Bethany. Mt. 26:6 Truly, Jesus associated with the outcast of humanity. A person suffering with leprosy was consider unclean by the Law. We are led to assume that this man had been healed by the Lord Jesus. Here again, he is anointed with a perfume of great costs. The first time, it was His feet which were anointed. Feet generally are not considered to be the most beautiful part of human anatomy. However, there have never been such beautiful feet on any person like those of the Lord Jesus. Their beauty was in the person, but particularly in the message which He brought to the world. A declaration of peace and good news. The message of salvation. Isa. 52:7

This time it is His head which is anointed. As the head of the body, that is His church it is fitting that He be anointed as the great high priest. Col. 1:18 It portrays that holy anointing oil with which the tabernacle in the wilderness was anointed.

Ex. 30:25 Then poured down over the head Until it ran down over his beard and priestly robe. Ps. 133:2 The ointment was in an alabaster box which in itself was of considerable value. To release its contents it was necessary that she break the neck of the bottle and in this manner release the very special spikenard, likewise of great value. Mt. 26:7 Both of these women no doubt brought their prized possessions to the Lord Jesus. What a beautiful lesson we can learn from them, to bring our best unto the Lord. This time

others joined in on the complaint that a better use could be found for the expensive perfume. Leave one in the midst of God's people, like Judas, long enough and they will influence others in a negative fashion, causing them to mumber and complain. Jesus came to her defense by saying that she had done a good thing.

He was anointed in preparation for His death and burial. His life was different from that of any other man who has ever been born into this world. In the eternal counsels of the living God Jesus was predetermined to die the death of the cross. 1 Peter 1:20 He was foreordained to die the death of a habitual criminal. He who is life itself, must die to save mankind. From the foundation of the world, He by whom, and for whom all things were created was destined to be the slain Lamb of God. Rev. 13:8 When we consider what a tremendous price He paid to redeem mankind it is utterly amazing.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 3

Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus. How warped is the heart and thinking of one who could commit such a dishonorable act. Three and one half years walking with Jesus. Hearing His teaching. Observing His miracles and the healing of the sick and afflicted. Even having been a partaker of the healing ministry. Acts 1:17 He was one of the twelve who followed the Lord and was closely associated with Him.

The prophetic words of David fit the situation and give us an insight into what must have been the feelings of the Lord at the time of His betrayal . Ps. 55:12 If Judas was not His enemy and did not necessarily hate the Lord Jesus, then Judas must have been overwhelmed by a great desire for the riches of this world. The love of money is the root of all evil. 1 Tim. 6:10 Judas was blinded and extremely naive in his actions. A person committed to the sin of Judas cannot see the harm and danger which their actions create until it is too late to reverse their deeds. He had meditated for some time about turning Jesus in and now that constant thought of his heart bore fruit. After having partaken of the Passover with the disciples and Jesus., he went out and turned Jesus in to the authorities. According to Psalm forty one, eight, Judas was accounted as being a close friend. They had broken bread together. Yet he betrayed Jesus. He lifted up his heel against Him.

The camaraderie of the disciples must have been something to behold. The Psalmist speaks of him as being a man, his own equal. One with whom he had fellowshiped, a friend, a guide, a good acquaintance. As a group, as a unit they had been together. Their deliberations and conversations had been satisfying. Together they had gone to the house of the Lord to worship. Ps. 55:13-14 Jesus was not fooled when He chose the twelve, He knew each of them and their attitudes. Jesus said to them, that one of them was the devil. He did not make a general accusation but well knew that Judas was that one who would betray Him. John 6:70 After eating of the bread Judas became demon possessed and Jesus commanded Him to quickly perform his vile act. John 13:27 Having received the bread Judas immediately departed and when he went out it was night. John 13:30 In more ways than one, Judas entered into darkness, not only was the night dark but the soul and spirit of that man was walking in the blackness of iniquity and the gall of bitterness. He is a type of the antichrist.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 4

Gethsemane, meaning oil press, this was a garden near Jerusalem where Jesus retired to pray. Mark 14:32 Though He was the Son of God and proclaimed to be God in the flesh, He regularly spent time in prayer to the Father. That should speak volumes to a prayer-less generation. This was His custom and it establishes an example for all of us. If it was necessary for Him, to pray then it is vital for us to follow the model He established. Luke 22:39

Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him into the garden. They seem to be the men closest to His heart. This was not to be the usual prayer session. It was to be an intense moment in the life of the Lord Jesus. We get a glimpse of the human side of the Lord in these heart gripping moments of prayer. The Amplified Version of the New Testament makes the experience of Jesus very dramatic and awesome. He, “began to be struck with terror and amazement and deeply troubled. He said; “my soul is exceedingly sad, overwhelmed with grief, so that it almost kills me.” Mark 14:33-34 Take note that it was His soul, the creature, the natural, the fleshly side of His nature which is expressing these thoughts.

Even though He was the Son of God, His natural man had to make a full surrender to the will of the Father. Never an easy thing to do. The price always seems too great to the flesh, but the result of total surrender is to be greatly blessed of the Lord. Jesus well knew the Messianic statement of David that His soul would not be left in hell or the grave. He was assured of a glorious resurrection. Ps. 16:10 Acts 2:27 He went forward a little, farther than any man has ever gone. There alone, he fell to the ground, the intensity of that hour, the burden of the consecration required was so great that it over-whelmed Him. The fleshly nature sought deliverance from the horror of becoming sin. The sinless one, the man of perfection was about to assume the filth of all the sin of everyone born into this world. The sinless one was about to become the sin bearer of mankind, that we might be made to be the righteousness of the Lord. 2 Cor. 5:21 His humanity is displayed openly that we might behold it and realize that we too must make the same consecration. Being willing to serve Him even though it might cost us our life. As a matter of fact, if we lose our life for His sake, we find true life. If we seek to preserve this natural life we will lose it. Mt. 10:39

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 5

Jesus requested the three disciples to, watch with Him. He had hoped that they would bolster Him in that hour of trial and the eternal decision which He would have to make in the garden. He looked for their support and comfort. Humanly speaking, He felt He could rely on them. When He returned to them, He found them sleeping. Mark 14:34, 40, 41 Three times they failed to watch with Him, and fell asleep. Do you think that they might exemplify the church of today? In the parable of the ten virgins, they all slumbered and slept.

Mt. 25:5

On returning from His first prayer session, finding them asleep, He singled out Peter with a word of warning. In it He gave the key to a triumphant Christian life. Watch and pray, or pay the consequences. Be tempted and learn of the weakness of the flesh when tempted. Truly, the spirit desires to do the will of the Lord, but the weakness of fleshly desires must first be defeated. Mk. 14:38 Jesus was facing the fulfillment of a decision, made in the eternal tribunals of the Lord, before the world was created. Now, His natural being must be brought into submission and obedience to the plan of

redemption. How very human Jesus was. He was made to be in the likeness, the similitude of men. That not only includes the body but the soul and spirit as well. He established an example that as a man, he was victorious. We then have this model before us that we may emulate His triumphant life. He was like us physically, we can be like Him spiritually.

Phil. 2:7-8

The man, Jesus, prayed that the cup of bitterness and iniquity which He must partake of be removed from Him. He was the very epitome of righteousness, holiness and all things that are good and right. Now He must partake of that cup of iniquity. The pure, the sinless spirit which dwelt in Him was grossly repulsed at such an undertaking. What person would not be. Jesus had learned to be obedient by the things which He had suffered in His ministry. Heb. 5:8 All periods of suffering, times of difficulties and reverses may be used as steps of learning. Even though they are negative, they can be turned into positive circumstances which advance us spiritually. All things work together for good. It is here that the final commitment of the total man was made. Therefore, the man Jesus was able to face the dire consequences which were about to break in on His life. Lord grant us the courage to pray not my will be done but your perfect will be wrought in my life. It pays big, and eternal dividends.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 6

My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death. Mark 14:34 Who can understand the depths of the agony of soul which had come upon the Lord Jesus. He was about to enter in to an experience the likes of which none other had ever, nor ever will experience. He was about to become the Lamb of God. The only offering which could possibly remove the guilt and condemnation which is in the heart of every sinner. He was about to pour out His soul, unto death. The soul life is in the blood, psuche, the animal life which is in all living beings and is centered in the blood. The life of the flesh is in the blood. Lev. 17:11 In the midst of the throne of heaven there is the witness and testimony of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus. Rev. 5:6 As the great high priest, Jesus entered heaven with the blood of His sacrifice. When Mary came to the tomb Jesus told her not to touch Him for He had not yet ascended into heaven, to His Father. He did not descend, He ascended taking His blood, the blood of redemption into heaven and the

mercy seat. John 20:17 Jesus entered the most holy place in heaven. The true, the Most Holy Place and that not without blood, His very own blood. Heb. 9:7 He needed to make entry but once, not yearly, and has obtained an eternal redemption for us. Heb. 9:12

Christ, is our propitiation. He is our, Greek, hilasterion, our mercy seat. An atonement which is effective when faith in that shed blood is exercised. Rom. 3:25 The emphasis in this verse is on the sins that are past, or those who believed on the Lord under the age of innocence and the Law. All salvation is dependent upon the shed blood of the Lord Jesus. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Heb. 9:22 He included all of mankind in His blessed act of atonement and all may come and partake of His forgiveness. 1 John 2:2 His work of atonement demonstrates the great love of God toward all mankind. 1 John 4:10 The Lord Jesus is our mercy seat. The only mercy seat that has ever been acceptable to the Lord. It is the throne of grace. Gloriously, we may come boldly to the mercy seat in heaven and always find forgiveness. The tabernacle and the temple were but shadows, copies of the real thing which is in heaven. We now come directly to that which is forever settled in heaven. In Christ we worship at the real mercy seat. No longer do those who seek forgiveness come before a type and shadow but now, in all reality, we approach that which is living, eternal and everlasting. Heb. 8:5

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 7

The agony of Christ in Gethsemane reaches far beyond just saying a prayer. The burden, the weight of all that He saw in His immediate future was staggering. He was to taste, experience, death for every individual born into this world. He who is the very essence of life was to die, that mankind upon whom is the sentence of death, might not die but live eternally. Heb. 2:9 The horrible event which He faced was completely foreign to His eternal being. Jesus understood, all too well, that it was not the physical suffering of the cross which would produce the greatest suffering. It would be that which was not visible, the anger and wrath of the LORD against sin. Consider the Messianic mood of these words. See if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow. Jesus, in His own body and soul bore every sorrow of every kind ever to be felt by mankind. Just think of it, at one time, the totality of the sins and sorrows of all was poured out on

Him. Jesus bore the brunt of the anger of the Father against sin. Fierce anger, the full, total wrath of the Most High. It was as if His bones were on fire. His feet caught in a net. Jesus was made to be desolate and weak. Lam. 1:12-13

Further evidence of the terrible physiological impact on the Lord Jesus is to be found in Isaiah fifty-three. In verse three, He is seen as a person who is despised. Even in our day there are still those who scorn and disesteem Him. He is yet being cast aside and rejected. The man of sorrows, one who took upon Himself the grief and pain of all. He stepped in and became the substitute for every person who will ever be born into this world. All the anxiety, the sicknesses, the diseases of this world were laid upon Him. The suffering, the pain, the heart ache endured by the human race was also heaped upon Him. He wholly took our place and purchased release for all. We need to learn how to cast all of our care upon Him, and let Him care for us. He wants to ease the pain and suffering and carry the burden that is too heavy for us to bear. 1 Peter 5:7 Upon Him, the Lord Jesus was laid the iniquity of the whole of mankind. There is not one for whom He did not bear the judgment and punishment of sin. Isa. 53:6 God made the sinless one, the innocent lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, His only begotten son, to be sin for the forgiveness of the whole of the world. He did not sin, but He took the place, in judgment and the full responsibility for each and every person who will ever live on earth. He is God's sacrifice for our sin. 2 Cor. 5:21

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 8

Being in agony. The word agony, in Greek, is derived from the emotions, the anxiety of the Greek athletes who were about to enter into competition. Jesus, the man, was under terrific pressure as He faced complete surrender to the will of the Father and His commitment to his sacrificial death. His prayer was more earnest, more intent, that is with His whole being. A prayer of this nature requires strength and stamina. It is not simple saying words but involves the total nature of the individual praying. Luke 22:44 This was a prayer of travail. The Father was to be satisfied as He beheld the travail of the soul of Lord Jesus. Isa. 53:11 Jesus toiled in prayer. This was hard labor, not unlike travail at the time of the birth of a child.

This season of such intense and laborious prayer helps identify Melchisadec as the Lord Jesus. Hebrews 5:7 is a direct reference to this season of strong, passionate prayer as prayed by Jesus in the garden. In the days of His sojourn here on earth His supplication was heard by the Father. Like any prayer of travail, had men heard Him praying they would have criticized Him because of the obvious strong emotions involved. He prayed with strong crying, with a loud voice, crying out to the Father. It was a forcible, boisterous prayer filled with the cry of one under extreme pressure. Copious tears were shed. Jesus prayed a prayer that is not foreign to the church in times of spiritual awakening. Few will experience it in their entire life time. Many, even in the ministry do not understand such a manifestation of the Spirit. Some have even considered it to be a demonic possession, so totally is it misunderstood.

The fact that Jesus shed drops of blood during this season of prayer demonstrates to us the magnitude of the tremendous pressure under which He prayed. Luke 22:44 It was not a beautiful scene, nor was it quite and peaceful. The anguish, the great sorrow, the urgency of the hour was upon Him. There was no turning away from becoming the lamb of God. Jesus prayed in the Spirit, making intercession for the world with groaning which cannot be voiced, or expressed by any language. Rom. 8:26 There is a prayer then which goes beyond all verbalized prayers and it is most effective. It is the prayer of all prayers and most successful before the Lord. It is not easily executed for it is a prayer of the Spirit and unless the individual praying is lost in or under the power of the Spirit it is not prayed.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 9

Looming large in the life of the Lord Jesus at this period of His life is that rogue disciple, Judas Iscariot. Oddly, his name Judas, means Judah. Judah was the nation, with the jealous religious leaders which were to reject the Lord. John 1:11 He was the only disciple who was not from Galilee. Jesus from the very beginning recognized the fact that He had chosen the twelve and commented that one is a devil. Jesus was not deceived in His choice of Judas. John 6:70 The purpose was that we might understand that those with the same spirit are in the church today.

Of necessity, the element of Satan must always be in close proximity to the reality which is in Christ. The antichrist will come out of the last day church. Judas is a type of that person. Jesus taught on the importance of the communion table. His speech was very plain as he declared that those who recognized the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus would have His presence dwelling with them. John 6:53-58 Those who heard His message had no doubts concerning the meaning of His words. They were strongly and truly spoken and are truth. This created a real dissension among the Jews. Even some of His disciples were disturbed by His teaching and were unwilling to accept His doctrine. From that time, some of His followers left Him and followed Him no more. Oddly enough, this is recorded in John 6:66 When speaking of the one who would betray Him, He knew that it would be Judas Iscariot. John 6:71

After the devil had motivated the heart of Judas to betray the Lord, Jesus washed his feet along with the other disciples. How many of us, knowing as Jesus did, that Judas was a turn coat, would humbly and lovingly wash the feet of such a character. That foot washing service was not a ritual but a spiritual experience for them. Jesus proclaimed them to be clean, but not all of them. Again He knew who it was that would betray Him. John 13:1-11 That one to whom He would give the piece of bread dipped into the Passover dinner would be the betrayer. Though the disciples saw and heard, they still did not comprehend. How slow some are to respond to things spiritual. They must have heard the command of the Lord that the wicked intent of Judas be done quickly. John 13:27 Judas arose from the feast and went out and the scripture says; that it was night. Judas had indeed come to the darkest moment of his life, he had left the presence of the Lord and had entered satanic darkness.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 10

Judas was not possessed by a sudden inspiration to act as he did. Jesus, who is the Word made flesh would have been very familiar with the prophetic utterance concerning him. Judas was considered to be a friend, and a close one at that. He was one of twelve men chosen exclusively to accompany the Lord Jesus and to partake in His ministry. He was a thorn in the flesh, a person of disruptive nature and character. He certainly destroyed any promises or covenant that was made between Jesus and

His disciples. Ps. 55:20 He was a man clever with words and able to motivate others. But his heart was far from the words of his mouth. They were words of separation, disruption, filled with malice and able to pierce like a sword. Ps. 55:20 Evidence, the trouble caused over his words concerning the anointing of the Lord Jesus. They murmured, not just Judas complained but his influence was seen on the others. Mark 14:5

Jesus in His prayer rejoiced inasmuch as he had lost none of His disciples. That is, with the exception of Judas whom He called the son of perdition. John 17:12 In introducing His disciples Jesus said that one was a devil, a slanderer and a false accuser. John 6:70 Yet it was necessary that a man of such disposition be among them. Even as the devil has access to the throne of the Lord, where he is ever accusing those who belong to the Lord. Rev. 12:10 That Judas was demon possessed there is no question. From the beginning Jesus said that he was a devil. Now he is labeled the son of perdition a title which is also given to the antichrist in the end of the age. The son of perdition in the last days is the instigator of a falling away from the faith. 2 Thess. 2:3 He will also present himself as the Lord Jesus by means of revelation. Both of these individuals are totally sold out to Satan. They are beyond any redemption or salvation.

Jesus in His messages had subtly warned Judas concerning his action. He was the treasurer of the group but was also a thief having taken from the common funds for his own use. John 12:6 Jesus taught that we are to lay up treasures in heaven which are beyond the reach of thieves. Mt. 6:20 Such a statement must have brought conviction to the heart of Judas, but no repentance. Jesus also warned that the hidden things, words spoken in secret would be revealed. No cover up will work with the Lord. All secrets will be made known. All duplicity will be revealed. Lk. 12:2-3

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 11

The fulfillment of a wicked covenant. Judas had made an agreement with the high priests to betray the Lord Jesus into their hands. Following the sinful condition of his heart, the motive was money. Thirty pieces of silver. Mt. 26:15 This same value, by the Law, was to be paid to a person whose slave had been killed by the ox of another individual. Ex. 21:32 It also coincides with the obvious prophetic vein in the experience of Zechariah

(Jehovah remembers). More than that, Jehovah foreknew, therefore the prophetic utterance. Zech. 11:13 The inflection of the voice of the prophet must have expressed his disdain for the meager value they had placed on his work. There is a bit of satire in the words a, 'goodly price, that I was priced of them.' There is no monetary value which may be placed on the Christ of God. His value cannot be compared to anything in the whole of the universe or in time or eternity. His worth exceeds all. It cannot be estimated.

Judas came with a large group of soldiers and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees. The exact number cannot be determined but we may be assured that it was not a small number. They came to capture the light of the world, with lanterns, torches staves and swords. Jesus did not wait for them to come to him but He went forward to meet them, and said to them, 'Whom are you seeking?' John 18:3 Their response was Jesus of Nazareth. When He responded to them He manifested the power of His Word. "I am He." The whole troop immediately went backwards and fell to the ground. When Jesus spoke the words "I am" He was invoking the mighty name and being of the Almighty. He also demonstrated to them that they could not arrest Him as they would a common criminal. For them to take Him, He must submit to such activity, otherwise, they did not stand a chance of laying a hand upon Him.

The sign of betrayal agreed upon was that of a kiss. Only a warped mind could take such a beautiful sign of friendship and love and turn it into a dastardly deed of this sort. It gives us a real insight into the total lack of spirituality in the life of Judas. Having lived with Jesus and partaken daily of His ministry and love, his rejection of the teachings of Jesus, only increased the wickedness of his heart. He had become calloused and totally without even human compassion. Mt 26:48

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 12

Judas came to Jesus identifying Him with that kiss of betrayal. The Amplified Version expands on the greeting and its nature. "Hail (greeting, good health to You, long life to You) Master! And he embraced Him and kissed Him with [pretended] warmth and devotion. Mt. 26:49 What a tremendous lie, both in word and in action. He had to now that they would

take the life of the Lord Jesus. The embrace and kiss must have been excruciating difficult for Jesus who had known what Judas was from the beginning. Of all the acts of betrayal committed in this world, there never has been one as vile and wicked as the betrayal of the Lord Jesus.

How beautiful the response of Jesus, He called Judas, Friend, a comrade, a fellow, a partner. Mt. 26:50 What an example. So many human emotions could have welled up in the heart of the Lord Jesus at this moment of time. In it all He maintained His spiritual dignity and responded with kindness toward Judas. He is constantly the perfect example. He taught us to love our enemies. Those of the household of faith can hurt one another in a deeper manner than the ungodly. We still must love them Bless them when they curse you. Do good, heap coals of fire upon those who hate you. Pray for those who demonstrate enmity toward you. It is amazing how praying for those who do not like us will change our attitude toward them. That is right, we changed whether they do or not. Our whole attitude and reaction is altered when we pray for those who oppose us. Mt. 5:44

A display of temper when calm is needed. It was not Jesus who lost His cool, but that man Peter. That disciple who was so ready to portray the natural man with his reactions. He actually took a swipe at a servant of the high priest and sliced off his ear. He was going to protect the Lord and go to battle for Him. Take up the sword, fight back and you will die by the sword. Peter put up your sword. Christian, react like Jesus and remember His teachings. Always the mediator and the healer, Jesus replaced his ear and healed it. Always the teacher, He used this as an occasion to state that those who live by the sword will die by the sword. Luke 22:49 Our human responses to situations in life could well be our undoing and defeat. The carnal nature is destructive to the Spiritual man. Contrary-wise the Spiritual man will eradicate the human, carnal nature and produce the life of Christ in us.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 13

Jesus was led away, bound like a common criminal, to the house of Annas (grace of Jehovah), this man as well as others who judged Jesus failed to realized that the grace of Jehovah stood before them and that they were judging Him. Annas had been the high priest but had been removed from

that office. He was a man who still had considerable political clout. Also the current high priest, Caiaphas was his son-in-law. John 18:12-13

Caiaphas is an example of the wisdom, yet the ignorance of religion. His knowledge of the plan of the Lord was true. John 11:49 However in his conceit he failed to see the fulfillment of his very own statement, or prophecy, as Jesus stood before him. Note Prov. 26:12 Caiaphas had prophesied that one should die for the nation. Also that He would gather together in one, all the children of God. Sounds like the Second Coming. But, he did not speak these words from his own understanding nor spiritual wisdom. His words were inspired of the Lord. John 11:50-51 They could only see Jesus as competition for their religion and therefore plotted from that day to kill Him. John 11:53 Amazingly, in their extreme blindness they could not see how their very actions were in accord with the prophecies which they had studied all their lives. Religious darkness is gross darkness. Like that of Egypt, in which there was no ability to move from their place or position. Ex. 10:21-23

Looking for a reason to charge Him with insurrection against the ruling powers they questioned Him concerning His disciples. They had seen the huge crowds which followed Him and though they knew better, they were seeking a cause with which to condemn Him.. They also sought to trap Him because of His teachings. Doctrine, after all is the belief and teachings of truth. One cannot preach, or teach concerning the Lord Jesus without it being doctrine. John 18:19 Jesus made no excuse for the things which He had taught. He had declared them openly in the temple and in synagogues every where. John 18:20 Jesus called for fairness in their accusations. Let those who heard Him teach in their places of worship give testimony as to His words. He well knew that there were those standing there who had heard Him in the temple and synagogue. Here again prophecy is fulfilled before their very eyes. He is struck by one of the officers as an act of reproach and contempt. Thus the words found in Job 16:13 were accomplished. It was but the beginning of much physical suffering which was to be inflicted upon Him.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 14

During the night hours Jesus was grossly mistreated by the guards who had captured Him and were to lead Him from place to place. Here too, their actions fit into the prophetic utterances concerning this period of His life. The mocker, the smiting which He endured was declare in Ps. 35:15-16 They made sport of Him by blindfolding Him and then challenging Him to identify the person who struck Him. They spent the night reviling and blaspheming the Lord Jesus. Luke 22:63-65 There was no respite nor escape from the constant opposition and cruelty of that night.

Often the emphasis is on Peter and his denial but it is well to note that 'they all forsook Him and fled.' Mt. 26:56 Such a statement does not at all reveal the intensity of the emotions stirring in His heart and soul. True, He is the Son of God, but He is also the son of man. As a man He was subject to all human reactions and feelings. In that hour He felt the loneliness of one who was forsaken by all. He was in trouble and this could well have been His prayer. "Be not far from me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help." Ps. 22:11 While the Psalmist is writing from experience he is also speaking prophetically of the extreme emotions of the Lord Jesus in the trying times which had come upon Him. The shame, the reproach, the rejection which was now a part of His life was so great as to break His heart. The enormity of what He must become in order to bring salvation to mankind was a great weight, physically and spiritually, to Him. In it all, He was alone, He found none who could pity or comfort Him. Ps. 69:20

It was all in the eternal plan formulated by the Lord for the redemption of mankind. All that was happening and all that the future held was because He took our place. He suffered every temptation common to man that he might be able to be with us and comfort us in our hour of temptation. Heb. 2:18 In every problem of life He is there to lift us with His Word. Ps. 119:50 He has not promised that our life would be trouble free but He does assure us that when we face the problems of life, there is a comfort available whereby we may be comforted. 2 Cor. 1:4 We have an assured double source of comfort, The Word and the Spirit.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 15

Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin, (the council or assembly). This was the highest court of justice for the nation of Israel at that time. After

spending a night being berated by His captors. Now, early in the morning, He is brought before this body of some seventy men, which was led by the high priest. Caiaphas was the high priest at that time.

Mt. 26:57 This was supposedly a court of religious justice. It was anything but that. They had determined before they arrested Jesus that they would seek a cause whereby they could take Him and kill Him. Mt. 26:3-4 What took place that early morning hour in the Sanhedrin was but a mock decision and totally unfair and criminal.

The only way possible for them to condemn Him was to find people, who would bear false witness against Him. Their decision and conduct was contrary to the Law. Ex. 20:16 They manifest total disrespect for their own teachings. Had such an injustice been done to any one of them, there would have been a great uproar, and a strong proclaiming of the rights of the Law. In spite of many false witnesses trying to accommodate them, they found none. Further more, those who came, as liars could not agree as to a cause with which to punish Him. Mark 14:56 Words spoken by the mouth have their origin in the heart. Mt. 12:34 Let a person speak long enough and if the heart is the heart of a liar they will eventually reveal that which is in their heart and contradict themselves.

The Law required that a man bearing false witness be required to stand before the priests and the judges with the man whom he was accusing of wrong doing. The court, in this case the Sanhedrin, was to inquire diligently, in other words to thoroughly question the accused and the accuser. If the accuser was found to be a false witness, then the penalty which he had sought to impose on the accused would be applied to him. Deut. 19:16-20 It was an evil thing to bear false witness. That condemns the whole Sanhedrin as well as the two false witnesses who had come forward. The judgment sought of the Sanhedrin was not a light sentence, they were seeking a death penalty. Their calling out for His death was like calling that very sentence upon themselves. They were not ignorant of the Law. Their religious zeal, their fear of losing their grip on the people, and hatred of their hearts toward one who had such a great ministry among the people overwhelmed them to do evil.

Any review of the circumstances in the life of the Lord Jesus at this time of His life would be incomplete without taking a look at Simon Peter. When he came to Jesus his name was Simon (hearer, or hearing) which follows a pattern found in Bible names. So often the name bestowed upon people at birth is like a prophecy, indicating their character, an attitude or their nature, or even an event which will occur at some time in their life. When Simon heard the good report, he followed Jesus. John 1:40-41

Jesus immediately changed his name to Peter. General taken to mean a stone or a rock. Easton, however makes his name to mean, "a mass of rock detached from the living rock." This is interesting, for it is a detached piece of stone then it is separated and not a part of the living rock. Unfortunately, though temporarily, Peter very positively detached himself from Jesus. Jesus was not referring to Peter when declaring that He would build a church founded upon a rock, but to Himself. Our LORD, Jehovah is the rock upon which He is building His church. Ps. 28:1 There is but one foundation and that is the Lord Jesus, the one who gave Himself for His church. 1 Cor. 3:11

Peter was one of the three who make up the inner circle of Apostles. He was a part of the important events in the ministry of the Lord Jesus. When Jesus asked His twelve if they would also go away and desert Him. It was Peter who spoke up and proclaimed the Jesus had the "words of eternal life." Further more he said; we believe and are certain that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. John 6:68-69 His statement is certainly powerful and straightforward. It would lead one to think that he was a stalwart and unbreakable follower of the Lord. Following the prediction of the Lord Jesus of Peters threefold denial of Him prior to the dawn of the next day, Peter went into complete denial. Claiming that he was willing to die with the Lord rather than even think of denying Him. Mt. 26:34-35 Immediately the other disciples all chimed in and stated their undying determination to follow Jesus, whatever the circumstances. How fickle and very typical of our human nature. How many in today's world, under the impact of the moving of the Spirit have made a promise to follow Jesus, even unto death. But now are desperately busy about seeking their own ways and pleasure. How very, very human His disciples were.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 17

In life, there is nothing which creates more heartache than being denied by the closest of friends. The words of Job are very fitting here, "He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me." Job 19:13 Even Christians will find that in life there will be times of extreme hurt, of anguish and despair over the untoward acts and attitudes of others. Jesus had come to one of those moments when He felt as if all had forsaken Him. Gone were the happy times which they had spent together. The camaraderie which had been built up between the Lord Jesus and His disciples seemed far in the past. Their promise to stand with Him had proven to be so fickle. Peter reacted just as Jesus said he would, and denied the Lord Jesus on three different occasions. John 13:38 Jesus was obviously within hearing and sight of Peter at this time for He turned and looked at him. Then Peter remembered and went out and wept bitterly. Luke 22:61-62

From their reaction to the words of the Lord Jesus regarding the temple it is obvious that the temple had become the object of worship rather than the Lord. Their lack of spiritual discernment caused them to miss completely that He was making reference to His body and not the temple. His words were twisted to make Him to seem to be an enemy of their religious beliefs. His silence to the false accusations stirred the high priest until he stood and commanded Jesus to give an answer. Are you the Christ of God. His answer most definitely did not please the high priest nor the Sanhedrin before whom He stood. Jesus told them in no uncertain terms that, they would see Jesus seated at the right hand of power and coming in glory. This fact is verified by the word found in Rev. 1:7. Every eye shall see His glorious coming. Not only those who brought false judgment against Him that day but all who have lived on the earth will behold His glorious coming. Every eye, regardless of their status, living or dead, all will behold Him coming in glory. Mt. 26:64

This elicited an uproar and manifestation of religious frenzy, and anger. So stirred was the high priest that he tore his clothes and called for a condemnation of blasphemy. His compatriots cried out in unison that He was deserving of death. Mt. 26:65 Their immediate reaction was to spit in His face, to beat on Him and to challenge Him to misuse the gift of

discernment. There is no anger like that of a mob unless it is the reaction of a group of religious bigots.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 18

Immediately, in the morning shows the urgency and the determination to rid themselves of the religious competition which they felt Jesus to be. Mark 15:1 They could not stand His popularity and His ability to meet the needs of the people, for body, soul and spirit. The whole leadership of the temple agreed together that Jesus should be put to death. Mt. 27:1 Therefore He was bound and taken before Pontius Pilate who at that time was governor over the area in which Jerusalem was located. His jurisdiction included much more territory than just Israel. He was a man of great authority and who was known to hated the Jews.

They brought Him into the governors judgment court. However they themselves would not enter the court for they were about to celebrate the Passover and would have been defiled and would not have been able to participate in the Passover. John 18:28 The true Passover was there in their midst. They were to slay a lamb for their Passover, while the real Passover Lamb stood before them and they were calling for His death. 1 Cor. 5:7 How ironic.

Pilate, therefore had to go outside of the judgment hall to inquire of them concerning the cause of this uproar and what accusations were to be brought against Jesus. They, then declared Him to be an evil man, therefore they brought Him to Pilate. John 18:30 According to Luke there was a multitude of people (or should it be called a mob) who were involved. Luke 23:1 How extreme, Jesus was the righteousness of God, not an evil man. Their accusations now became political and financial for they accused Him of refusing to pay taxes unto Caesar. Luke 23:2 It is very likely that they themselves had cheated on their payment of taxes. He went about doing good to all who came to Him. Pilate tried to pass the responsibility back on the Jewish leaders who stood there his suggesting to them was that they take Jesus and judge Him according to their Law. Those words had to be words of bitterness to them for they well knew that they could not condemn Him under the Law. Men who spent their time studying the Law,

well knew that their actions were contrary to the Law. Their confession was, "it is not Lawful." John 18:31 Never the less, they had already falsely accused Him, contrary to the Law. They had condemned Him unjustly and were now crying out for His blood. It is a miraculous act of the Lord that He can take a situation which is so extremely ugly and turn it into the most wonderful work of salvation.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 19

Born, King of the Jews. The wise men came seeking this babe upon whom had been bestowed the name Jesus, or Savior. They were to introduce Him as King of the Jews, a title which was to be much maligned during His trial and crucifixion. Mt. 2:2 From the very beginning, it had the seal of death upon it. Herod sought Him that he might kill Him. Mt. 2:16 They gave Him that title as a prophecy which would become an issue in His trial, suffering and death. While the title was God given, it was rejected by the very people over whom He would have ruled. From it's inception it became a statement which bore the seal of one who was to be unwanted and cast off. Denied and crucified. Never has there been one with such great authority, who did so much good and was such a tremendously good person, so wrongfully treated. Note: Isa. 53:3 He is unique in every aspect of His life, death, resurrection and ascension to the throne of God.

The multitude which accompanied Him on His triumphant entrance to the city of Jerusalem proclaimed Him to be the King who came in the name of the Lord according to Luke. Luke 19:38 John added to that by saying that they also called Him the King of Israel. John 12:13 Such attention by so many and such an outpouring of praise and joy would certainly have created consternation among the religious leaders of that day. This is evidenced by the Pharisees who tried to get Jesus to silence the loud praises of the people. Luke 19:39 Nathanael, on coming to the Lord Jesus, without hesitation, declared Him not only to be the King of Israel but also the Son of God. John 1:49

Inevitably, Pilate must ask the question, are you the King of the Jews. Jesus responded by saying is this inquiry of yourself or does it come from those who are my accusers? Pilate responded your own have faulted you and brought you to me, what have you done? That is an excellent question,

just what had He done that was evil or deserved the treatment that He was receiving. The answer is of course, absolutely nothing worthy of the actions of the priest and the people. The Lord Jesus answered saying that His kingdom is not of this world. Had it been His disciples would have resisted and not allowed Him to be taken captive. John 18:33-36 This is a key that applies even today, His kingdom is not of this world, not then, not now. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom and will not be established on earth until after He returns.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 20

Are you a king then? John 18:37 Pilate was completely without an understanding of the greatness of the one who stood before him. In His appearance there was nothing about Him to even suggest that He was a king. Little did Pilate know that the King of kings stood before him. Jesus responded to his question in the affirmative. While also stating that He was born to be King and that He had come proclaiming the truth. It was a golden opportunity for Pilate to become acquainted with the truth. Pilate becomes an example of many who have been confronted with the truth of the gospel. Then, only to turn a deaf ear toward what they have heard. The cause of the rejection on his part could have been racial, political or strictly spiritual blindness. His response, what is truth, sounds as though his heart was filled with bitterness. John 18:37-38

Returning to the mob awaiting his decision, Pilate gave them an answer which they had not wanted to hear. I find no fault in Him at all. At least, as one who bore the responsibility of a judge he was able to render a proper verdict. The silence of the Lord Jesus in the face of all the accusations by the chief priests and the elders made against Him had an impact on Pilate. He marveled greatly. Mt. 27:12 -14 Jesus' refusal to enter into a debate with His accusers was but one more prophetic sign being fulfilled, showing that He was indeed the Christ of God. Isa. 53:7

Innocent blood. Mt. 27:4 Truer words were never spoken. Thank the Lord for the purity, the innocence, the holiness of the blood of Christ. All of the great multitude of sacrifices made prior to and under the Law cannot cleanse from one spot or stain of sin. They were but appeasements offered until the true sacrifice would come. There is absolutely no other offering

acceptable to the Lord God, but the innocent blood of the Lamb of God. Heb. 9:11-12 When he saw the consequences of his betrayal Judas is filled with guilt and regret. He knew now that he had indeed betrayed the Man of absolute innocence. He attempted to return the reward given him of the chief priests and the elders, but they rejected it, proclaiming it to be blood money. The stubbornness and hardness of their hearts is astonishing. They heaped guilt on Judas by their refusal of the money and their words to him. Mt. 27:1-5 He had been so completely blinded by his love of money that he could not see the results of his betrayal until it was too late.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 21

Pilate though he had found a way whereby he could avoid having to make a decision. He learned that Jesus had started His ministry in Galilee and that there was the possibility that He was a Galilean. He immediately sent Him to Herod, who just happened to be in Jerusalem at that time, for Galilee was Herod's jurisdiction. How is that for passing the buck. Luke 23:5-7

Herod received Him gladly for he had sought an opportunity to see for himself the many reports that he had heard about this Man. While the atmosphere was friendly, the purpose was not right. Herod sought a demonstration of the power of the Lord through a miracle. Jesus would not respond to such an attitude of heart. His purposes were to help and benefit not to make a display of the miraculous powers which were invested in Him. In spite of the many questions posed by Herod, Jesus did not respond with one word. As the Lamb, he remained silent. Acts 8:32 All this while the chief priests and scribes stood hotly, loudly, brazenly, mightily accusing Him. It does not take much imagination to feel the heat of this violent mob by this time. They were filled with great anger and demanded His death. Luke 23:10

Despite his attitude at his first meeting Jesus, Herod was soon to be caught up in the fanatical spirit that prevailed over the occupants of Jerusalem. Herod, with his soldiers began to mistreat Him, ridiculing Him and mocking Him. They then placed a brilliant and beautiful robe on Him and returned Him to Pilate. Luke 23:10-11 In the process, these two Pilate and Herod

who had up to until that time been enemies, now became friends. Luke 23:12

Pilate assembled the high priests and the rulers of the people as well as the people. His decision was true and strait forward. He had well examined Jesus and had found no cause or proof of the accusations which they were making against Him. Their accusations were without merit and in direct and bold contradiction of the Law of Moses. Ex. 20:16 Neither Pilate or Herod had been able to find any fault in Him, let alone a cause for death. Luke 23 :15 Pilate desired to punish Him and then release Him. They responded with a great and united voice, do away with Him. Release Barabbas unto us. Pilate wanting to free Jesus tried again but their hue and cry was one, Crucify Him! Crucify Him!

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 22

You have a custom. At this feast the local Roman governor would condescend to the people by releasing one of their country men who had been imprisoned. He offered them Barabbas, whose name means, son of the father. Some commentators have discovered in ancient manuscripts that he was also known as Jesus Barabbas, in contrast to Jesus, which is called the Christ. Jesus or Joshua were not uncommon names in those days nor are they today, in certain countries. Such a situation was not coincidental. It was an act of God. A powerful message of salvation is to be found in this instance. The most innocent one taking the place of the most guilty. The Lamb of God took our place, receiving our just punishment that we might be released from all guilt and condemnation.

Barabbas was a notable prisoner. His name was not unknown by any means among the population. He could well have enjoyed great popularity, in spite of his reputation. His criminal record pretty well covered the spectrum of unrighteous acts. He had been responsible for leading an insurrection against the Roman political powers that prevailed at that time. His attempt to drive out the Romans would have made him a popular figure in the country. He and his cohorts were still considered to be of such danger that they were not only imprisoned but lay bound or perhaps even chained or in stocks. Mark. 15:7 He was also a murderer for in the time of his rebellion he had committed murder. Luke 23:25 Added to all that he was

a robber. John 18:40 This had most likely been his dishonorable profession prior to his failed attempt to upset the powers of authority in Israel at that time. To say the least, Barabbas was an uncouth and undesirable character and unquestionably robbed his own people as well as the Romans.

Pilate stated to them, that he could find no fault in him, especially along the line of their accusations. Had they had ears to hear he was calling them false accusers. Give us Barabbas. A choice which every individual must make. Will it be Barabbas the epitome of ungodliness or Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Christ, the perfection of holiness. Pilate was a wise man and judge. He well understood the people, especially their leadership, and their attitudes. He knew the envy that flooded their hearts and therefore tried to release Jesus, the Christ, instead of Barabbas. Mt. 27:17-18

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 23

Pilate gave a fivefold witness and righteous judgment that there was not a fault to be found in Jesus. To the chief priest and the people, I find no fault in this man. From the very beginning of His dealings in the matter, Pilate knew, without a question, that he was dealing with an innocent man. Their accusations were astonishingly weak. They said, that Jesus excited the people with His teachings. Thank the Lord He still does. Luke 23:4-5

I, having examined Him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof you accuse Him. Luke 23:14 Pilate questioned the Lord Jesus in the presence of His accusers where they had full view and hearing of the process. He failed to find where Jesus had committed the offenses for which they were blaming Him. Herod likewise came to the same conclusion and sent Him back. He had not done anything worthy of death. Luke 23:15

He (Pilate) went out again unto the Jews, and said unto them, I find in Him no fault at all. John 18:38 It seems to me that there is a bit of an irritation in Pilate's words to them. "No fault at all." He is totally convinced of the absolute innocence of Jesus. His words were to the point and emphatic.

I bring Him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him. John 19:4 While he was totally convinced that Jesus had done nothing

worthy of any sort of punishment, yet as a politician he desired to please the people. As unjust as the whole scenario is, we know that it was all in the purpose and will of the Lord.

Pilate said, take Him and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him. John 19:6 Pilate echoed the words of the chief priest, the scribes and the people by telling them to crucify Him, nevertheless he could find absolutely no cause for such drastic action. The words and actions of Pilate were freighted with fear. He feared the accusers, he fear the accused. John 19:8 He was really seeking for a way to release the Lord Jesus and looked to Him for a word which would allow him to free Him. John 19:10 We find here one of those subtle thoughts found through out the Word of the Lord. Five is the number of atonement by blood. Five times His absolute blamelessness and freedom from guilt of any sort is proclaimed.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 24

The silence of Jesus, His refusal to defend Himself would have been a maddening situation to Pilate. Plus the boisterous, howling mob on the other side demanding that Jesus be judged, be condemned and crucified would have brought great pressure and confusion to him. In desperation he reminded Jesus that he had the authority to have Him crucified or released. John 19:10

Pilate's declaration of his power and ability to release or crucify Jesus finally evoked a response from the Lord Jesus. It was a rebuke and a declaration of the perfect will of the Lord. Were it not that the process which we see unfolding before us was the plan of the Lord, this scene would not exist. Before him stood the One who had proclaimed and demonstrated that, all power, in heaven and earth had been delivered unto Him. Mt. 28:18 His speech, His Word, His doctrine was with power. Luke 4:32 Had Jesus exercised the power of God vested in Him, there would have been no angry mob or Pontius Pilate. They would have been eliminated by the might and power of His living, all powerful Word.

The decision that Pilate was about to make was not his own but a manifestation of the Lord controlling all worldly powers and kingdoms. In a dream, the Lord spoke to Nebuchadnezzar revealing to him that the Lord is

in absolute control. Even the vilest, the very worst are part of the plan and purpose of the Lord. Note His words to Nebuchadnezzar. The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Giving it to whomsoever He will, even the very basest, the lowest of men.

Dan. 4:17b Paul wrote to the Romans that the powers, the authorities that exist are ordained of God. None of them exist outside of His eternal strategy. Rom. 13:1

Then greater sin, committed by Judas, the high priests, the scribes and even the mob all of whom had an ulterior motive of some sort in their actions. Even though it was in the eternal intention of the Lord that one would die for the redemption of all who would believe, those who were a part of it's fulfillment must bear the responsibility for their actions. Their act was lawless to the extreme, by any standards of conduct by any of the nations of the earth. Acts 2:23 None of them were ignorant of their lawless actions. They were a people run amuck. Wild and blinded by their over zealous and strong desire to protect their religious order.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 25

Are you then a king? King of the Jews? Pilate was desperately seeking a way whereby he could release Jesus. He was thoroughly convinced that there was no cause to imprison Jesus. Let alone crucify Him. As the ruling governor he found in Jesus no threat to his office nor to the Roman empire. He believed the Lord Jesus when He said that His kingdom was not of this world. John 18:37, Mt. 27:11

Thou sayest. An answer in the affirmative. Jesus responded by stating that, I am exactly what you have said, I am a king. Isaiah had prophesied that He would be the King of Righteousness. He, being the very epitome of Righteousness and imputing the same to His people. No sinners in His kingdom, only sinners saved by grace and made righteous through His righteousness. He is LORD, Jehovah the true Holy One, the creator, not only of Israel, both natural and spiritual, but of all creation. He is our King. Isa. 43:15 Jeremiah proclaimed Him to be the King of the nations. He rules unseen, most generally His voice is not heard. Yet, He rules the nations of the world. Though they do not know it, they are under His control. There is

no King like Him. Jer. 10:7 He is of course, KING of Kings, always been and always will be. Rev. 19:16 He is the ONLY Potentate. 1 Tim. 6:15

Born to bear witness to the truth. His reason for coming into the world was to convey the truth of the Lord to the inhabitants of this earth. His cause is to minister the Gospel of truth to all who will hear. John 18:37 In Jesus is to be found the completeness of grace and truth. This is that which He desires to share with all who will come unto Him. John 1:14 Where truth prevails grace is manifest in the richest of measures.

All those who have the ability to hear and recognize truth find Him to be their Savior and King. This is a test as to whether or not we are truly in Christ Jesus. Do we hear His Words? Hearing them and obeying them is a true sign that the individual is in Christ Jesus. Just as communicating on the internet is called, talking. So, the Word of the Lord, as we read it will speak to us by His Spirit. John 8:47 To obey the truth is to purify the soul. There is a sanctifying power in the Word as it is illuminated to us by the Spirit of the Lord. Consummating in the nature of the Lord being revealed in us to such a great measure that we love one another with pure love, without hypocrisy. 1Peter 1:12

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 26

During that second visit to Pilate's judgment hall he received an urgent message from his wife. She warned him concerning his decision pertaining to Christ. Literally she wanted him to refrain from having anything to do with the plot to kill Jesus that was at hand. She had a dream concerning the whole affair and was frightened because of it. She was fully persuaded that Jesus was totally innocent of all charges brought against Him. Whatever she had dreamt, it was of such magnitude that she was afraid of the consequences, for Pilate, herself and her family, of condemning a just man and wanted Pilate to withdraw from the whole affair. Mt. 27:19

Political forces were brought to play as Pilate sought a way whereby he could release Jesus He was completely convinced of His absolute blamelessness. He thoroughly understood the motives behind this rabid mob that were demanding the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. The more Pilate questioned them as to His guilt and his constant declaration of the

finding of no fault in Him, the angrier they became. Now they were accusing Pilate of not being a friend of Caesars which would mean political if not physical death for one in his position. That motivated Pilate to pronounce sentence and deliver Jesus to the chief priests and scribes. John 19:12

It was the preparation of the Passover and unbeknown to that crowd, they were preparing the true sacrifice, the only offering which can possibly save mankind from sin. Christ is the true Passover Lamb. All others were but shadows pointing to that which would come. 1 Cor. 5:7b Pilate was constantly provoking them with his insistence that Jesus was their king. He had to know that saying to them; Behold your King, it would only increase their fury, but he did and it worked. John 19:14 Then by saying to them, shall I crucify your King, he provoked the high priest into proclaiming that they recognized no king but Caesar. In the heat of anger many foolhardy words are spoken and many stupid acts are committed. This was one of them. In his outburst the high priest had denied the God of his Fathers. The Lord who had brought them up, out of Egypt. John 19:15 The words of the high priest that day make the words of the Psalmist to be a prophecy of the treatment given the Lord Jesus. Ps. 59:12 The sin of his mouth and words spoken by him was a direct denial of the Lord and a commitment to an earthly heathen king.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 27

For the third time Pilate was to declare that he had found no fault, most definitely no cause of death due to the actions and words of the Lord Jesus. His decision, his will was to chastise Jesus and free Him. Luke 23:22 such a choice proved to be extremely unpopular with the chief priests and their followers. The crowd furiously demanded with loud shouting that Jesus be crucified and Barabbas be released. Luke 23:23 Pilate gave in to their will and passed the sentence which they had required. He delivered Jesus to their will. Luke 23:25

Just prior to His surrender into the hands of the angry crowd to be crucified, Pilate scourged Him. The maximum of flogging that could be done to a person was forty stripes. Deut. 25:3 Paul five times in his ministry received thirty nine stripes, one short of forty so that they could whip him as many

times as they desired. At anytime, had they added the fortieth, he could never have been beaten again, that is according to their Law. 2 Cor. 11:24 The number of stripes which were applied to the back of the Lord Jesus is not given, but how about a full forty. His experiences were unique, even while being crucified with others and as many previously were crucified. He was absolutely innocent. He was bearing the sin of the world. He was dying as the Lamb of God. His death was once and for all. The shedding of His blood is the only means of salvation. Heb. 10:5

The extreme wounding of His back and the subsequent flow of blood assures us of healing for our physical bodies. Such action, with its result, places healing directly in the category of the atonement. There is healing virtue in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. Isa. 53:5 Salvation and healing are treated alike with the Lord. He forgives and eliminates both from the life of those who trust in Him. Ps. 103:3 There are no impossibilities with the Lord. While the abilities of human beings are limited, there are none with the Lord. Luke 18:27 Israel having partaken of the Passover lamb in Egypt became a nation without a sickness, disease or physical infirmity among them. There had to have been a mass healing in Egypt when they partook of Passover. Ps. 105:37 The Lord sent His Word and healed, cured them all. Ps. 107:20 Not only did the Lord promise healing but went beyond and promised health. He revealed Himself to Israel as Jehovah-Rapha, the healing Lord. Ex. 15:26

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 28

The back of the Lord Jesus would have been horribly torn and frayed by the cat of nine-tails and the pieces of bone which were attached to it. Thus tearing and mincing the flesh of His back with each blow. It is no wonder that the Psalmist, speaking prophetically said, that the plowmen had made deep furrows on His back. Ps. 129:3 That is extremely expressive language but it helps convey to us the magnitude of the suffering which Jesus endured, in this case to bring healing to those who trust in Him.

Jesus took upon Himself all our infirmities, whether they are spiritual, physical or mental, He exchanged places with us that He might bear the weaknesses of the human race. In so doing, He freed us from their pain and anguish. All the sicknesses of mankind were a part of His suffering. Mt.

8:17 May the Lord help us to realize that there is no need of our bearing that which He has already borne. Lord teach us to throw all our worrisome and troubling situations and sicknesses on You, for You have already paid the price for our deliverance from them. 1 Peter 5:7 How complete is the deliverance which has been purchased for us by the shedding of His blood from that horrendously wounded back? To the same extent that He has forgiven all our iniquities, so He has healed all our diseases. Ps. 103:3

The prayer of faith produces salvation and forgiveness of sin, plus healing for the physical man. The two are indelibly connected and may be considered one act. 'The prayer of faith will make the sick person well, the Lord will raise him up' James 5:15 NIV Which is easier, take up your bed and walk or your sins be forgiven thee? Mark 2:9 If we have faith for salvation, then the same faith is that which brings deliverance from sickness and disease. Faith is motivated by the Word of the Lord. The examples of faith are many in the scriptures. Any one of them may be applied to a personal situation and generate the faith necessary for an act of healing. The Word sent to Israel of old produced the desired results and that same Word is most effective today. Ps. 107:20 So we see that the tearing up of His back, in particular, has purchased our healing. There are many facets to divine healing and in some cases requirements which must be met. The spiritual condition of the individual can make a difference. A wrong attitude of heart, such as bitterness, hatred or even sin can become a hindrance. Correcting thoughts and feelings will in some instances produce the sought after healing.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 29

At this time Jesus was placed into the hands of the cruelest of men. David, wrote in Messianic prophetic vein when he spoke of his many enemies, who hated him with cruel hatred. Ps. 25:19 Never has there been a man like Jesus who has been so vehemently hated, by some, while on the other hand so deeply loved by those who know Him. Their actions were those of a most malicious nature. We see mankind demonstrating their basest, most spiteful nature as Pilate gave Jesus into the hands of his soldiers. To them, in that day, it would have been considered sport to mistreat Jesus as they did.

Matthew records Jesus having been in the hands of this band of soldiers, twice. It would appear as if they were a special unit designated to be a special guard for Pilate. As Jesus was first delivered to Pilate we see that He is in the hands of these soldiers. At which time they also spit in His face. Spitting in the face was a sign of rejection and deep disdain, the ultimate of insults. Mt. 26:67, Mt. 27:30

The Messianic statement of Isaiah gives us a bit more insight into the circumstances of this time in the life of the Lord Jesus. His willingness to become the offering, the suffering one may be noted in the statement, 'I gave my back.' Isa. 50:6 This is comparable to the statement of Jesus, 'I lay down my life.' John 10:17-18 It is here in Isaiah where a detail not recorded in the gospels is given. That is the plucking of the hair of His head and beard. What excruciating shame and pain He bore, not for Himself, but for us. For all the paintings of the Christ on the cross, none have ever depicted the true face of the Lord Jesus as it appeared then.

Isaiah said that His visage was marred more than any man. Isa. 52:14 The word visage in the Hebrew refers to the appearance, a handsome face, the good looks. While to be marred, is to be disfigured. Above all others His face was bloody, discolored and swollen. These men were not just tapping Him in the face but their hands, roughened by the life they lived, were hardened like stones. It is also apparent that their blows were not only to the face but to the whole of His body. Between this horrible beating by this band of soldiers, in Pilate's judgment hall and His crucifixion at Calvary, His form, or His whole body was bruised, battered and broken. He came to His own and His own mistreated Him, rejected Him. Now, through that tremendous love which He has for mankind, all may come to Him and become sons of God. John 1:11-12.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 30

In the hands of the band of Roman soldiers Jesus was to suffer yet more indignities. This Roman band of soldiers would have numbered between four to six hundred. That would constitute a mob of raucous, shouting men who were determined to ridicule not only Jesus but the Jews over whom they ruled. They stripped Him of His clothing that they might put Him to shame. Being forced to be unclothed was an act designed to be inflicted as

a sign of shame. Isa. 20:2 Those who do not maintain the covering of the gospel will be exposed and shamed at the coming of the Lord Jesus. Rev. 16:15

How little did they know the significance of the scarlet robe which they now placed upon Him. Mt. 27:31 In mockery they gave Him a robe which was a color worn by kings. Scarlet is also a color depicting the sins of mankind. Jesus bore our sins and the subsequent penalties in His own body. He is the King over all sin. He reigns and will destroy all sin from off the face of the earth, and will have a sinless kingdom. Isa. 1:18 The color is beautifully portrayed as a sign of deliverance by the scarlet thread in the window of Rahab the harlot. Josh. 2:18 It brought freedom from death to her whole household, as many as were in her house when the Lord destroyed Jericho. It was also used extensively in the clothing worn by the high priest. In the ephod. Ex. 28:6 In his girdle. Ex. 28:8 and in the breast plate. Ex. 28:15 Jesus is the King of liberty and freedom from the guilt and condemnation of sin. He is our High Priest. Heb. 7:26-28

They mocked Him. Ridicule was heaped upon Him from every side. Surrounded by a gang of thugs such as this every hew and cry would have been repeated over and over as they heaped verbal abuse upon Him. It would have been an ugly scene enacted by men who were hardened by their conflicts and battles. Jesus told His disciple that He was to be spitefully entreated, to entreat shamefully, to exercise violence. (Strong) He would be verbally insulted in every way possible. Also, that His captors would continue to spit on Him. Luke 18:32 As ugly and hideous as this scenario was Jesus faced the greatest test of all in the crucifixion which was inevitable. The process of the final act of the redemption of mankind had been placed into action. The pure, holy, totally innocent Lamb of God was about to be offered. His blood was about to be shed. Atonement was to be completed.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 31

So unruly had that boisterous crowd become that Pilate, the voice of authority saw that he had no control over them. His position as ruler had been completely eroded. He had lost all ability to govern the people. He could not prevail against their will. If he did not agree with the people the

next step would have been a riot. Pilate could see but one way out of his dilemma and that was to deliver Jesus to their will. Mt. 27:24

The religious leaders of the people who should have been directing the crowd in the ways of the Lord were the instigators of the whole lawless act. The law reads, that they were not to follow a crowd to do evil nor were they to turn aside justice. Ex. 23:2 Their actions were of the utmost lawless measure by any law of any country or of any kind. It is difficult to portray the human emotions of the Lord Jesus at this moment of time. Yet, they were there. Take for instance, the emotion of fear. Under such dire circumstances who would not fear. We must remember that Jesus was human, just like all others, and every human emotion may be found in Him. David, in one of his Messianic statements said, "The sorrow of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid." Ps. 18:5

Pilate attempted to free himself from the condemnation, the guilt of the shedding of the blood of the Lord Jesus. He was thoroughly convinced of His absolute innocence. He stood before the angry crowd and washed his hands in what he thought would be an act absolving him completely. This was a custom in those days practiced by many nations. It had its roots in the Law of the Lord. Note, Deut. 21:1-10 Unfortunately for him, only that pure, holy blood that was about to be shed profusely can bring cleansing from all condemnation and guilt. As gruesome as the whole history of His crucifixion is, all these who played a part in it did us all a favor. It is the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, which has the power and ability to cleanse us from all of our sin. There is no other way of obtaining salvation but through the blood of the Lamb. 1 John 1:7 There is but one source of the redemption of the soul of any person and that is by the priceless blood of the Lord Jesus. 1 Peter 1:19 Inasmuch as it is a known scientific fact that the blood of a child originates from the father, the blood flowing through the veins of Jesus was the blood of God. His blood is the blood of the eternal covenant. Heb. 13:20

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 32

Jesus was crowned in Pilate's judgment hall, by Pilate's troops, with a crown of thorns. An act of complete disdain, not only for Jesus but for the whole nation of Israel over whom they had control. Due to the sin of Adam

and Eve the soil of the earth was cursed. In the place of the abundance and ease with which things grew in the garden, now toil and sweat, hard work was necessary to produce a crop. Thorns and thistles, a sign of the curse, would grow in great abundance. In His Kingdom it will be, once again, like the garden of Eden. No curse. Gen. 3:17-18

Prior to all this. At a time when the Pharisees would have caused Jesus to be arrested but those sent to capture Him marveled at His works and His Word. Therefore, they did not take Him. The foolishness of a religious mind was exposed by the words of the Pharisees, who said; these people who know not the Law are cursed. John 7:49 What tremendous truth proceeded from their mouths, yet they themselves did not comprehend the depths of their statement. They were in the very worse of circumstances for they knew the Law but did not put it to practice. Those who were claiming to live under the Law but did not live up to all of it's demands were under a curse. Gal. 3:10 Jesus died for the heathen with their false religion and for Israel who had the Law but did not live according to the Law. The death of the Lord Jesus removed even the curse of the Law. He took the place of all. Salvation is to be found in Christ alone. Gal. 3:13

The Lord warned the children of Israel that they were to completely eradicate the unclean from the land which they were about to conquer, or they would become thorns in their sides and an eye irritant to them. Num. 33:55 To not follow the command of the Lord in this matter would bring the same judgment upon Israel as had been intended for the heathen. Num. 33:56 Mixing the people of the Lord with those who do not believe in the Lord, but serve other gods, is a catastrophe. The mixture leaving Egypt was a source of trouble and complaint in the camp of Israel. Ex. 12:38 Num. 11:4 The ungodly results of such a compromise may be found in the Psalms. Ps. 106:32-41 The Lord has always sought a separated people who will consecrate their lives fully to Him. Even His name is Jealous, to worship other gods is to stir up jealousy in Him. He loves with a perfect love and expects the same in return. Ex. 34:14-17

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 33

The soldiers, having crowned Him, in absolute wicked and vile mockery began to worship Him kneeling and proclaimed Him to be the King of the

Jews. It is not difficult to assume and hear the jeers and scornful laughter, the uproar and ridicule which accompanied such action. Having dressed Him in the scarlet robe, a garment of rank and dignity for the Roman army. They placed a reed (also translated as a pen or a writing instrument. 3 John 13) in His right hand. Surely this represents the Word made flesh. Jesus satisfied all the demands of the Word of the Lord. He, and He alone has fulfilled all righteousness. Mt. 27:29 Here in place of the reed, NIV, states that they placed a staff in His right hand. This too would be significant for He is the great shepherd of the sheep. Heb. 11:20 Whether a rod or a reed, it was then used to repeatedly strike Him over the head. Mt. 27:29 It must have been of sufficient weight to cause Him pain or they would not have done it.

Hail, King of the Jews. To the soldiers it was a manifestation of scorn and contempt to express their dislike and disrespect of Jesus. King of the Jews, was a title expressed in the questioning of Jesus by Pilate. Pilate saw an opportunity to aggravate the Jews by insisting that this Man is the King of the Jews. Twice in an attempt to release Jesus he called Him King of the Jews. The second time he really insulted them by stating that you, addressing the Jews, say that He is King of the Jews. Mk. 15:12 Pilate was not satisfied to have verbally irritated the Jews but saw to it that there was a superscription, above Jesus, on the cross proclaiming Him to be, JESUS OF NAZARETH KING OF THE JEWS. John 19:19 He made certain that all who viewed the crucifixion would thoroughly understand who this man was. The title was written in Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Luke 23:38 Pilate was obviously one of those men who thoroughly enjoyed irritating people. He certainly got to the high priest of that day, who came objecting to the title as it was and wanted it changed to, He says, He is the King of the Jews. John 19:21 Pilate's response was, what I have written, I have written. John 19:22 The irony of all this is that just a few days before the multitudes had extended Him a tremendous welcome as He entered Jerusalem. They proclaimed Jesus the coming of the kingdom of their forefather David. Luke 19:38 They acknowledged that He had come in the name of the Lord and that He was the King of Israel. John 12:13

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 34

What could be more repulsive to the psyche of mankind than that of being spit upon. From the report which was given by the disciples this was a constant act of those who held Jesus captive. Mt. 26:67, 27:30 Mark 14:65, 15:19 The Roman soldiers delighted in showing their extreme contempt for Him by constantly spitting upon Him. Of the many injustices heaped upon Him, this had to have been one of the hardest to bear. It was an ugly, ugly scene as the hundreds of soldiers present repeatedly expressed their hatred and anger by spitting in His face. Jesus warned His disciple of all the things that would take place in His life when He went to Jerusalem. He well knew what would happen, nevertheless He set His face as a flint to go to Jerusalem. Mark 10:33-34 Isa. 50:7

All that he suffered at the hands of the cruel and mean leaders of the religious and political entities of that time, was for us. Jesus took our place. He suffered these many indignities at their hands that we might be set free from the guilt, the condemnation and the penalty of our sin.

1Peter 3:18 All the happenings at Jerusalem at this time were for the direct purpose of freeing mankind from His sin. Jesus most definitely was not without a deep emotional upheaval in His soul. How he must have hated every drop of spittle and the shame connected with His excruciating experiences. Not only was He called upon to endure the cross, but also all these circumstances leading up to the cross. He despised the shame of each vile act against Him. Heb. 12:2

He who is the Word made flesh would well understand the spiritual significance of expectoration which they so grossly discharged upon Him. He who is the very epitome of purity and spiritual cleanliness was made to be impure and unclean. Lev. 15:8 To spit in a persons face was to show the utmost contempt for that person. Under the Law it was performed by a widow who's brother-in-law refused to take her to be his wife that his brothers name might be continued. She was to take off his shoe and spit in his face, thus manifesting her utter contempt for him. Deut. 25:9 The prophet Isaiah stated that, Jesus would not hide His face from shame and spittle. Isa. 50:6 Spitting in the face of a person is most demeaning. Even today, in most countries of the world just to spit in the presence of a person is considered to be an insult of the grossest kind.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 35

All the people had gone berserk. There was no longer a thinking person among them. These were a people whose customs were according to the Law. Their desires and actions had reached an extremity which caused them to commit a major violation of their code of ethics and Law. They were demanding the blood of a man who was totally innocent of any wrong doing. They were so far out of control that they had completely lost sight of the Law. The insanity of the hour, brought on by their high priests and scribes, utterly controlled their every thought and action. Pilate sought impunity from blood guiltiness or the slaying of one against whom no charges could be proved. He proclaimed his innocence in the matter. Mt. 27:24

The mob, in the heat of anger, pronounced judgment upon themselves by taking the responsibility for the shedding of the blood of the Christ of God. They cried out, let His blood be upon us and our children. In doing so, they invoked the same sentence on their future generations. While thousands are the recipients of His mercy and the forgiveness of iniquity, transgression, and sin, The Lord stated that He will by no means clear the guilty. Even visiting judgment upon them until the third and fourth generation. Ex. 34:7 How much more when in a fit of great anger people react like these, by demanding that they bear the brunt of the shedding of innocent blood.

Jesus had previously rebuked them for their religious hypocrisy. They were so faithful in building the tombs of the prophets, in supposed honor to them and then constantly white washing and caring for them. Jesus quoted them as having said, that had they been alive in the days of these mighty prophets that they would not have been a party to their murders. In so doing they declared themselves to be the descendents of those who committed such vile acts against those whom the Lord sent to them. Mt. 23:29-31 Fill up, make replete, the actions of your fathers by taking the life of the great prophet. Mt. 23:32 Such a horrible penalty should never have been passed on to the succeeding generations. So intense was the hatred which had been stirred up in their hearts that they had become the hardest spirited murders and were bent on destroying the Lord Jesus and any Kingdom plans which He may have had. What a horrible display of the blindness of religion without love.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 36

Behold the man. John 19:5 What an ugly, hideous spectacle Jesus must have been at this point of time. He had endured all the abusive beatings and the spittle of the soldiers. He was still crowned with the crown of thorns and clothed with the purple robe of a roman soldier. The sight of Jesus here and on the cross reveal the utterly repulsiveness of sin. The Man, Christ Jesus who knew no sin, had never sinned in any way was now being made sin for us. The guiltless, the Man who had never felt the condemnation of sin and iniquity, literally becoming sin, He was made to become sin. 2 Cor. 5:21 This had to have been much more repugnant to Him than all the physical suffering which He was to endure. Rejection, beatings and crucifixion all were common punishments issued by conquering nations.

Never had a Man who had lived His life in total innocence and purity have to take upon Himself the sin of every person which would be born into life on earth. He is the true expression of the great magnitude of the love of God for humanity. Rom. 5:8 For all the suffering, body, soul and spirit that mankind may suffer, Jesus is the only Man to suffer as He did. Absolute, entire righteousness was to bear, absolute, entire unrighteousness. He not only bore our sin but He became sin in our place that we might achieve the righteousness which is His. Phil. 3:9 Physically, there was nothing unusual about the Lord Jesus. He was a man without the physical features which might attract others to Him. He was a very common man. Isaiah mentions that He was without form, that is, without the type of physic which other men would admire and desire to emulate. No regal bearing. He was not an exceedingly handsome man.

Just the Man among men with no distinctiveness which would cause people to take particular note of Him. Nothing about Him was to be physically distinguishing or appealing. He was one of those individuals who would fit into a crowd of people without others taking particular notice of Him. Isa. 53:2 Jesus came into this world, not seeking a reputation that He might gather a great following but came as a servant. He was willing to lay

aside the highest honors and glory of that which is eternal, of the universe and of time, to offer Himself in the place of sinners by becoming one of mankind. Phil. 2:7 One man died for all, that all mankind might find and enjoy life everlasting. Only Jesus has paid the price of our redemption and only Jesus can redeem us. Rev. 5:9

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 37

The Man, Christ Jesus. As a Man, He was wholly like all other human beings. As God, He bore the exact image, likeness and character of His Father. He was God like in all of His eternal being. Completely, a Man. Completely, God. Having suffered and borne the sin of all, He is able to succor all who will come to Him. He is the single, the only mediator between the true God and man. This is a spiritual action, the likes of which no one else has been authorized to accomplish. 1 Tim. 2:5 In His office as the great High Priest, He was able to carry His blood into the eternal Most Holy Place, which is the throne of the Lord. By one offering, He perfected eternally, full redemption, for all who will be saved. Heb. 9:11-12

Of no other person, but the Lord Jesus, may it be said that they possess the capability to fully save sinners from their sin. The salvation proffered by Jesus is full and complete. It is Jesus who lives as the great intercessor, always presenting the witness and testimony of His blood before the Father. Heb. 7:25 John saw the slain Lamb of God located in the very heart of heaven. The declaration of the importance of the shed blood of Christ is seen by it's preeminence, it's place of manifestation. Rev. 5:6

Faith, confidence, belief in His blood is the only remission for sins past. That would include all sin from Adam to the time of Christ. Every drop of animal blood shed as a work of atonement depended upon the eventual shedding of the blood of the Lord Jesus. Jesus alone is the proper propitiation. Propitiation, in the Greek, is hilasterion, and may be translated mercy seat, or the lid of the Ark in the Tabernacle and Temple. The Lord Jesus is not only the intercessor, He is also the sacrifice as well as being the High Priest who performs the duties of redemption. Rom. 3:25 The high priest dare not enter the Most Holy Place without having slain a lamb, which would afford him entrance into that sacred presence of the Ark of the Covenant. Heb. 9:7 Jesus, the sinless one. Our High Priest. The atonement, following the

pattern established for appearing before the Ark, would not have been accepted, but by blood. In this case His own blood. Heb. 9:7 He was a man and therefore, even though He is the Son of God, His humanity demanded redemption. The high priest entered, not without blood. His blood was the blood of God. Blood originates from the Father.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 38

Jesus, the despised Man. Isa. 53:3 From His birth to His resurrection contempt is poured upon Him. Those who claimed to be the seed of Abraham spoke insultingly and said, we be not born of fornication. John 8:41 Concerning His resurrection, the elders bribed the soldiers into saying, His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we slept. Mt. 28:12-15 For all the venom, disrespect and lies spoken against Him, for these past two thousand years, He is the most loved of all men. Those who truly know Him respect and adore Him above all others. There is none other like the Lord Jesus. He is the very essence of the love of the Lord.

The Man rejected. Isa. 53:3 Many who are rejected by others will take extreme action and retaliate by doing harm to themselves or others. Rejection creates extremely strong emotions. Jesus, as the son of man, the one who took our place, must feel as we would feel. He must suffer the pangs of rejection just as one of us. We may understand what He experienced by taking note of the Psalm of David, where through his own experiences he spoke as a prophet, pertaining to the emotions which the Lord Jesus would feel. Jesus was to be shamed, reproached and dishonored by adversaries who stood before the Lord. He would be broken hearted, filled with heaviness but none were willing to stand with Him. Ps. 69:19-20

The Man of sorrows. Isa. 53:3 He has borne our grief's. How thoroughly Jesus took our place. The word grief as used here covers a large spectrum of human suffering. From anxiety, malady, calamity to sickness and disease. He is the answer to every manner of grief that mankind faces in this life. He has gone the way before us and will carry the load for us, if we will but cast our burdens and problems on Him. 1 Peter 5:7 His sorrows have a depth to them which we will never know. He was smitten and afflicted by His own Father. He satisfied the will of the Father by being

made the sacrifice which appeased the full wrath of God against sin. He made His soul, (The life of the flesh is in the blood. Blood and soul are synonymous) to be the only acceptable sin offering. It may seem strange, never the less it is true, that Jesus was smitten and bruised of the Father. Isa. 53:10 Jesus entered into the very extremity of sorrow when the Father deserted Him at Calvary. It was the final blow. A separation which had never before existed. Now because of sin, Jesus was entirely alone. Mt. 27:46

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 39

Behold the man. John 19:5 The words of Pilate should have stirred the emotions of every student of the scriptures who heard these words. There, standing with Pilate, before that ugly crowd was the Man of prophecy. The Man, whom the prophets had named the BRANCH. Zech. 3:8 He was to be the servant of His Father, that is, He would perform, perfectly, the Fathers will. He was a Man who would faithfully do all that was required of His Father. A Man of great and perfect obedience. Jesus is a Man, unique amongst men. As the BRANCH He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Yet He came to serve. His act of obedience in being willing to minister, rather than being ministered to, is a demonstration of His great humility. Mt. 20:28 Jesus pointed the way for advancement in the kingdom of the Lord and the obtaining of a position of leadership. Such a simple lesson. Be a servant. Mark 9:33-35 The Divine reason for His coming into the world was that He might Surrender His life as a sacrifice, a ransom for the many who would believe on Him.

The prophetic voice of Isaiah portrayed Him as one who would come with a servants heart. With a love for mankind and a goal to accomplish, that is, in the redemption of all who would believe and receive Him. Pilate's declaration is an echo of the words of Isaiah, Behold! Take notice, consider the innocence of this person and just exactly who He is. He is the person whom the Father has chosen to sustain and uphold. He is the chosen, the elect of the Lord. One who is very close, with whom a constant and intimate contact is maintained. The delight and rejoicing of the Father was in the Son because of His complete willingness to fulfill the will of His Father. The servant was to be filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and He most definitely

was. The Holy Spirit was in the Lord Jesus in His absolute fullness. Without being measured or limited. John 3:34

In keeping with the prophecy, the Gospel was about to bring justice and redemption to the Gentiles. Isa. 42:1 The message of salvation through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was, and is, carried to the ends of the earth as well as to the end of the age. He is a light unto the Gentiles. Isa. 49:6 The Gentiles, ever since have gladly heard and received the glorious good news and have believed on His name for salvation and redemption. Mt. 12:18 Jesus is the BRANCH and is causing to grow, a spiritual nation and people comprised of individuals from all the nations of the world.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 40

In that day, the last days, the Branch of the Lord, the Man whose name is the BRANCH, is to be a person of beauty and filled with the glory of the Lord. Isa. 4:2 This is in great contrast to His time of life on earth and His ministry when there was to be found no physical beauty or outstanding features about Him. Isa. 53:2b He came as the root out of dry ground. That rod or new growth springing up from Jesse and David. The seed of David no longer ruled in Judah. What was left now was but a stem, a stump, seemingly a dead stock, or roots. The Branch would grow, spring forth to new life from that which was dead and was but history. Isa. 11:1

As the root of David, that is a descendent of that Kingly line, He is seen in the Book of Revelation as One possessing powers which no one else has. It is His privilege to introduce the events of the Revelation and to open the seven seals when none other could. Rev. 5:5 As the root and offspring of David He gave an account of all the last day events which are now recorded in the Book of Revelation. Rev. 22:16

Isaiah four is a prophecy of the last day religious orders which will prevail. We are first presented with an amalgamated church which is already in the process of formation. It is not one religious body or organization which is seen here, but there are seven mentioned. Isa. 4:1 The number seven is used because it is a divine, complete number and relates to the end of the age. The physical number of organizations involved will be many, many more than seven. It will involve all the religions of the whole earth uniting as

one. They embrace one man, the antichrist, seeking his shelter and companionship. They will continue to eat their own bread, teach their own doctrine. They will also continue to wear the clothing of their religious order, that is, they will continue to practice the tenets their own religion. They seek only to be called by his name that they might be sheltered by him. Because of the unholy mixture conjured by this union the Lord has given it the title of the great whore. She is introduced by one of seven angels who have the seven last plagues which will be poured out upon the earth, immediately preceding the second coming of Christ. The great expanse of her world wide power is seen by the fact that she sits upon the waters, (peoples), the oceans of the world. Rev. 17:1 Not only is she religious but she is also a political power which must be reckoned with and has committed fornication with the political leaders of the last days. Rev. 17:2

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 41

Behold the Man. Behold the righteous Branch. Jer. 23:5 Righteousness, purity, holiness is made manifest in the Lord Jesus. He is not only righteous, He is righteousness itself. Only in and thorough Him can any person become righteous. Godly righteousness demands His abiding presence. Those who are His, are noted as being the branch planted by the Lord. They are a very special work wrought by Him personally. They are the ultimate work of His hands. A people who are altogether righteous. Their inheritance is an eternal inheritance, one that will never cease to exist. All the mighty works of the Lord are produced with eternal goals in mind. In all that which is accomplished in His Bride, He is exalted and glorified. Isa. 60:21

From this dry root which had been cut down and forsaken would spring forth the living BRANCH. The Man of eternal life who would bear that name and fulfill the office represented by that name. This is the planting of the Lord. It is a work to be accomplished in His Zion/Sion. The grand and glorious objective of the Lord finds its completion in the group of very special redeemed and consecrated people who stand with the Lord Jesus on mount Sion. A people who bear His name and His Fathers name. (NIV) Rev. 14:1 This number of saints represent a very special member of the body of Christ, that is, His Bride. They are privileged to be called trees of righteousness. It is their nature and character because of their close affinity

to Him. Isa. 61:3 In the Bride will be seen the manifest beauty of the Lord. Their hopes and aspirations for the things of this world are ashes. In place of heart ache and sorrow, they will exhibit the anointing of the oil of joy. Rather than the burdens of this life they will rejoice in the beautiful garments of the wedding of the ages, the marriage of Christ and His Church.

Every individual who has lived in this world will be measured by that Man. The Lord has appointed that day. Acts 17:31 It is a day known to the Father God and nothing can hurry it or deter it. It is appointed. When the Lord makes an appointment we had better believe that He will keep it and be on time. Do not try to second guess the Lord as some do by trying to determine when that day will be. Every item declared in the book of Revelation will be completed before He returns. The Lord Jesus is the standard whereby the whole of mankind will be judged. It pays eternally to know Him personally. John 5:22-24

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 42

The revelation of the man whose name is the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. What a glorious manifestation of the Lord Jesus as the King who is to eternally occupy the throne of David. He is the righteous Branch. His kingdom is a kingdom where the righteousness of the Lord is supreme. All who are citizens of that glorious heavenly kingdom are those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Whether they be of Israel, Judah or are a Gentile, all who are in His kingdom will dwell in absolute tranquility. Jer. 23:5-6

Similar words are to be found in Jer. 33:15-16. Only this time the name is not applied to the Lord Jesus but to His Bride. The reference is to the city of Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem. That Jerusalem which is from above. Heb. 12:22 That majestic and glorious city which is the mother of us all. Gal. 4:26 Now, the name, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS is bestowed upon the Bride as well as the Bridegroom. She will take His name, and in so doing will be made to be everything that He is. They are the perfect match. Their desires and actions are identical. She has the mind of Christ, that mighty Man of God. 1 Cor. 2:16

It is said that men are planning to build a Temple in Jerusalem. The Word of the Lord proclaims that this Branch will spread out from His humble beginnings and become the architect and builder of the Temple, which is the result of His efforts. Zech. 6:12-13 An eternal City whose builder and maker is God. Heb. 11:10 It consists of lively stones. When fully developed it will be a spiritual house, a living active priesthood, enthusiastically doing service unto the Lord. 1 Peter 2:5 It is the most gorgeous structure to have ever graced the face of this earth. It is the true holy city. None other have ever achieved the same standard of holiness as will be manifest in this city of Godlike purity. It is depicted as a bride who is wearing her wedding garment and is totally prepared for her Husband. Rev. 21:21 A holy city without a church in it. No temple, because the entire space of that enormous city is occupied by the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb and they are its temple. Rev. 21:22 Trying to compare the things of this life with that which is to come is like comparing mud to gold. There is no comparison. The place that Jesus went to prepare for His own is this majestic city. Every portion of it is spiritual. The material things of this life will not be in existence in that everlasting, heavenly New Jerusalem. Rev. 21:4

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 43

Crucify Him, crucify Him. A cry pertaining to the Lord Jesus, which issued from the heart and mouth of the religious leaders of that day. The very heart and soul of innocence stood before them yet they deemed Him worthy of crucifixion. Pilate in his human wisdom recognized the absolute blamelessness of the Lord Jesus. He proclaimed that he could find no fault in Him. John 19:6 Nevertheless, Pilate released Jesus into their hands for crucifixion.

Never before nor ever, will there be another like Jesus. He came to be the Lamb of redemption, that which is available to all who will accept His sacrifice. There is no way whereby we may consider Him to be of such criminal nature that He would be worthy of crucifixion. Jesus fulfilled the demand for a perfect sacrifice. He also has demonstrated that He is the High Priest of the Most High God. Only of Him may it be said that He is actual, exact holiness, the totally harmless one, absolutely undefiled. A Man who lived in this world surrounded by sin, but was separated from sin and

was utterly sinless. Heb. 7:26 Best of all, He has become our High Priest by virtue of His death and resurrection. Now He is exalted above the highest heavens and reigns eternally.

Any other sacrifice, aside from the Lord Jesus, is an abomination to the Lord. Isa. 66:3 All offerings made after the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus are an insult to the Lord and are obnoxious to Him. They are totally unacceptable. Under the Law, daily sacrifices had to be made and were completely ineffective for they are unable to remove sin from any ones life. Heb. 10:11 No greater insult could be made toward the Lord than to re-establish old testament worship and animal sacrifice. This Jesus made the perfect sacrifice, once for all. Its value and acceptance by the Father is seen in the fact that Jesus was accepted and enthroned at the right hand of God. Heb. 10:12 His one offering, on Calvary, has opened the door of eternal perfection for all who come to Him for sanctification. Heb. 10:14 The priesthood under the Law was led by men who had many imperfections, weaknesses in their lives. Consequently, the continual sacrifice that had to be offered daily. But now, the word of the oath, the promises of the New Covenant. That which has succeeded the Law, has replaced that which had such blaring faults, with a person who is acknowledged to be the Son of God. The man of everlasting perfection. Heb. 7:28

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 44

Jesus was known among His neighbors as a carpenter. Mark 6:3 How fitting that in His daily life and worldly occupation, He would be a craftsman, working, and building with wood, bricks and mortar. He would have been a master builder producing the very best of anything He wrought with His hands. He handled wood daily. Mark 6:3 Was it a constant reminder of His ultimate purpose for coming into this world? The brick and mortar could have kept the vision alive of a perfect church built of lively stones. Now, at the conclusion of His natural life, He is compelled to carry a wooden cross, which was to be used as an instrument of death. John 19:17

The crowd had come prepared for one answer from Pilate and that they received. They had brought His cross with them and were ready for instantaneous gratification of their strong desire to see Him crucified. The cross was laid upon Him and the parade of mockery was under way. The

intensity of the past hours and their effect upon the Lord Jesus are apparent in the fact that He could not carry the cross on His own. A man named Simon who just happened to be passing that way was pressed into service to carry the cross in His stead. Mark 15:21 This experience must have had a profound influence in his life for later we see one of his sons mentioned as being a Christian. Rom. 16:13

That another would be called upon to share in the carrying of His cross is of great interest, for the cross is to become a definite part of our Christian experience. Paul included the cross in his spiritual life and his association with the crucifixion of Christ as a very real thing. While physically, he had not been with Jesus at the time of His crucifixion. In his spiritual experiences he was able to so deeply become a part of the life of Christ that the death of the cross was also an integral part of his life. Gal. 2:20 The life that he lived during his ministry was the resurrection life of Christ. In order for the life of Christ to be made manifest in those who are in Christ, it is necessary that they die with Him. This was the secret for the powerful ministry of the Apostle Paul and the mighty victories which were in his life. 2 Cor. 4:10 To possess eternal, spiritual life it is necessary to die to the flesh and all of its desires. There is a cross, not physical but spiritual, where all who would live godly in Christ Jesus will die to the desires of the flesh. A dead person knows no temptation.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 45

Just what is a cross? This is a search for truth and the purpose is not to create an issue. First we must consider it's shape. Was it really in the shape of a T? The Greek word for cross is stauros. Which Strong translates into meaning, a stake or post. Jesus gave credence to the incident in the lives of Israel when they murmured and complained against the Lord and Moses in the wilderness. John 3:14 Consequently the Lord sent fiery serpents among them and they were bitten. There is a quick and easy lesson to be learned by that which they experienced. Do not speak out against the Lord or His appointed leadership. It is a dangerous practice. It's cure is a visit to the cross and repentance.

The remedy was given to Moses by the Lord. Make an image of the serpent out of brass and place it upon a pole (Strong. A flagstaff, a pole.) All

who were bitten were to visit and look upon the brazen serpent and they would be healed and live. Num. 21:8 This was a sign of that one who would come and be lifted up on a pole or stake for the healing, physically and spiritually of all who would rightly evaluate the cross of Christ. Jesus compared His experience to that incident in the wilderness, only now it is healing for the physical, emotional and spiritual nature unto life eternal. The lifting up, the crucifixion of Christ is an act of God that all men might be attracted to Him. John 12:32

What is to be adored? The cross or the Christ of the cross. Is there really any virtue in a cross of wood, ceramic, silver, gold or even of the original wood of the cross. Inanimate substances, whether in their original form or shaped into a sign of the cross are futile and useless. It is the one who was nailed to the cross who is our Savior and Redeemer. The cross did not bear our sins, He who was nailed there took all of our sins upon Himself. Our pardon from sin is in Him and in Him only. Most unfortunately, the pole and serpent were preserved by Israel and obviously carried with them. No doubt as a charm and for a source of healing. It was Nehustan to them. The brazen serpent and it became an object of worship, to which they burned incense. Hezekiah, King of Judah caused it to be destroyed because of the idolatry which was being committed by Judah in worshipping an idol. 2 Kings 18:4 Human nature is more prone to worship the creature or objects which supposedly commemorate certain acts of the Lord, than they are the Lord.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 46

The week of a double Sabbath. To properly understand the Old Testament worship of the week of crucifixion it is vital to have a proper knowledge of the Sabbaths which occurred during that weeks festivities. Such knowledge will seal for us the veracity of the Word of the Lord. When the Lord creates a shadow or a type He will fulfill it in a manner which is comprehensible. The day of Passover was to be on the fourteenth day of the first month of the Levitical calendar. The month of Abib, a new beginning. It was the introduction of their religious year. Ex. 12:2 They were about to exodus from Egypt and embark on a journey which would carry them to a new life, in a land which was to be their own.

The week of the crucifixion is known as Passover week. It is that time when the release of Israel from Egypt was finally accomplished. Their liberty was purchased by the blood of the Passover Lamb. In its origin it was the week of the firstborn. It was also then, as now, a matter of life or death. The homes where the blood had been applied to the door were "passed over" by the death angel. Where there was no blood, the death angel visited and the firstborn, from man to beast died. Ex. 12:13

Jesus was the fulfillment of the sign of Jonas and He used the experience of Jonah to show that He would be three days and three nights in the grave. This specific measurement of time is just that, it is exacting, and precise. Jesus would spend a full three days and nights in the heart of the earth. This is not a Hebrew idiom. It is a statement of fact. These days and nights are full twenty four hour days, for a total of seventy two hours during which the body of the Lord Jesus lay in the tomb. Mt. 12:40 The Hebrew day begins with sundown, the night which follows it is the night of the next day. In other words first the night and then the day. For an example, Jesus was taken captive the night of Wednesday and was released for crucifixion on the day of Wednesday. This was what was known as the day of Preparation for the Passover. The lamb was to be slain and all the preparations made for the celebration of the Passover. The day was established as a type, a shadow of the coming of the real Passover Lamb into the world. To complete the type, Jesus must be slain on that day and at the time of the slaying of the Passover lamb. For the Lord Jesus is our Passover Lamb. 1 Cor. 5:7

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 47

The bodies of those who were hanged on a tree, according to the Law, were not to be left in that condition over night. They must be taken down and buried before sunset. Deut. 21:22-23 It was evening when Joseph of Arimathaea requested, of Pilate, the body of Jesus for burial and was granted his wish. Jesus therefore was crucified and entombed on the day of preparation. Mark 15:42-43 The LORD'S Passover was slain, cooked and eaten in the closing hours of the fourteenth day of the first month, which was Wednesday. Lev. 23:5

It is exceedingly unfortunate that so many miss the all important message of the day for which they prepared. The day after the day of preparation. That is, the day of Passover, which was a Sabbath day. Not the weekly Sabbath or the Seventh Day, but a very special Sabbath called a "high day, in the Greek language, a Great day." John 19:31 Because of its atoning virtue it was the greatest Sabbath of the year. This is speaking of the Thursday of that week as being a Special Sabbath and is not referring to the weekly Sabbath, or the seventh day.

After having kept Passover on the fourteenth day, the fifteenth day of that first month was that special, holy Sabbath day. It was the first day of the Feast of unleavened bread. Leaven was to be completely removed from their houses for the full time of this feast. Leaven is a type of the old man of sin and we are urged to sanctify ourselves from it. It was the beginning of a seven day feast where no leaven was to be found among them. Lev. 23:6 It is here that the Special Sabbath is made known. The first day was to be a day of rest, a sacred Sabbath. No work was to be done. This first day of the feast is the special Sabbath day spoken of in John 19:31.

Thus, we see that this week of Passover always had two Sabbaths. The special Sabbath, the first day of the Feast of unleavened bread, plus the weekly Sabbath. This will allow the Words of the Lord Jesus to be perfectly fulfilled when He said that He would spend three days and nights in the heart of the earth. If Jesus had been crucified on Friday He would have been in the tomb only for the night of Saturday, the day of Saturday and the night of Sunday. In no way does that reckon to be three days and three nights.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 48

It is necessary that the Biblical method of measuring a day be applied to our subject. To do so, we go to the book of Genesis and note that the Lord used the night and day system in reckoning what constituted a day. "The evening (night) and the morning (day) were the first day. Gen. 1:5 A night and a day were needed to make one day, or a period of time deemed to be twenty four hours. Had Jesus intended merely a part of three nights and three days, He would not have emphasized the length of time which Jonah was in the stomach of the great fish. The statements of the Lord Jesus are

very emphatic when He said that Jonah WAS incarcerated for a period of three days and three nights. He then positively declared that He too would be three days and three nights in the grave. Mt. 12:40 We may apply another method of Bible interpretation here, for Jesus twice affirmed that the period of time involved was three days and three nights. In the Scriptures a word is repeated to strongly emphasize it's importance and veracity.

Here are some quotes from the book *Difficulties in the Bible*, by the well-respected **R. A. Torrey**:

"The first fact to be noticed in the proper solution is that the Bible no where says or implies that Jesus was crucified on Friday." Page 101

John tells us in so many words, in John 19:14, that the day on which Jesus was tried and crucified was the day of the preparation of the Passover, that is, it was not the day before the weekly Sabbath (Friday) but it was the day before the Passover Sabbath, which came that year of Thursday, That is to say, the day on which Jesus died was Wednesday. Page 102.

Furthermore, it has been figured out by the astronomers that it is the year 30 AD, which is the commonly accepted year of the crucifixion of our Lord, the Passover was kept on Thursday April the 6th, the moon being full that day. Page 104

JESUS DIED ABOUT SUNSET ON WEDNESDAY, seventy two hours Later, exactly three days and three nights, at the beginning of the first day of the week, (Saturday at sunset). He rose again from the grave. Page 104.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 49

The day of the week when Jesus was crucified would matter little were it not for the fact that He specifically spelled out the detail that He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Those who heard Him make that declaration would have been well acquainted with the experience of Jonah and would immediately relate to the full three days and three nights. It is spelled out so beautifully, how could anyone miss the fact of three full days and three full nights. Mt. 12:40

The measurement of days, weeks, months, and years may have had a casual approach among the Hebrews in those days. Nevertheless, the Lord had given them a sure measurement of judging the seasons and time. He placed His clocks in the heavens above. Gen. 1:14 The three major feasts of Israel were determined by the lunar month. Therefore they had a stable method by which they could adjust these feasts to fit into their proper time element. We know also that they were well aware of the hour of the day for one thing they had sun dials and thus were able to tell the time of day. Isa. 38:8 They also divided their nights into three hour or four (Roman) segments and their days into hours. Acts 2:15, Acts 10:3, Acts 16:25 They would fully understand the Word of the Lord Jesus as to the time spent in the grave, as being a complete three nights and three days. To alter His statement of time, is to make Him to be speaking a lie.

It must be considered also that when Jesus was teaching concerning His impending death and resurrection that He definitely placed His resurrection AFTER the three days. Mark 8:31 It is impossible to squeeze a full three nights and three days between Friday evening and Sunday morning. Besides that, the Jews reckon the night first and then the day. So Jesus would have been entombed at the beginning of the evening of Saturday. Then would have been resurrected sometime after the beginning of the evening of Sunday, which hardly accounts as being three nights and three days. To further attest to the fact that even those of that day, who killed Him, believed His teaching, was the request which they made, that a guard be established at His tomb. They recalled that He had taught that AFTER three days He would arise again. Mt. 27:62-64 The strongest words of verification concerning the truth of this subject originate with the Lord Jesus. Most assuredly, if anyone knew of the period of time which He would spend in the tomb, it would have been the Lord Jesus.

JESUS IS THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 50

Regarding the number of days (3) involved and the length of each one, that is twenty-four hour days, we find an interesting Levitical law which make a Sabbath day to be from even to even. Such a practice would cause each and every Sabbath, special and weekly to embrace a full twenty-four hours. Lev. 23:32

Jesus had traveled from Galilee with His twelve Apostles and a group of followers. Among these were the women whose lives He had touched and changed. They followed the whole transaction of the day, even to the tomb where He was laid. They observed very carefully the place and how His body was placed in the tomb. It was in their hearts to give Him a proper burial by bringing spices and ointments to properly prepare His body. Luke 23:55

The day of preparation (for the Passover) came to an end. The evening, the beginning of the Special Sabbath, the Passover, the First day of the feast of unleavened bread had arrived and they could no longer accomplish their purpose. Therefore, they rested on the Special Sabbath day, which would have been the Thursday of the week of crucifixion and the first of the three days of Christ in the tomb. Luke 23:56 Friday would have been a busy day for them as they sought and purchased the necessary items to place with His body. They are unable to accumulate all the necessities before the second Sabbath, the weekly Sabbath came upon them. This too would have required their observance and would have been a day of rest to them.

Sometime after sundown on the conclusion of the third day which would have been at the close of the weekly Sabbath or the beginning of Sunday, or our Saturday night, Jesus arose from the tomb. Mary Magdalene came to the tomb while it was yet dark. John 20:1 The death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is something for which we should be grateful every day of our redeemed life. It is not a religious Holiday over which we should go into a religious fervor once a year, and that erroneously, with a resurrection service on a Sunday morning. He arose at the beginning of the Hebrew day which was our Saturday night, not Sunday morning. If we do not worship Him every day of the week, then all the fuss at Easter is futile.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 51

The weekly Sabbath had come to a close. The time of day at which the Sabbath would be concluded was about 3 P.M. Thus, the Saturday, the Sabbath was over while it was yet light. The next day, the Hebrew Sunday,

would begin at the sundown of the Roman Saturday evening. The night following was the beginning of the Hebrew day. It is in this time frame that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary come to the tomb, in the end of the Sabbath. Mt. 28:1 Stated to be after the Sabbath in the NIV version. This leaves no doubt but what the following events took place during the night portion of the Hebrew day, or Sunday.

John in his Gospel lists only Mary Magdalene as the first visitor to the tomb. This is unquestionably the same visit when she went with the other Mary. She came on the first day of the week (Roman, Saturday night or Hebrew, night of Sunday) we do know that she came while it was yet dark. John 20:1 When (this is important) she arrived, the tomb was already opened. It was the two Mary's who would carry the message to the others and in doing so created quite a stirring among them until they raced to the tomb.

Prior to the arrival of the women to the place where Jesus was entombed there had been a tremendous manifestation of the power of resurrection and a great miracle was accomplished. The angel of the Lord descended from heaven. It is necessary that we properly identify the Angel of the Lord who appeared here. Note, it was not just, an angel, but THE Angel of the Lord. Plainly speaking, the Angel of the Lord, is a theophany where Jesus appeared for a specific purpose in the Old Testament. This Being, seen here was not a created angel but the Lord Jesus Himself. Mt. 28:2 It was the Angel of the Lord who stayed the hand of Abraham when he was about to sacrifice Isaac. Isaiah proclaimed Him to be the Angel of His Presence who journeyed with Israel during their wilderness experience. Isa. 63:9 AS the Angel of God, He was their light and guide. Ex. 14:19-20

Jesus on the cross had committed His Spirit into the hands of the Father. Most assuredly, at that moment His Spirit, went to be with the Father in the heavenly realm. That which was placed in the grave was His body, His house, in which He had lived for some thirty-three and one half years.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 52

In the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus we have the perfect example of the triune nature of man and the difference between each part of man. The body is no problem. We see Him hanging on the cross. Too often we do not

differentiate between the soul and the spirit of man. Even in the scriptures the two are used interchangeable. There is however a great difference. Jesus made His soul an offering for sin. Isa. 53:10 The Hebrew word for soul is nephesh, animal vitality, (Greek, psuche). Soul life is found in the blood for it sustains the life of the flesh. Blood is likewise necessary for the atonement of mankind. Lev. 17:11 Neither flesh nor blood can inherit the Kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 15:50 The soul life must be redeemed by the blood of Jesus in order for the spirit to be saved and live in His eternal presence.

Jesus poured out His soul unto death. Isa. 53:12 But the keeping of His spirit He gave into the hands of the Father. Having done so, He spent the three days and nights with His Father. Luke 23:46 It is noteworthy that He gave His life. In spite of the whole of the actions taken against Him, He gave Himself as the Lamb of God. He could have stopped the actions being taken against Him at any time. He said, I lay down My life. No one takes it from Me. John 10:17-18 His coming into this world in physical form was to fulfill all the sacrifices and ordinances of the Law. Therefore, after His death on Calvary, it was vital that He enter into the Heavenly Most Holy Place and present His blood on the Mercy Seat. Lev. 16:14 In commending His spirit unto the Father He was about to enter the heavenly realm with His blood as the surety of salvation for all who will believe on Him. Heb. 9:12

It is therefore necessary that we find a place where He fulfilled His office of the High Priest. Mind you, we are looking at a resurrected Christ in the following scriptures. Events which verify His resurrection. The first occasion that we are going to look at has it's deep spiritual implications plus a very human side. After Peter and John had returned with Mary Magdalene to the sepulcher and they had departed, Mary stayed behind Weeping. Stooping down and looking into the tomb, she beheld two witnesses, clothed in light, one at the head of where His body had been and one at the feet. These were not created angels but messengers, witnessing the events in the Life of the Lord Jesus which they will eventually give in Jerusalem during the tribulation period. Rev. 11:3

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 53

Mary Magdalene's first visit to the grave site was in the end of the Sabbath according to John. It was at a time which we would call night. Some commentators have considered this visit to have been in the beginning or the evening of what would be, to the Hebrew, the night of Sunday or our Saturday night. For certain it was yet night time. The tomb was opened when she arrived. The Mary's did not witness the great deliverance from the grave for the stone had already been rolled away. John 20:1

Jesus but spoke her name, Mary. She had no doubt wept and sobbed greatly at seeing the empty tomb. Her inquiry of the two in white and then of the one whom she supposed to be but a gardener as to the whereabouts of the Lord Jesus was the same. Where have they taken Him. Twice she is asked the cause of her weeping. An occupied cross is a reason to weep. An empty tomb is an opportunity for rejoicing. Jesus is not on the cross, He Is Risen. The cross is empty, the tomb is empty, now those who believe on Him are filled with the glory of His presence. Jesus but spoke her name and she immediately recognized Him. It was not that she recognized His voice, for they had already been in conversation. He spoke to her heart, to her spirit nature. He just called her name and it opened her whole being unto Him. John 20:13-16

Touch me not. John 20:17 There was an all important accomplishment which He must fulfill. As the great High Priest, His body is a body of resurrection He must present His blood before the Father. He must enter once as the High Priest of the Most High God and present His body and blood as the only means of redemption. There is no other sacrifice or way of salvation but through the Lord Jesus. He is the perfect sacrifice and has been exalted to the throne of the Lord. Heb. 10:10 What a great volume of worship and praise there must have been when Jesus entered heaven with His blood as the only propitiation. There is no other way, it is Jesus and His redemptive blood, or not at all. 1 John 2:2 The very heart, the center of heaven is that precious Lamb which is situated in the very throne of the Lord. The witness and testimony of the blood of Christ is eternal and as God's Lamb He will ever be worshiped. He said, I ascend to my Father. The grand purpose was to finish the work of redemption by blood and forever seal the covenant of grace. Later, at the time of His next appearing they were able to touch Him for His work was now completed. Mt. 28:9

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 54

The problem of a closed sepulcher was solved prior to the arrival of the Mary's. They were concerned about the great stone which had been used to close the entrance of the tomb. However the Lord had already resolved that situation. How many times do we worry about circumstances which really never develop or are settled even before we are confronted by what we see to be a problem. Mark 16:3 When they looked, that's all it took, just to open their eyes and behold the work of the Lord. Is there something about this which sounds familiar?

The opening of the burial site was a momentous event. It was a demonstration of the ability of the Lord to frustrate the very best efforts of men to hinder His works. In the first place, there was a huge earthquake. An evidence of the presence of the living God. The descent of the Angel of the Lord (Jehovah), out of heaven, from the presence of the Father. Is an illustration to us, that when Jesus said that He was commending His spirit into the hands of the Father, His spirit was received up into heaven and spent the three days and nights with His Father. The Angel of the Lord is none other than the Lord Jesus.

The Lord has a sense of humor. The display of His strength and power were demonstrated in the rolling away of the stone from off the mouth of the tomb. What better way to display His disdain for the grave, also those who caused Him to die, the seal and the guards, all of which were feeble attempts to prove His predictions of His resurrection to be false. Then He sat on it. Proving Himself to be a conqueror, triumphing over sin and the grave. He made the stone His throne of victory. "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. Deut. 32:31 Their rock could not retain our Rock, the Lord Jesus.

His countenance was like lightning. This particular aspect of the appearance of the Lord is awesome beyond description. The shining of His face was equal to a bolt of lightning, brilliant and of great brilliancy, very likely to a degree greater than lightening itself. He is the light of the world, dispensing the light of life, natural and eternal. John 8:12 He is also known as the Sun of righteousness. Mal. 4:2 The greatest display of light, the most intense brightness that exists is that which is found shining forth from the

Lord. Saul, at his conversion saw a light above the brightness of the noonday sun. Acts 26:13

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 55

Not only does the Messenger of the Lord appear in physical appearance as a being of light, but that light permeates the clothing which He is wearing. He is clothed in white (Gr. leukos, from luke, light, white.) Mt. 28:3 The Lord Jesus is seen praying on the mount of transfiguration with the same phenomenon taking place. It is here that His real character and essence are revealed. Luke 9:29 The AMP version states that His garment was “flashing with the brilliance of lightning.” Want to know what the glory of the Lord looks like, “His face did shine like the sun.” Mt. 17:2 To be confronted by such a gorgeous and bright shining person would be the experience of a life time. It was the same glory which appeared when the message was given to the shepherds concerning His birth. Luke 2:9

The earthquake and the glory of the Lord was too much for the strong, stalwart, brave guards, they passed out and were as dead men. The prison of the grave or the jail of men cannot hold its captives when the glory of the Lord is present. Mt. 28:4 When the glory of the Lord appeared to Peter and brought release to him, he thought he was seeing a vision. Amusing, the Lord has a sense of humor. There was no explanation offered him, he was just left to come to an understanding that the whole thing was real. Acts 12:6-11 Imagine the uproar when it was discovered that for all their efforts to keep Peter, he had just walked out and was gone.

Thus far, His beloved followers are set on ministering to the Lord Jesus as unto a dead corpse. They are following the customs of the land and are desirous of preparing His body with spices and perfumes. We have to ask, where is their faith. They had followed Jesus and had seen the miracles wrought by Him, even the raising of the dead. They had heard His teachings and His proclamation that he was the resurrection and the life. John 11:25 He had promised that if His body, His temple were destroyed that in three days He would raise it up. John 2:19 We would expect His

close followers to go to the tomb filled with the expectation of His resurrection, but they went only because His dead body was there. They did not hear with the heart His teachings. Too often we hear with the ear the Word of the Lord but do not hear that Word in our hearts. Mankind is diligent to seek that which is customary and natural but does not receive that which benefit's the spiritual.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 56

The sequence of events concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus is difficult to determine. It would have been an extremely emotional time for His followers. That they were in deep mourning is witnessed by the scriptures. Then in the midst of their sorrow to hear that He had been raised from the dead. How He had been seen by Mary Magdalene, who was the first to bear the glad report to them. Good news which would elicit a great change and mixture of emotions in them. What excitement as they ran to the tomb. John 20:4

The women when first visiting the open tomb not only looked inside but physically went in seeking what they thought would be the body of Jesus. Instead they found a young man, sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment. Who else would it be but the resurrected Christ? While Jesus was not an old man at thirty three and one half years of age. We see here the bloom of new life, youth manifest in the resurrected body. Of interest also was the statement that He was sitting on the right side of the of the grave chamber. Jesus, at His ascension was seated at the right hand of the Father. 1 Peter 3:22 Furthermore, this man was clothed in the light of the glory of the Lord. The white (leukos, light) robe is evidence of the glory that has been bestowed upon the risen Christ. Mark 16:5

One thing is most certain, the body of death, the crucified Lord Jesus was not to be found. Two angels, two witnesses stood, one at the head and the other at the foot of where Jesus had been placed. John 20:12 Thank you Apostle Luke for identifying these two as men. Luke 24:4 John reports that their garments were white and does use leukos, the same word as the garment of the young man. However, Luke is a bit more explicit and reports their garments as shining. Shining, (Greek, to flash like lightning). The AMP Version calls their robes dazzling. These same two men appeared, "in

glory” with the Lord Jesus on the mount of Transfiguration. They are identified as Moses and Elijah. In other words the same glorious light, of the God who is light, shone forth from them at that time in identical fashion. Luke 9:30-31

The message of the tomb was, and still is, He is not here, “He is risen, go and tell,” and ever since the glad story of the resurrected Christ of God has been proclaimed around the world. Jesus is not on the cross, He is not in the grave, He is risen and is at the right hand of His Father. As a matter of fact, He is the right hand of God. Rom. 8:34

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 57

Pathetically, men who had been with Jesus for the three and one half years of His ministry. His followers who had heard His teaching and believed it, for they continued to follow after Him. Yet when the women came with the report of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, they could not believe their words. Luke said that the words of the women sounded like idle tales and they could not believe them. Luke 24:11

How blind they were, not only the nation of Israel but those who were closest to the Lord. They had lived in the midst of the fulfillment of the prophetic utterances pertaining to the birth, life, and death of Christ and should have known that He would be raised from the dead. Their hearts should have been filled with anticipation and great expectation of His coming to life again. He had promised them that He would be resurrected and live again. In the face of sorrow and tragedy how soon they would forget the promises of the Lord.

Oddly enough, we have a parallel in the church world today. Most Christians believe that Jesus is coming soon, and He is. Some even believe that His coming is imminent, but the doctrine of His imminent return has been around for over a hundred years. How soon is imminent? His life span, from birth to grave site was well covered by the prophets of old.

The prophecies of the New Testament show there are yet many unfulfilled prophetic utterances which must take place prior to His return. He will not violate His Word. He is not a man that He should lie. Every prophecy which

in any way relates to His return must be fully accomplished before He can possibly come again. The same condition which existed in that day, the excitement of a coming King of Israel ended up in total unbelief. Every event recorded and revealed to John on Patmos is related to the tribulation period which concludes with the destruction of the anti-christ at the second coming of the Lord Jesus. The details of the book of Revelation are not yet fully involved in the life of this earth but the time is nigh. The warming of the earth is a minor thing when compared to the prophecies which are to be found in that book of the last days, the book of Revelation. Its intent was to reveal, to open up, to make visual the mighty works of the Lord in the end of the age, but alas, it is still a sealed book to many in the church. 2 Thess. 2:3

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 58

The trip to Emmaus was made by two of His disciples. It is reckoned to be about a two hours walk. One is named Cleophas while the others name is not given. Following the pattern of John in not including ones name, it could well have been Luke. Their conversation was on the most unusual events of the past few days. No doubt, centering in on the empty tomb. Jesus suddenly began to walk with them without revealing His identity to them. Strange that they would not recognize Him. But then, Jesus as a man, was one of those persons who was very common looking. He would fit in, without being outstanding, anywhere in a crowd. They had been in close association with Him, still did not recognize Him. Luke 24:13-15

Is it not always necessary that He reveal Himself to us in a spectacular manner for us to hear His voice. There is, you know, that time when He speaks with a still small voice. 1 Kings 19:12 How important it is that we learn to hear Him when He speaks to us, in what ever fashion. So many times, because we do not hear a voice like a clap of thunder, we fail to respond. Visually, His identification was hidden from them. Luke 24:16 But they were later to say that their hearts burned, they were stirred, as He spoke to them. Luke 24:32 The presence of the Lord is not always revealed to the natural man, but to the inner man, the spiritual man. We must learn to recognize that inward voice, the voice of His Spirit speaking to us.

It is interesting to see that Jesus spoke to them from the Word of the Lord. Showing them from the scriptures the various events which had happened to Him and how they were to be plainly seen in the prophecies of the old testament. Luke 24:32 It is doubtful that there is anyone reading this which at sometime of another has not felt a compulsion, an urge, to change their course of action and do something else, only to learn that it was most definitely an act of the Lord in their lives. The Lord has made the natural hearing ear and the seeing eye. Prov. 20:12 He has also provided those who are born of the Spirit the ability to hear and see those things which are not heard by the ear of flesh, nor seen by the natural eye. Learn to listen with the inner ear and see with that hidden man of the heart. He will frequently speak to our hearts through His Word. What better and more assuring way is there to communicate than through the Word of the Lord which he has already given unto us.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 59

The overwhelming, seemingly all persuasive idea that Jesus had come to establish a secular kingdom was expressed again by these two as they conversed with Jesus. They said, "we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." Luke 24:21 For all the mighty works which the Lord Jesus had accomplished among them. Plus His constant teaching concerning a Spiritual Kingdom of God, they were so earthly minded that they expected a natural kingdom. In redemption, He came to gather unto Himself a blood washed people. Redeemed by His blood alone. They are not from any particular nation but from all the peoples of the earth. 1 Peter 2:9-10

The Amplified Version has a full and complete translation, almost a commentary on Titus 2:14 Speaking of Jesus, "Who gave Himself on our behalf that He might redeem us (purchase our freedom) from all iniquity and purify for Himself a people -- to be peculiarly His own -- [people who are} eager and enthusiastic about [living a life that is good and filled with] beneficial deeds. The kingdom of God will never be a worldly, natural kingdom. The day is far past where the Israel which existed under David will ever exist again. To anticipate a political/religious kingdom of Israel is to misinterpret the teaching of the Lord Jesus and the scriptures.

Consider His statements concerning the Kingdom of God. First of all He did come to Israel and they thoroughly rejected and crucified Him. Therefore He opened the door of the Kingdom for all people, the whosoever of all generations, those who believed in that day and in the days to come. The citizens of the Kingdom are those who are born of the will of the Lord. Not of blood, natural birth, national birth, that is born into a certain nation or tribe. Nor of the will of the flesh, but being born of the Spirit. Nor yet, of the will of man. Those belonging to the Kingdom are born of the Spirit, not chosen or accepted by a man, a religion or a church. There is no religious ceremony which may be performed admitting them into the Kingdom. John 1:11-13 Both then and now, His kingdom is not of this world for if it had of been those who followed Him would have been exhorted to fight against those who were about to crucify Him. John 18:36 To know, to see, to even understand that there is such a Spiritual Kingdom one must have been born again. John 3:3-5 The kingdom of God cannot be sought out and discovered by natural, visible means. It is a Kingdom which is implanted within the human heart and spirit by the new birth. Luke 17:20

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 60

Further evidence of their lack of spiritual comprehension is seen when Jesus called them fools, or foolish ones. They were “sluggish of heart, and dull of perception.” AMP. VER. They had no vision of what the Lord Jesus was trying to establish among them. Their own prophets had introduced them to the working of the Lord, outlining for them the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Their whole attention was centered on being like the nations around them. They wanted an earthly king and kingdom.

From the days of Samuel, Israel and Judah demanded that they be led by a king. Their desire was displeasing to Samuel and also to the Lord. Samuel warned them of the price which they would pay in having a king over them. 1 Sam. 8:5 The Lord however told Samuel that in fulfilling their demands they were not rejecting him, but were rejecting the Lord. 1 Samuel 8:7-8 That attitude remained among them until the time of Christ and oddly enough still prevails. They have rejected the true Messiah and now await another messiah. One who is a false messiah. The doctrine of many Christians follow the same pattern and can only result in a gross deception.

2 Thess. 2:3-4 The anti-christ will deceive the nation of Israel and the other nations and will be accepted as the Christ of God by them.

Revelation by bread. On entering into the place where they were to lodge for the night, Jesus took bread and brake it, blessed it and when they had eaten it their eyes were opened and they realized that their companion was Jesus. Bread is used as a type of the Lord Jesus. When the Lord took Israel out of Egypt He daily gave them manna from heaven. They were fed supernaturally for forty years. John 6:31 Now, in Christ the true bread of heaven is made manifest. It is the bread of life. John 6:32-48 He partook of the Passover Feast with them by blessing the bread and declaring it to be His body which would be broken. In that Passover meal Jesus made it very plain that the bread which they were eating was a type of His body, and that in eating they were partaking of Him. He established the Communion Table that they, as well as we of this day might partake of Him and be made one with Him. Mt. 26:26 To participate correctly of the Lord's table is to become one with Him. It is never to be merely a ceremony, but an act of living participation.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 61

The early Christians suddenly found themselves in the company of a different Jesus. All the glory, the praise and adoration that He had been given to Him prior to His birth as a man was now returned unto Him. All the capabilities of an Almighty God which He had laid aside to become a man were now restored. The excellent glory of God, which He had so greatly missed was His once more. In prayer, Jesus had sought that the glory with which He had been clothed and filled might be manifest once again in Him, in it's full intensity. John 17:5

Knowing His God like nature helps to explain His departure from the two disciples. He simply vanished from their presence. We are not looking at something which is metaphysical, incorporeal, or lacking substance. We know that the resurrected body of the Lord Jesus was indeed substance For the women had held Him by the feet on their way to spread the good news of an empty tomb. Mt. 28:9

The two to whom He had appeared and broken bread with them straight way made their way to Jerusalem, seeking to give their testimony of having met the resurrected Christ. It appears now that it was Simon Peter who was with Cleopas, Luke was merely the one who recorded the meeting. Being one of the twelve His word was readily accepted. How interesting that they emphasized the fact that Jesus was known to them in the breaking of the bread. Luke 24:35

No doubt they were in the midst of a great time of discussion concerning all that had taken place. Suddenly Jesus stood in their midst with a message of peace. Instead of rejoicing, they were distressed and filled with fear thinking that they were beholding a spirit. Luke 24:36-37 Under the circumstances, a human reaction which certainly would have been anticipated. Yet, strange, in the light of all the most unusual events which had taken place in the past week. Their lack of spirituality and ability to grasp the message of the Word which they had heard for the past three and one half years is amazing. They react with very carnal actions. His questions to them, were well directed and to the point. Why are you troubled and why do you doubt. Not unfamiliar reactions. Again, the presence of a resurrected body demonstrates to us that it is a body composed of flesh and bones. Jesus invited them to come to Him and feel His hands and His feet that they might attest to the truth that He was very real. Luke 24:37-39

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 62

The incidents where the Lord Jesus appeared to the Mary, (Mark 16:11) the women, the two disciples (Mark 16:12) and those gathered together is of interest to us because the body of resurrection is revealed here. To Mary, because He had not yet presented Himself as the Lamb of sacrifice unto the Father, His body was still that natural, but resurrected body. His blood, poured forth for the sin of the world, had not yet been offered on the eternal mercy seat of heaven. John 20:17

When He appeared to the two who had walked into the countryside, it was in an entirely different form. It is difficult not to sense a bit of subtle humor in His encounter with these two. First, He played ignorance as to all the fuss that was going on in Jerusalem and led them into telling Him of all the

things which had happened to their leader. Then, in plain words, He related to them the prophetic statements which had been accomplished in His life and death. Even so, they were totally blind as to His person. Would you act in such manner as Jesus did here. I would and be chuckling all the time at their ignorance. They did not believe that He had been resurrected therefore did not anticipate meeting Him in such a way. Spiritual ignorance is stupidity. It should never exist among the people of the Lord.

John is rather expressive of the event when the Lord Jesus showed Himself to the group of eleven disciples. Actually, Jesus wasted no time in approaching them, for it was on the first day of the week when He chose to stand in their midst. They were meeting in secret, with the gathering place all closed up because of their fear of the Jews. They were concerned for their own lives, lest they be singled out for punishment because of the close association with the Lord Jesus. They felt that they were marked men. Jesus, suddenly stood in their midst. His message was that of peace be unto you. What John did not include in his report, Mark did. They were rebuked of the Lord because of their unbelief and hardness of heart. A fact that was demonstrated in their rejection of the witness of those who had seen Jesus and reported to them their experience. Mark 16:14 It is here that the great commission is given to take the gospel of Christ into all the world. Jesus used this as an opportunity to inform them exactly what their responsibility would be in the future. He also assured them that the power and presence of the Lord would be with them and be working in them. Mark 16:15-18

(Note: The following note is #63 in the series JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. Brother McKnight inserts this November 29, 2007 note to inform readers of his next study on the subject of The Minor Prophets.

Greetings in the Lord Jesus.

The current series is about to come to an end. Several years ago I ran a survey on the minor prophets. For a season that will be my daily study. I may or may not finish them all. We shall see.

Seeing as there will be a different study, this is a good time for others who might desire the studies to join in, as they will be able to receive the studies from their beginning. If you have friends or loved ones who would like them just send or have them send me their e-mail address, and they are onboard.

I hear such a cry from the sheep these days that they miss the Word of the Lord being preached. They go to church but are not fed. It is the burden of my heart to use this means of reaching what few are in my address book with the hope that it will be a blessing to them. Also, that if the recipient is in the Ministry that these studies might give inspiration and a source of thoughts for ministry.

Example.

MINOR PROPHETS SURVEY

JONAH

INTRODUCTION. Jonah, meaning dove or pigeon. Prophesied in the days of Jeroboam II. 2 Kings 14:25 The son of Amittai, meaning the truth of Jehovah. He originated from Gath-hepher, meaning, the wine press of the two wells, or the double portion. There are two great experiences recorded in the book concerning his life and ministry. The Three day and three nights spent in the belly of the great fish and the repentance of a city. Both of which, are miraculous.

Chapter 1: Jonah called, fled only to be caught by a fish.

Chapter 2: Jonah repented, consequently was delivered.

Chapter 3: Called a second time. Willing and obedient.

Chapter 4: Ninevah repented. Jonah frustrated and rebuked.

JONAH CALLED, DISOBEYED, CONSEQUENCES.

Chapter. 1:1 NOW, THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME. The call of Jonah was by the book, the Word of the Lord. What better assurance could one have than that of a call based on the Word of the LORD or Jehovah. He was the spokesman of the Lord proclaiming to the people the will and Word of the LORD.

May the Lord Jesus mightily bless you.

In the Love of Christ. C. Joe Mc Knight

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 64

His terrestrial body was as natural as all human bodies. There was nothing in the physical man which could, then nor now, overcome sin. All born into this world are born with the stain of sin upon them. Ps. 51:5 Consequently they follow the path of sin for all have sinned. Rom. 2:23 Only in Jesus can we find one who lived a sinless life that He might present Himself to the Father as a perfect, sinless Lamb. Heb. 10:5 Jesus, the man, in order to become the savior of mankind had to become what we are. First, born of a woman, born of the flesh. If ever men could be saved by simply living a good life, this man, Jesus would have been that person. He came with the explicit purpose of destroying death and the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Heb. 2:14

Jesus came to illustrate to the world that there is a way of obtaining eternal life. He demonstrated life daily, through His ministry. He healed the sick, raised the dead and has now been exalted to the right hand of the Father. He was able to say, I am the resurrection and the life. Then promised eternal life to all who would believe on Him. Proclaiming that they would never die. John 11:25-26 There is a place, a time where death is not death. The physical man is destined to death. The spiritual man, the inner man, though absent from the body does not die, for it is eternal. The individual, born of the Spirit, on vacating this present dwelling place, the body, is immediately in the presence of the Lord. 2 Cor. 5:8

Jesus came purposely into the world with the object in mind of taking on the form of mankind. The ultimate of His coming would be seen in the power of resurrection. He died, and was raised from death that we might see His blessed example and follow Him, in life, death and resurrection. He is our faithful, gracious high priest ever making intercession for sinners. Thus, reconciling them to the Lord. Heb. 2:17 In His exalted position as the only, true high priest He is not only our hope of eternal Life, He is the example of what the redeemed, resurrected will be. This body of sin, polluted, contaminated, vile and unclean because of sin will go through a process of metamorphosis from corruption to incorruption. The resurrected body possessed by the believer will be made like unto His own glorious, eternal body. Phil. 3:21 I hesitate to use the words of John for so many

have corrupted his words into the wrong meaning. Nevertheless, the Word is true. We are NOW, the sons of God and we are assured that in the resurrection at His coming we will have the same kind of a body as His. 1 John 3:2

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 65

It is of little wonder that among those whom Jesus called to follow Him as disciples, there were those who had made their lively hood by fishing. They were seine fishermen, using nets to gather in the fish. They would not fish any particular species but gather in everything and anything that was swimming in the waters where they were fishing. Jesus likened the Kingdom of God to just such a catch. Fish of every sort, a great mixture. From fish which live and feed on the bottom, the dregs of society to those who occupy and feed near the surface, the high and mighty. The great equalizer, is the Kingdom of God. The lowly are exalted, those of considerable stature in the world are humbled under the mighty hand of the Lord. All must come through one door. All are made equal in the Kingdom. If they persist in their wickedness they are cast aside and are not accepted into the Kingdom of the Lord. There will be a great separation at the time of the coming of Christ. Those rejected will be eternally cut off from the Lord and His Kingdom. Mt. 13:47-50

The dynamic power of the Spirit and the Word had a profound effect on some fishermen by the sea of Galilee. Jesus found Simon, Andrew, James and John plying their trade and called them to follow Him. There is certainly no evidence of hesitation on the part of any of them to immediately forsake their nets and go with Him. Their call was to be fishers of men. How much more rewarding than their past employment. Mark 1:16-20

Luke described this encounter of the Lord Jesus with these fishermen in far greater detail. Because of the press of the crowd Jesus borrowed Peters boat to minister to the people from the lake. On finishing, he would repay Peter with a multitude of fish. Mouthy Peter, always out of step, insisted that there were no fish out there. After all they had fished all night and had

caught nothing. But, if you say so I will do it. Imagine his great amazement when his net was so full that it was tearing. The catch was so great that even with his partners, James and John loading their boat to the full, both boats began to sink. Peter immediately dropped on his knees and confessed his wickedness. He again is recorded the call of the Lord Jesus to them to become fishers of men. On beaching their boats they forsook all and followed Him. Their moment of success and riches had arrived. What they did with the fish is not recorded. However, it is strongly stated that they forsook all and followed Him. Luke 5:1-11

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 66

Seven of His disciples were sitting by the Sea of Tiberias, or elsewhere called the Sea of Galilee. The number seven is a divine complete number. It foreshadows the end of the age. The consummation of the work of the Lord. Final things. John 21:1-2

Among them was Peter. Always one to speak out and lead others with him in the wrong direction. Crudely today, we would call him mouthy. Until after his Pentecostal experience, he was general wrong in his decisions. In one of those quick, thoughtless decisions he declared, I go a fishing. The others immediately agreed with him and all entered into a boat and fished all night, catching nothing. John 21:3

At dawn Jesus stood on the beach, but they did not recognize Him. It is apparent that they did not expect to see him. Had there been an anticipation in their hearts of seeing Jesus again they would considered more carefully the man standing on the shore of the lake. Though they were grown men, their spiritual immaturity was evident in as much as Jesus called them Children. Jesus knew the answer to His question before He asked them. No doubt He wanted to hear their confession of a vain, night long, fishing trip.

Do you have any meat? How has the catch been? The answer was a dismal nothing in the net. No fish, no catch what so ever. As always, Jesus had a solution for the problem. Cast your net on the right side and you will find a school of fish. John 21:6a In a whole, long night of fishless fishing, these seasoned fishermen would have cast their net from every portion of

their boat. There is a point of desperation when there are no results. We cannot move on with this scene without a play on words here. The word right in this case indicates the right side of the boat. But the word, right, also bears the connotation of that which is proper or correct. Actions, particularly in the Christian life, taken with the right purpose or correct principle in mind will be blessed of the Lord. The great lesson we learn from this encounter is that when actions are taken after the way and will of men, the results are often nil. When the Lord is involved there are real and wonderful results. We have too many in the church today who are filled with ideas and human solutions which are not the methods of the Lord. Then we have those six others who just follow along without considering the consequences. There is a right way. There is a wrong way. Always take the right.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 67

A great abundance of fish in the net was so huge that they were not able to take them into the boat. The result of being obedient to His command, His word. Jesus, once again demonstrated to them His power over all things created. Where the waters had been deserted of fish that were made to swarm with a great school of fish. John 21:6 His methods produce certain and lasting results. The methodology of mankind may produce similar results but they are not as lasting as His works. Men have concocted many ways and means to attract people to church but that which is not founded on the true gospel can only produce weak results. A whole night of fishing resulted in empty nets. One word from the Lord Jesus and the net was full to overflowing. His way is always the best. His call to them had been not to continue their life as fishermen but to become fishers of men. Mt. 4:19

The disciple whom Jesus loved, John was the first to recognize that the man standing on the beach was Jesus. Spontaneously, Peter was in the water swimming toward the Lord Jesus. John 21:7 Different people, different reactions. John received the revelation and shared it with the others. Peter would still be remembering his denial of Christ and was most anxious to show Jesus his love for Him. The others were more practical minded and stayed in the boat to care for the catch. They were only about one hundred yards from the land and in a small boat. They brought the

catch to land. It would have no small value and they certainly would have need of the funds. John 21:8

Immediately on reaching the beach they took notice that there were coals of fire and fish cooking over them as well as a supply of bread. He had supplied them with a miraculous catch. Surely with the fish and the bread, He had performed another miracle in obtaining the necessities with which He prepared breakfast for His weary disciples. When Jesus invited them to share their catch, Peter immediately took charge and pulled the net up on the beach. It was Peter to whom the call of the Lord came to minister to the Gentiles. Through a threefold vision the Lord convinced him that they were also called to hear and receive the Gospel of Christ. Acts 11:10 Amazingly, there were six brethren who accompanied him on his journey (seven, once again). Acts 11:12 The seal of the call of the Lord to the Gentiles was the baptism of the Spirit which they received while Peter was yet ministering to them. Acts 11:15

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 68

Come and dine. An invitation extended to them for that particular moment and for their natural needs. He was manifesting to them His ability to supply their every need. These men, while they had been with Jesus for the three and one half years of His life, and had seen His mighty works. They had even participated in extending His ministry as they went out by two's to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead and cast out devils. Mt. 10:8 But now, sitting with a resurrected Christ, they are uncertain as to whether or not He is the risen one. John had already identified Him. Peter seemed to recognize Him, but they are vacillating individuals. There is something missing from their spiritual make up. They are not yet born of or filled with the Spirit. They were of that interim season, where they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. The time between the age of the Law and the revelation of faith. The years of the ministry of the Lord Jesus. They believed but as yet did not possess the power of the new birth.

This was the third time that Jesus came to a group of His disciples and made Himself known to them. John 21:13 Three is the fullness of witness. Deut. 19:15 There was no reason for them to doubt that He had been raised from the dead and was very much alive.

It is note worthy to consider the fact that He served them. He not only taught by word but by deed also. John 21:13 This follows the pattern of His life. The night of His betrayal, he not only broke bread with them but He washed their feet. John 13:12 It was also fitting that He served them bread, for He is the bread of life. He satisfies the inner most longing of the human heart with the bread of His presence. Partaking of His bread assures one of everlasting life. He completely satisfies the deepest longing of the human heart with that heavenly bread. John 6:35 Jesus took the meal of a lad and as it passed through His hands, the bread and the fish multiplied until it fed five thousand men, besides women and children. John 6:9-11 I guarantee you that they proclaimed it to be the best they had ever eaten. When they were finished they gathered up twelve baskets full of take home food. John 6:13 That boy made a good deal and ended up with great sufficiency. The second time, He fed the multitude there were seven loaves and a few little fishes. Here He fed four thousand men, plus the women and children. The left over's amounted to seven baskets full. He demonstrated that He is the bread of life, naturally and Spiritually. Mt. 15:34-38

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 69

Jesus had instructed His disciples to go to a mountain located in Galilee. Mt. 28:10 While the mountain is not named, it would seem to be reasonable that it was the same mountain where He had been transfigured. Mountain peaks speak of great spiritual experiences. Beginning with Moses on Sinai to Jesus on mount Calvary. However, Let us not forget that the mountain is surrounded by valleys, which must be passed through. Here, once again, Jesus appeared to them. Astoundingly, there were still those who doubted. It is very evident that there was a deep spiritual lack in these who doubted that it was really Jesus.

The statement Jesus made in introducing the great commandment to them is wonderful and marvelous. ALL power in heaven and on earth has been given unto me. Mt. 28:18 All authority is in His hands. ALL other authorities are under Him. His will, His desires are to be obeyed to the nth degree. He commissioned them to use His Name as they went into all the world with His gospel. All who became His disciples were not only to believe, but were to be baptized. Not only baptized but to be baptized in the name of the

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Does the Father have a name? How about the Son? The Holy Spirit? These are personal titles referring to their status their position in the Trunity, called God. Can we find a name for each one in the scriptures?

When Moses inquired of the Lord concerning His name the response was I AM (the eternal, the ever present God). The Father introduced Himself as the LORD God of your fathers, this is my name forever. Ex. 3: 13-15 The name of the Son is easy. Call His name Jesus. Lk. 1:31 The name of the Spirit is Christ, He is the anointing of the Lord. God anointed (chrio) Jesus with the Holy Ghost. Jesus became the Christ by virtue of the anointing which was upon Him. Acts 10:38 The Father has bestowed the fullness of the name of God upon Jesus by making Him both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:36 God has highly exalted Jesus in giving Him the name which is above every name that is named. Phil.2:9 The ultimate purpose of God is that every knee will bow and confess that Jesus Christ, is Lord. Phil. 2:11 To acknowledge His name is a matter of great desire for the Father. He is well please with His Son and therefore has given Him that glorious name. If the Father loves His Son to such a degree, then it is our privilege to acknowledge, and greatly love that one who bears the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

JESUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS. 70

Jesus had instructed His disciples to go into Galilee. Mt. 28:10 It was a meeting place which had been designated by the Lord Jesus. Mt. 26:32 The following occurrence could have taken place there, although no other name or place is even hinted in Paul's statement. Jesus revealed Himself to about five hundred people at one and the same time. This was certainly a cloud of witnesses whose testimony of a resurrected Christ could not be refuted, because of the shear numbers. 1 Cor. 15:6

Jesus is ever the teacher, during the forty day period between His resurrection and His ascension, when ever He met with His Apostles, He was giving them commandments. Also He continued to teach them concerning the kingdom of God. Acts 1:2-3 He offered many "infallible proofs" to them that He was the resurrected Christ. Paul would cause us to believe that in that time in Galilee His presence among them was very

frequent, for he said that Jesus was seen of them many days. Acts 13:31 This time of visitation and fellowship would have had done much to establish a foundation of the Word in their lives.

The commandment which was to have the greatest effect on that infant church was for them to tarry in Jerusalem until they had been endued with power from on high. Jesus promised that they would be filled with the Spirit. Acts 1:8 Most unfortunately they were still focusing on a natural kingdom and asked Jesus if He would restore the kingdom to Israel at that time. He had said, My kingdom is NOT of this world. John 18:36 That statement was good for then and it is still the same. Men try to emphasize a natural kingdom but His kingdom is Spiritual. When will our spiritual eyes be opened?

Having taught them the Word and promised the coming of the Holy Spirit He was received up, out of their sight, into a cloud. The disciples standing and watching in utter amazement were confronted by two witnesses. Men, clothed in white (light) who declared to them that this same Jesus would also come in like manner as they had seen Him go. Acts 1:10-11 To the world He will certainly come as a thief in the night but not to the church. The church is not in darkness that that day will overtake us as a thief in the night. 1 Thes. 5:2 To declare that Jesus will come as a thief to the body of Christ is to acknowledge that the one making such a statement is walking in darkness. We are not of the darkness, we are children of light. (end)